Yuri Azarov

Teaching: Calling and Skills

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УЧИТЕЛЬ: ПРИЗВАНИЕ И МАСТЕРСТВО

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Russia is renowned for her teachers,
And their pupils bring her fame

Andrei Dementiev

Part One

HOW A CALLING IS BORN

To be a teacher is to be a member of a special profession. The future make-up of a new generation of a country's citizens depends on the teachers' cultural, professional and general standard.

I am convinced that everything that pedagogics achieved is transformed through the personality of the teacher. For students a teacher should always be a Personality in the highest sense of that word, and everything about him acquires special importance: how he works, how he lives, how he spends his leisure time, his attitude towards people and nature. I would distinguish four basic types of relationships that develop a teacher's inner self. First, his attitude towards the world of objects, towards science, technology, culture, and towards pedagogics proper and the means it employs. Secondly, his attitude towards people, towards children and their parents, colleagues, school administrators, to those around him, and especially those in trouble and experiencing difficult times. Third, his attitude towards nature. And fourth, and this is especially important, his attitude towards himself, his consciousness of himself as a teacher.

The aim of the present work is to acquaint readers with some of a teacher's spiritual states of mind, and, more specifically, to develop some understanding of how first a teacher's calling is born, and then a mastery of pedagogical skills.

1. THE FIRST STEPS ARE ALWAYS INDIVIDUAL

Looking back and trying to understand my thirty-five years of experience in teaching I am ready to examine and try to evaluate once again the specific professional and human element that was born within me when, at the age of twenty-one

I chose to teach under the guidance of Mikhail Fedorovich Parfenov, a remarkable pedagogue, in the far north of the Soviet Union, in the distant settlement of Solenga in the Arkhangelsk Region.

Today I know for sure that my association with teaching began not with classroom work, but with sentiments of admiration, astonishment and conflict. I was literally shaken by the nature of life in a northern Russian village, and in the course of time it actually produced a fundamental change within me. I was continually surprised at the spiritual purity, kindness and openness of village children, their mothers, fathers, grandfathers and grandmothers. It was partly Parfenov who created this new world of kindness. That is why I came to love him. I loved him for his devotion, sincerity and honesty. Parfenov was an unusual and creative person, and that is why my conflict with him, too, was unusual. It should not really be called a conflict. It was something else—a collision of different approaches to upbringing, different intonations, and moods, generally there were many contradictions.

But let me be more precise: my mention of the contradictions is deliberate. In my view contradictions constitute the governing principle in the development of both theory and practice. They constitute a knot, as it were, in relation to decisive elements. It is by unraveling that knot that one comes to know essential aspects. While the development of each teacher's personality is always a unique process, it is also typical in some respects and instructive. I closely associate both my life's achievements and its failures with my fate as a teacher, which I can now firmly say was a happy one.

I recall how I first saw the small settlement of Solenga. The narrow-gauge line broke out of a narrow corridor into the open. Everything around us—the trees, shrubbery, the fields on the hillsides, the woods beyond them, and then again to the right more houses and fields—was flooded with sunshine, glittering in vivid colours, with the clear sky reflected in the blue waters of the river. My heart filled with joy.

At that time the settlement to which I had come did not yet have a name. It adjoined the village of Faddeyevo and was known as the DSK—a house-building plant. "Agashka" (as the local rail car had been named) came to a stop and I saw mounds of sawdust and the houses beyond the river, like patches of cadmium yellow on the greenery.

Two people approached the "agashka": Mikhail Fedorovich Parfenov, School Director, and Faik Bulatovich Samedov, Head of Curriculum.

I found myself swept into the rhythm of Solenga's life from the very first moment. I stayed overnight at Faik's home and already at about six the next morning I was awakened by Parfenov: we had agreed to go pick mushrooms. This was a first time for me, and perhaps the fact that it took place in the presence of Parfenov played a certain role in shaping my attitude towards him. It was already there, in the woods, that I became aware not so much of Parfenov's external appearance (his smartness, agility), as of some inner refinement, coming from the depth of his soul, not liberally but sparingly. His quiet and thoughtful speech, the way in which he touched the mushrooms, pointing out various types, and in which he reacted to my delight—all expressed a certain intimacy that invited mutual sympathy.

If it is true, as I have always believed, that each person is marked by his own specific combination of certain colours, then I can imagine Parfenov in an intensive grey monotone. Not the grey that denotes a lack of distinction, but a refined pattern of white and black that stresses a subdued colour scale. During our mushroom hunt I seemed to acquire an ability to see more vividly and in greater depth. It was as if new forces emerged within me that found and absorbed previously unknown sensations. I now saw a mushroom not only as a perfect tiny creation of nature but as my link with the living world requiring particular care, in a uniquely human sense.

Much later I formulated for myself the principle of care in upbringing. Much depends on the ability of a teacher to create the most delicate types of relations with children. These may be expressed through glances, smiles, barely perceptible movements, a line from a poem, and forms of play, as well as commands, outbursts of indignation, or well-intentioned enthusiasm. Basically all these forms are both moral and fundamental.

...On that day I was stunned by the forest's magnificent beauty. Every now and then Parfenov would leave me and vanish God knows where, while I both rejoiced at the mushrooms and felt saddened by his absence. I wanted so much to talk with him. I had already heard about Parfenov. People spoke of him with great emotion. "He carried a small volume of Tutchev's poems with him throughout the war." "There is no other man as honest as him on the Pechora." "He is our conscience."

Parfenov had built the school log by log, stocking up boards, window frames and nails as he came upon one. In planning the equipment of study rooms he sought for technical perfection so that everything would operate like clockwork. He wanted the relationships in the school to be strict and based on respect.

2. MORAL STIMULI

A teacher's personality largely develops on the basis of evaluations and self-evaluations. As a rule colleagues and experienced administrators lend their support to a young teacher who is just beginning his career. The way in which his pedagogical talents will develop greatly depends on their assessments.

The Curriculum Head is still another pedagogical problem. In today's schools he is directly responsible for establishing the scope of home assignments, for papers registering the results of study progress, and for teaching methods. As a rule such persons are hard working and responsible executives. But their position is not an easy one, for basically they have to see that a variety of instructions are carried out.

Unfortunately, few such Heads are able to develop or perfect a systematic treatment of the teaching process into which any creative method or creative teacher could fit.

Ideally such a person should be not a dispatcher ("Tomorrow you have a test, while you, on the other hand, have a free period, and as for you, please be so kind as to fill out your classroom register.") but a generator of new teaching techniques and a model of pedagogical culture.

Faik Samedovich was the first head of curriculum with whom I had occasion to associate closely. At the beginning of my stay in Solenga I lived in the same room with him. I arranged the mattress I had been given in a corner, used the floor as a writing desk, and two nails that Faik hammered into the wall served as a closet for my clothes.

Faik was entirely different from Parfenov. He seemed to be drawn exclusively in pronounced oval lines. He possessed his own range of colours, as it were, and his own set of accounts to settle with civilisation. One could not drag him into the forest. He was not averse to beauty, providing that there was some advantage to be gained from it. While he himself barely read any books, he felt deep respect for the fact that

so many books had been written. This respect was combined with a natural practicality, which in local conditions easily passed for a high level of education. Above all he was concerned with the teachers' accountability and with achieving a high rate of the students' performance. My first conflict with him occurred during the very first quarter of the school year.

The dictations and compositions that the children had written contained numerous errors. Initial estimates indicated that about half the class would receive "two's."*

"What is this?" asked Faik pointing to the class register.

"Marks."

"A few things have to be corrected."

"What precisely?"

"Here I believe you can give a three rather than a two. And here as well."

"But I can't possibly put a three in this case," I argued, "look at what is written."

"Why look? Simply change it."

The tone was friendly. Faik patted me on the back as if to reassure me that I would find it easier in the next quarter.

"You still do not yet know what a school is," he suddenly added with great sincerity. "As soon as you submit such marks a commission will arrive, they will criticize you and will prove that you have taught the children poorly. To put it honestly, you have not yet fully mastered teaching methods, have you?"

"No, I have not," I agreed.

My spirits were low when I left the office. But my thoughts quickly turned away fom this nonsense, for I had other concerns. My mother had arrived.

3. DIRECT CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

Each learner's personality is unique. And the development of close relations between the teacher and each student should also be unique in some respects. In each case the teacher uses his methods in a new key, as it were. I did not know this at that time.

A chance event and my relatives' wishes made me the teacher of a "family" pupil, my nephew Victor, who arrived in Solenga with my mother.

* In Soviet schools the students' performance is evaluated by marks ranging from a "five" (the highest) to a "two" (the lowest).—*Ed.*

To this robust and quick-minded lad, who somehow managed to spend two years in each grade, I became both father and teacher, as well as police inspector. I was already aware of a short record of his transgressions: a thing pinched, a thing peddled, occasional gambling, a self-conceited gait, spitting through his teeth, and a generous use of slang.

"Now listen, Victor," I said to him, "we will begin a new life. Get rid of all this nonsense. We will get down to study, and go mushroom picking.

"Me? Pick mushrooms?" My nephew was longing for a bit of adventure. The prospect of a quiet walk in the woods was absolutely out of his line.

Which was what Victor explained to me.

"That's not for me."

I did not insist. But as for his studies and conduct in school, I put a rigorous ultimatum: complete obedience, or I would send him home.

Solenga was very much to Victor's liking. There were wide open spaces, untouched forests and fresh air. Its freshness was invigorating. There was a river and a raft could fly as quickly as its waters. There were mountains, and soon there would be snow. One could then ski or glide down them on a sled. Finally there was a gun and, they said, game in abundance. No, Victor definitely liked Solenga. And he accepted my terms: rising at seven in the morning, exercises, showers, studies, reading, training in the boxing club that I led, walks, more reading—and the outcome would be a most educated Victor Vasiliev, who upon returning home would dumbfound everyone with his culture, learning, and good manners.

He would be met by his former pals: "Vic, a game of cards or perhaps of dominos?" But our new young citizen would answer with kindly condescension: "No, lads, these things are no longer for me. I have just finished reading Goethe, in the original of course, that's grand; come visit me and I will show you some reproductions of Serov, Botticelli, and Vrubel." Victor listened to my chatter; he was not opposed to becoming an educated person, but some time later, no hurry. But there was a glitter in his eye; the evening was warm and there was still a long time before the cursed morning, when he would have to rise at seven for the sake of this education and culture. In the meantime one could fully agree to anything and everything.

The situation was altogether different the next morning when I went to wake him. A button flew off as poor Vic strug-

gled into his trousers. He blew his nose, cursed and grunted while stumbling about.

"Let him sleep," my mother intervened, breaking the supposed unanimity of our educational effort. "There is still time."

"Please tell him to leave me alone," he pleaded, and then suddenly he saw the towel and pail of water in my hands. "What is this for?" he asked in a frightened voice. "Are you crazy? What fool would wash in such a cold weather?"

"Just give it a try! But first you must prepare yourself. So let's begin; start running, lift your knees higher, watch your hands, try to make your shoulder-blades meet."

Vic was only going through the motions, he did not want to do knee-bends. He only wanted to get some more sleep while exercising, and then return home, crawl under his blanket and send everything of this new life to blazes.

Today, of course, I see myself as a tyrant in these personal pedagogics. In past times family tutors were several social ranks below their charges. And this difference within the "rich-poor" system worked effectively; the tutor revered his pupil, and did everything to avoid insulting his dignity. He was free to omit some lessons, but he could not insult. Should the child say "I do not want to do this," the tutor would patiently wait. Ultimately he would not, of course, concede to the child, especially in the English or German tradition, nor did he pamper him by allowing him to stay in bed or ease up on him altogether, for it was his task to find a variety of ways to make the child study and work while enjoying the pleasure of preparing to be a real gentleman.

My charge, on the other hand, was Victor; he was my property, which fate had given me to polish, process and shape. But he was not clay. Nor did he have any previous personal tutoring. Yet I threw at him, obsessed and carried away with my own prestige. And that was my principal pedagogical error, which I did not recognize at the time.

It was when my relationship with Victor reached a state of complete disarray that I first gave serious thought to the essence of education.

This is how it happened. Victor had grown so strong in Solenga's sunny air and on its healthy food (fish, potatoes,

cereals) that at times we wrestled as equals. He had engaged in many sports, he was an enthusiastic boxer, sailed rafts down the river in the spring, and joined the boys in winter ski expeditions to the forest and there was no place for weaklings. He was proud of his muscles ("Feel them, they are like a rock, and now stand with both feet on my stomach—I can take it".) and insisted that he could beat anyone. I would explain that strength was needed not to beat other people but in order to be healthy and work well. But he rejected such reasoning. I knew he had already joined forces with some other boys, that a fight had already taken place and that he had come home with bruises.

He made no progress in German. He continued to confuse his "der", "die" and "das", neglected his German exercises, and played noughts-and-crosses during classes, until finally the teacher complained to Faik.

Faik called Victor into his office.

"You are disgracing your uncle." (I was the uncle and I was twenty-one, while Victor was fifteen).. "We have to take measures. We will call you before the Teachers' Council, your uncle will be ashamed."

Upon learning this at home, the "uncle" in question flew into a rage. All rules were forgotten, we quarrelled "as equals", and finding himself in his own element again Victor announced:

"I will stop studying altogether. What do you say to that?"

That was a move. Much later I learned to anticipate such moves in my practice with other children and to check them in the very first conversation; sometimes even turning to such a simple ultimatum as: "I would say nothing. I have no need for you whatsoever, and you may do just as you wish."

But at that time I did not yet know this psychological variant of "softening the situation", and accordingly lost my temper:

"You *will* study! Here is your text and you *will* learn the lesson."

"I will not!" Victor replied decisively, following me move for move.

"Read!" I commanded, placing the textbook in front of him while grasping his shoulder with the other hand.

"Don't start anything," answered Victor, ready to challenge me.

"What do you mean? Read at once or you will be sorry."

"Just try!"

Victor greatly preferred a fight to the "der", "die" and "das" of a German lesson and continued in the same vein.

That was the point at which I should have stopped, left him for a while, and displayed hurt feelings: "Well, go before the Teachers' Council then, and stand there like a fool, while Faik will say: 'Look at your uncle.' Next you will be called before the Students' Committee and there Olya Krutova will look at you with revulsion. Don't study if you prefer, throw away your textbook. Should I do it for you?" But all this was still unfamiliar to me. I became prey to strong impulses, threw myself at Victor, and pushed his head into the German text. He broke loose, grasped a kitchen knife—and then I knocked him off his feet.

It was a disgusting scene. My downfall was horrible. I stood confused, while Victor seized his clothes and shouting "I hate you, you beasts!"—ran out of the house.

It had not even occurred to me to compare his state of mind with my own feelings as a child when I would receive a humiliating thrashing from my mother. She was merciless with me, even though I generally studied well and behaved decently. It is true that while my teachers were pleased with me they stressed that my conduct could be better. And recommended to my mother that she "take proper measures". And she did. She made use of a pair of slippers with smooth worn soles. Mother performed this rite professionally: she held my head between her knees (I was about eight years old at the time), and I twisted and turned and shouted, crying not so much from pain as from humiliation. On one occasion during winter I ran out into the street half dressed wanting to catch a cold and die.

The use of physical force operates as a boomerang. It not only humiliates but also produces an accumulation of negative feelings that call for revenge. Even when a person is not aware that he wants revenge that destructive feeling is still stored somewhere in subconscious corners of his personality.

But in the incident with Victor I did not remember my own childhood. Instead I continually stressed something quite different: "By the time I was your age I had already completed ten grades, read so many books, and was proficient in so many types of sports." It was only many years later that I understood that such reminders represented some of the worst examples of moral upbringing.

At the time I felt very different concerns. Naturally I was frightened; where was he? My mother returned from the store.

"Nothing will happen to him. He will come back. A sound well-earned thrashing has never harmed anyone."

We turned off the light in the room and sat down to wait.

Some time after eleven the door slammed. He had returned. For a long time he fussed in the kitchen. Next morning I heard my mother reprimanding him:

"How could you, you ate almost a full three litre jar of jam."

"But I like raspberries", Victor replied, as if nothing had happened.

"Well, never mind the raspberries, sit down and study your German lesson."

As I left for school Victor was drilling his German exercises. In general our relations with Victor returned to normal. There was yet another conflict that year but this time not with me.

It happened at Easter time, which that year coincided with the May holidays. I was sitting in my small room working, when there was a knock on the door. There stood a policeman and military officer, and behind them was the School Director. They had brought Victor home drunk as a fiddler. Somehow he was still able to move his feet, but the moment he saw me his eyes closed completely.

"Take your lad," said the officer, "he's been kicking up a real row."

The Director approached me, highly excited, and stuttered as he pointed to the blood on his hand.

"You m-m-may make a complaint about me, but I struck him." At first I remained silent. Then I sought to calm Parfenov; I was not planning to make any complaint. They told me what had happened. When Victor began to cause trouble near the recreation centre, someone sent for the Director who was at home celebrating the holiday with his guests. That was when the unexpected occurred.

"Go straight home," said the Director.

"I'd love to see all of you in your graves," Victor replied to the general merriment of those who had gathered.

"Vic, that's the Director!" one of the boys warned.

"The Director too... I am the Director here!" This is the kind of nonsense my nephew began to shout until Parfenov could stand it no longer and tried to pull him away: "Go home immediately..."

"Hands off!" shouted Victor. "No one has the right to use force!"

Victor lay on his bed and I did not touch him. On the next

day I did not speak to him, and by evening he came to plead with me:

"I will do anything you say but do not send me away."

It was spring and I was in an excellent mood. I no longer had any quarrels with Victor although on several occasions there were reasons to have one.

Olya Krutova, with whom he was in love, was one of my pupils. Incidentally, to have an attractive and intelligent girl in one's class is a great joy to any teacher. In addition, Olya was a creative child. She was so sincere and spontaneous, her eyes were so pure, and at the same time she was so quick, energetic and impulsive that it was impossible not to fall in love with her. And I was glad to see that this had happened to Victor. This is why I told him:

"Olya is perfection itself. Do you understand what perfection is?"

In going to meet her one spring evening Victor put on my raincoat. When he was returning home with Olya, a stream had washed away the road. Wearing light shoes Olya expressed real fear as she stepped awkwardly from one side to another. And that was perhaps why my nephew generously threw my raincoat off his shoulders (bravo, how can one fail to applaud) and onto the stream and the feet of his beloved passed over my humble coat.

Victor came home radiant. "I fell", he explained, "it is so damn slippery..."

The next day this episode with the raincoat had become known to the children at school, to the teachers and to myself. Unexpectedly I praised Victor:

"You know, that was perfect. I would probably never have thought of doing such a thing."

The thermometer reading of Victor's self-esteem rose as if it had been dipped in boiling water. And a few moments later he was drilling his irregular verbs without any reminder.

Children like contest and competition not because they are allegedly guided by inherent destructive drive, but because this is a natural stage of their growth. If a kitten does not tussle with another kitten, jump on it, touch it with its paw, and brush against it to indicate that it wishes to compete with it, then it is not healthy or normal. The same thing is precisely true of children—their natural state consists of constant challenges to themselves, and of tests of their physical capabilities.

This great principle contains the secret of child development and maturation.

Because children are part of nature their upbringing should conform to nature as much as possible.

Somehow we always view a fight as an infraction of moral norms. And if it also leads to a bloodied nose we condemn it in even stronger terms as delinquency. But let us think retrospectively: if a competitive behaviour among children strengthens their spirit, their will and their solidarity—is this not a moral development of the personality?

To develop a child's will, or more precisely freedom of will is a vital activity. Above all I imagine this as a freedom to grow physically, an absence of fetters, and a freedom to express one's self. In general, this has many aspects, one of which is game.

4. GAMES AND CHILDHOOD

To understand the nature of games is to understand the nature of childhood. What is childhood? Many wonderful words have been devoted to it by writers and thinkers of different historical ages and parts of the world.

Childhood is a specific psychological state of a person who has discovered an eternally self-renewing world. It is an irrepressible striving for independence and creativity and is synonymous with spontaneity and moral purity. It contains the powerful secret to inexhaustible human energy, eternal inspiration and boundless human hopes.

It is the world's most prosaic and familiar miracle and expresses the primeval state of human existence. Like the first sparkling snow or the first warm rain, each child is made beautiful by his warm smile, the delicate pastel shades of his face, and his open earnest expression.

And if one experiences a sudden feeling of invigoration when looking at children's faces and listening to their clear sonorous voices, then one has not yet lost one's freshness and vitality. And if, on the other hand, one is irritated by children, then one is immensely tired and requires either rest or medical treatment.

Many books have been written about childhood that describe how a child's life may be perverted through the use of games in such a way as to rear amoral persons.

In a science fiction novel entitled *Brave New World*, the well-known British writer Aldous Huxley describes how attrac-

tive toys that produce electric shock are used to make children of poor families lose their sense of what is beautiful in life. Instead, khaki workers' overalls are represented as a source of pleasure. A similar point is made in another well-known novel that has been called monumental. This is Hermann Hesse's *The Glass Bead Game.*

In it Hesse persuasively shows that when a game is separated from actual life it is transformed not merely into an empty pastime but rather into a cruel, amoral instrument that can produce soulless forms of activity and a brutal functionalism.

The events that are described take place in approximately the year 2200 in the imaginary Pedagogic Province, Castalia. There, elitist schools completely separated from actual life train young people not in practical matters but how to play a game involving glass beads. The novel's hero, an intelligent boy named Joseph Knecht, arrives at an understanding of the subtle magic and "crystal logic" of a harmonious combining of glass beads. As an adult he becomes the Master of the Glass Bead Game—Josephus III—one of the highest ranks in the Castalian hierarchy. The Game is a symbolic representation of the refined spirituality of intellectuals and a means for finding life's harmony and meaning through endless combinations of signs, codes, abbreviations, signatures, diagrams, positions, and conventional figures expressed either through formulas or entire "dialogues of formulas". The Master of the Game is like a superb mathematician who commands a universal game language that allows him to express spiritual values in terms of meaningful symbols and conjugate them with each other, conveying the meaning of Leibniz's formula or Bach's fugue, the laws of freedom and the discord of emotions and human communities.

The teaching method, too, is the most modern one, problem oriented! In training Knecht, his teacher stresses that one must learn to correctly recognize contradictions, first as contradictions proper, and secondly as poles of some integral unity.

And Knecht, who is extremely bright and intelligent, and an incarnation, as it were, of spiritual sensitivity and devotion to science, is ready to fight in order to exchange the burdens of everyday life for an intelligent game of the immaterial world, a dance of elves.

He believes in the glory of the game of glass beads as a means for transforming the world. Deceived by the elite of priests he betrays his people. And he does this not because

of egotistic motives, but because he is captivated by the game's magic perfection. Knecht is more than just deceived. His tragedy is that of the intellectual teacher who finds himself, because of the world's unfair organization, to be a cog in an immense machine designed to stultify everyone who is outside the elite community.

How did this happen? Where and by whom was such a terrible and irreversible tragedy programmed? Hesse answers this question with a philosophical calmness: "... Rather they dwelt anxiously among political, economic, and moral ferments and earthquakes, waged a number of frightful wars and civil wars, and their little cultural games were not just charming, meaningless childishness. These games sprang from their deep need to close their eyes and flee from unsolved problems and anxious forebodings of doom into an imaginary world as innocuous as possible. They assiduously learned to drive automobiles, to play difficult card games and lose themselves in crossword puzzles—for they faced death, fear, pain, and hunger almost without defences, could no longer accept the consolations of the churches, and could obtain no useful advice from Reason ... they moved sporadically on through life and had no belief in a tomorrow..."*

Plinio Designori, Knecht's former schoolmate, rebels against the artificial, illusory world of formulas and sign systems. "... Fed by others and having few burdensome duties," he explains, "you lead your drones' lives, and so that they won't be too boring you busy yourselves with all these erudite specialities, count syllables and letters, make music, and play the Glass Bead Game, while outside in the filth of the world poor harried people live real lives and do real work."**

That disharmony between the elite's parasitic way of life in the Pedagogic Province and the stifling atmosphere of surrounding reality gives Plinio Designori no peace.

The questions that are posed in *The Glass Bead Game* are unambiguous. What is the essence of genuine spirituality? Can children be reared in separation from life's actual problems, from the specific threats of their own historical times? Through his entire brilliant narration Hesse proves that life and upbringing form an integral unity, and that genuine harmony is achieved when man expresses himself in society acti-

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* Hermann Hesse, *The Glass Bead Game*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1974, pp. 24-25.

** Ibid., p. 291.

vely and sufficiently fully, without neglecting the suffering of others and without becoming an appendage of a social hierarchy's upper layers.

Why did I feel a need for this literary excursion into the world of *The Glass Bead Game*? Simply in order to stress that games should assert moral democratic principles, and awaken imagination, fantasy and creativity in children.

Why then are these wonderful human properties—imagination, fantasy, creativity—needed? This is by no means an empty question, since it leads to such practical inferences as how members of creative professions should be selected, who should study at institutes of higher learning, either technical or in the humanities, and who does not need post-secondary education after completing high school.

In his remarkable work entitled *Grammatica della fantasia* Gianni Rodari, a well-known Italian writer, answers such questions simply and categorically: creativity and imagination are needed by everyone—scientists, engineers, housewives, artists, bakers, farmers and workers. In stating this Rodari finds support for his views in the theoretical and methodological propositions of Lev Vygotski, a prominent Soviet psychologist. Rodari writes that "L. S. Vygotski's book *Imagination and Creativity in the Age of Childhood* is woven of silver and pure gold; although it has now been written some time ago, first it describes imagination clearly and simply as a type of thinking activity, and secondly it recognizes that a propensity for creativity exists in all persons and not only among a select few (artists) or a few chosen ones (selected with the help of tests and financed by some 'foundation') and that expresses itself in different ways, that largely depend on social and cultural factors."*

Human mind is single. Man's creative capacities can and should develop comprehensively. Rodari considers that a complete mastery of all of the potentials of one's own native language is one of the approaches to man's creative development. Why? Because "a child's imagination that is encouraged to invent new words will then apply that same method to all other types of activities requiring a creative approach. Mathematics needs fairy-tales just as fairy-tales need mathematics.

* Gianni Rodari, *Grammatica della fantasia*, Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi, Torino, 1973, pp. 169-70.

They are also needed by poetry, music, utopia, and political struggles. In short, they are needed by each integral personality and not only by those who live in the world of fantasy. They are needed precisely because at first sight, like poetry and music, theatre and sport (unless they are turned into a business), they seem to serve no purpose."*

Rodari is uncompromising and categorical: "Every person should gain a full command of his language," and adds "...this is a sound democratic slogan. It is not its aim that everyone should become an artist, but no one should become a slave."**

In his book Rodari provides many concrete approaches to arousing imagination and fantasy in children, so that they may always be creative, sincere, active, inventive, and capable of social action. Adults playing with children possess a certain advantage: they have extensive experience, know the essence of the game and the means for achieving success. Yet there is something that adults can also learn from children; especially in theatrical improvisations children react spontaneously and possess a heuristic capacity for finding the correct word, text or even subtext. This is why adults can "overtake" their small partners in games only by recalling their own long-forgotten experience from a distant past. Each equal participant (big and small) in a collective game contributes to the general movement of thought. This is the higher equality of joint social creativity. And this should be remembered by every teacher.

Much is said about childhood. Rousseau and Tolstoy considered children to be a primeval image of good, harmony and beauty. Dostoyevsky and Gorky noted with sadness that children could be cruel. They spoke from a position of defence of childhood, which they stressed has a need for sensitive and kind teachers.

In this respect Tolstoy and Rousseau, as well as Gorky and Dostoyevsky, found countless opponents. Their philosophy is that one should be strict with children, and that occasional thrashing is for their own good. A child should not be pampered, this will do him good in dealing with life's hardships.

As one studies the history of human destinies one continuously asks oneself eternal questions. Where is the boundary after which primeval good and beauty begin to be tarred with evil? At what point does a naturally harmonious being begin

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* *Ibid.*, pp. 170-71.

* *Ibid.*, p. 6.

to turn into an unscrupulous money grabber, a vicious woman, a traitor, or a sadist?

Where is that boundary beyond which good turns into evil, and childhood, lowering its original line of flight, gathers speed in pursuit of evil?

Where are the sources of these metamorphoses to be sought: are they biological or social?

Human history provides numerous examples of the fact that specific social conditions can distort the normal course of childhood and produce characters that henceforward reproduce themselves on and on in increasingly ugly forms. Millions of people in Nazi Germany were examples of such a crippled fate.

Childhood is created by social environment which introduces its amendments in heredity. It either destroys harmony or consolidates it. It either sullies it or cleanses it.

But social factor cannot operate independently of natural ones. The key to the mysteries of childhood, and perhaps the secrets of upbringing as well, lies in an integral unity of social and biological factors. Upbringing is a social phenomenon that also involves the biological aspect. Forms of upbringing that do not take biological factors into account, thus ignoring the very nature of childhood, are doomed to failure. In the present context the term biological factors refers not to physiological growth but to the specific psychological state that characterizes childhood. The biological intensity of the development of today's children also determines new forms of socialization. The concept of man's boundless possibilities is more than mere words. But this capacity is destroyed if biological factors are not taken into account. There is no guard board that will signal overload pressures on a child's integral unity. It is the function of the teacher to define stages in the development of such a unity and encourage it. It is the teacher who is always engaged in a synthesis of the biological and the social, and who is always in search of optimal ways to organize the entire process of socialization so that children's natural endowments are encouraged to blossom.

A strong-willed, temperamental, and choleric type of personality cannot always be soft, calm and inert, for its biological code continually programs outbursts in its communication with other people. Naturally these outbursts acquire a moral colouring and display specific moral aspects in interpersonal relations. A type of habitual response to one's own "outbursts" develops; for some this is regret and remorse, for others it

is indifference, and sometimes even a feeling of self-satisfaction with one's strength.

Naturally, all biological types lend themselves to socialization through upbringing and self-training. But that is another matter. The fact remains that from the point of view of social communication it is convenient to deal with a mild, calm, and balanced type of personality. And yet most often life gets its impulse from those who are given to outbursts, cause disquiet and arouse the mind's curiosity.

What relation can there be, one may ask, between social and biological factors in the case of games? Actually one that is most direct. When a child plays, he is independent of the intervention of adults. Games are one of the leading forms of socialization, of assimilating rules of joint living. And an individual's upbringing depends largely on whether the games that he plays are good or evil.

Soviet pedagogics is interested in creating games that are conducive to happy childhood, that help develop true citizens, and that ennoble the natural impulses of children.

We need neither "glass bead games", nor games that alienate children from their own selves.

We need games both as a method for developing creative activity in children, and as a way of perfecting the pedagogical skills of millions of teachers and parents.

5. GAMES AND WORK AS EDUCATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

Green rolling hills, lush vegetation, velvety fields, the warm earth, rough tree trunks, rippling streams, the clear sky, and the joyous bird songs—all have a direct bearing on the upbringing of children. For they all combine with children's games and become a part of them. Yet, in addition to the inspiration of nature children also require that of culture.

In Solenga I suddenly saw that games provide a powerful means for combining spiritual and natural principles. The games played in open spaces brought out the most diverse traits in children, their spontaneous inquisitiveness, fearlessness and absence of restraint, their tenderness and mercilessness. They rivaled with each other in being honourable. No allowance was made for age, mental abilities, strength or weakness. Everything was governed by the rules of play: freedom to express one's self and fairness.

During the holidays I visited a summer camp for children whose director was our school teacher of physical education Aleksandr Serdelnikov. Everything around me was in motion. It was as if I had been pushed into a film comedy in which children raced to and fro past the observer with laughter and cries that reminded one of a seashore bird colony. In order to regain my composure I began to examine their bustle with a critical eye.

A group of children walked past a few steps away from me. It was led by a woman, wearing a red Pioneer tie, who could no longer be described as young. She was making desperate attempts to lend her movements a lively rhythm, swinging one hand as she sang, while holding a large bag in the other.

From time to time she looked back at the boys in her unit, shouting:

"Barashkin, step back into formation! Chaly, pull yourself together!"

I recognized Barashkin as a pupil from our school. He was probably making the most of it teasing the counselor. Every now and then he would slip out of formation, scoop water from the river into his hands and splash himself and his friends on the back.

Next, the woman ordered the unit to stop. Irritated, she turned to a girl, evidently the unit's leader:

"Tanya, it is impossible to continue like this; Barashkin and Chaly are behaving outrageously. Something must be done."

Tanya gravely commanded:

"Barashkin, leave the formation! Chaly, you too."

When both had left the formation the unit burst out laughing; Barashkin had decided to make faces, while Chaly had pulled up his pantlegs. The counselor then stated an ultimatum: either there would be discipline or Barashkin would immediately be sent home.

I do not know how this episode ended, for I left as quickly as possible; it was embarrassing to watch the conflict develop.

Shortly afterwards I ran into Barashkin, who had been expelled from the unit. I could not avoid voicing a reprimand:

"You should not let your school down, pal, that's bad."

Perhaps it was because I had addressed him as "pal", or possibly for some other reason, but suddenly Barashkin became very sad. I embraced him by the shoulders, and, as if he had been waiting for this, he buried his head in my chest and began to cry. I was lost and did not know what to do. I could feel

my shirt growing warm from his tears.

"Will you tell my father?" he suddenly asked.

"I'm not going to tell your father anything," I replied.

Immediately Barashkin became cheerful. His tears vanished completely. This, too, surprised me.

At that moment I was called in to see Serdelnikov. He explained that the first unit was now without a counselor and showed me the letter of resignation written by the woman who had rebuked Barashkin.

The unit was without a counselor. And I had nothing to do. Serdelnikov had therefore decided to entrust the unit to me, and assured me that another counselor would be found within a day or two.

There really were no alternatives. We soon decided to have a real vacation. First we constructed a raft and on the following day we left for a fishing expedition at five in the morning. The fish were biting well, and instead of returning for breakfast we sent a messenger with a note: "The fish are biting! We ask permission to..." In about forty minutes our messenger returned with a bag full of sandwiches. That evening, when everyone gathered for the daily report our unit was commended ... wor a day well spent.

Afterwards the children surrounded me and asked me to remain another few days. Serdelnikov, too, invited me to stay. He told me confidentially that he had already obtained the consent of my supervisors and that there was a direct advantage in my staying; I would earn an extra month of holidays. I agreed to remain.

"Let's go fishing again tomorrow," Tolya Barashkin proposed.

"We want to go, too!" shouted the girls.

I looked at the boys. The younger ones stood a short distance to the side. Among them I recognized Vasya Chaly.

"Do you want to go, too?" I asked him.

"Very much..." he answered in a whisper.

"If we take the kids the raft will not hold all," Barashkin observed.

"We will build another one," I replied, "there are lots of logs around."

Someone laughed, "We will build an entire flotilla!"

We spent the next half hour thinking up a name for our flotilla and dividing the group into crews. That evening I informed Serdelnikov that the unit would now be called Sea Lion Flotilla, and that Tolya Barashkin would be its command-

er and Vasya Chaly its commissar.

The next morning we began to build first a wharf and then rafts. A short time later, when the raft *Variag* already had a mast with a flag, Serdelnikov approached our wharf.

"This is no longer a children's camp. It has turned into a logging industry. I will not have..."

"Aleksandr Vasilievich," I pleaded, "this is simply a game!"

Serdelnikov did not like to be challenged. Looking away from me he voiced his own position clearly:

"A game? It is slave labour! Forcing young children to carry logs. What will their parents say?"

"No one is carrying logs. The children are rolling them downshore and then floating them here on the river. They find this very interesting."

"What kind of fairy-tales are you inventing! Look instead at how this small boy is straining himself."

Vasya Chaly was approaching us, hauling a log behind him as if it were a barge. Serdelnikov walked up to him, loosened the strap and felt the marks that it had left on his shoulder.

"Does it hurt?"

"Not a bit," smiled Vasya.

"Now listen to me. Stop all this and go back to the camp." And turning to me Serdelnikov added, "As for you, take the entire unit to the camp's isolation ward for a medical examination."

In mentioning the isolation ward Serdelnikov, of course, laid it on thick. He was simply showing everyone that he ranked higher that I did in authority. In reply to my objections he sternly observed that so long as he was responsible for the children's safety and health he would not discuss the matter any further.

"Then there is nothing for me to do here, " I said as he was leaving.

He simply shrugged his shoulders. I was ready to leave the camp that very same minute.

Silently, as if they were guilty in some way, the children approached me. They looked at me with hope.

"Probably this really is difficult for you?" I asked.

"No, not at all! We could..."

"These logs do not even compare to the ones I carried when we were building our house!"

"As for me..."

I turned to Barashkin, "Call the unit together."

Without waiting for a command the children formed into

two rows as I inspected them. There were nothing more than a few scratches on their arms and legs.

"Well then, let's go forward to the isolation ward," I said. "But with a song..."

While the doctor was examining the children and colouring their limbs with a green antiseptic, an educational dispute was taking place in the Director's office. Serdelnikov argued as follows: the children should gain in weight, maintain their health and learn to manage Pioneer affairs. It was suggested that I turn to more refined activities such as building model ships from plywood and cardboard (which was unavailable), or rehearse for a concert.

"But if you insist on introducing some form of labour training," he turned to me, "then you can help the neighbouring state farm weed its potatoes."

Serdelnikov spoke as if he were reading my mind.

"You say that games should merge with work. Well then, play at weeding.... I have already mentioned this at school; work is a serious matter, and to combine it with play is unpedagogical."

"Children's work without games, without happiness and satisfaction, is pure nonsense!" I replied abruptly, having decided not to stand on ceremony; if he dismisses me then let it be!

Our argument was resolved by the doctor,' Dina Ivanovna. She said that the children were healthy, that they had a hearty appetite, and that her own son does not give her a moment's peace—he, too, wants to join that flotilla.

I returned to the unit and related part of our conversation with the Director.

"We know," Vasya Chaly interrupted me with a wink. "Tomorrow we'll go to work."

"Work is not the word for it," I said. "We have to prove that we can do other things besides playing."

We then discussed the plan for the following day's expedition into the field.

"And the day after tomorrow," I told them, "we will sail along the river for a day or two on our rafts."

After supper we rehearsed the details of our trip to the field several times. When Vasya Chaly gave the signal, by raising a pennant on a long pole, all the crews would run up to Tolya Barashkin in an agreed order.

The next morning a truck arrived from the state farm. Before Serdelnikov had time to even say two words the boys responded to Chaly's signal and rushed into the back of the

truck from both sides.

"You have really drilled them," said the driver. "I thought it would take them a couple of hours to get ready."

Serdelnikov smiled with pleasure.

...While the unit next to us was still counting its rows of potatoes our own "crews" had taken their fields by storm and did not pause until they were finished. From time to time Chaly moved the unit's pennant to a new position.

By noon we had completed work on our own sector. After we each completed one more row we walked over to the second unit.

The second unit's counselor was scolding a young boy who refused to work.

"Just look at this Pioneer!" she turned to Serdelnikov. "He does not want to help the state farm, 'I am not a tractor,' he says, 'I am not made of iron.' "

Serdelnikov remained silent.

"You should be ashamed of yourself!" the counselor continued. "Who taught you to say such things? We will have to discuss this at our council meeting or perhaps write to your school. Why don't you look at how the first unit's Pioneers are working?"

We did not wait for the truck and returned to our wharf on foot. That evening at the general gathering Serdelnikov greatly praised our unit. At that point Tolya Barashkin stepped forward and announced in a loud clear voice:

"Comrade Director, tomorrow our Sea Lion Flotilla is leaving for a two-day trip. It invites you on board its flagship, the *Variag*!"

That evening at dinner I was a guest of Serdelnikov.

"What remarkable boys!" I exclaimed. "So much tact, and good sense!"

"They are all right," Serdelnikov agreed. "We do not treat them fairly at school, we are too strict."

"And Barashkin, what a good organizer!"

"A born leader," Serdelnikov laughed.

I then learned that Barashkin was a distant relative of Serdelnikov. I also learned that Serdelnikov really liked this kind of work with children. It was now late at night, and I felt great happiness sitting there in the small room and speaking freely about what had been on my mind. Serdelnikov now seemed to me to be the best of all persons. How wonderful

it was that I had been invited to the camp. Gradually my embarrassment for having previously misunderstood Serdelnikov dissipated.

6. AN ORDINARY SCHOOL LESSON: WHAT SHOULD IT BE?

Having returned to school after the Pioneer camp, I shared with Parfenov my views on methods of play in school practice.

"One should try to combine play with learning," I argued. "In play we find the principle of volunteer effort, deep involvement and interest. Learning, on the other hand, is based on the fulfilment of duties and on mandatory requirements that children do not always find interesting. Play can contribute an element of fascination, and help overcome fatigue..."

I was trying to convince Parfenov, and although he did say: "Well, then try it," he nevertheless made a repeated warning:

"You cannot combine games with learning. These two things do not mix."

Yet I did try to combine them. It was then that my first conflicts with other teachers, and also with Parfenov himself, began.

It was only much later that I began to study theory.

I later learned about the aesthetic aspect of games in Kant's theory, and about Schiller's conception of games, which states that man is truly himself only when he is playing. Also the view of Johan Huizinga, the Dutch culturologist, who believed that man expresses his very essence in games and examined possible game interactions such as games and myths, games and attitudes of seriousness, and the culture-forming function of games.

It was also later that I read Plekhanov's views concerning the connection between games and work in man's cultural and historical evolution.

Today we see the interconnection between games and creativity, games and man's development, everywhere—in art, in education and in culture. Play becomes a method of overcoming standards and formalism.

But then, in the schools of the 1950s, the situation was altogether different.

In Parfenov's school the word "lesson" held magic in it. At that time it seemed to me that the process of lessoning meant more than the teacher himself, or the author the lesson was devoted to, or even the spiritual values with which I was supposed to fill the children's hearts. A lesson was made up of parts: first, there was the organizational element ("Children, stand up, straighter! Good, take out your text books, don't be so noisy! How many times must you be told!" And then my icy stare, and pause until the sparks in the children's eyes were extinguished; good, they all vanished, now we could begin!); and second, the questioning. What a word incidentally, it sounds like inquisition; and what a contrast when you combine the words "questioning" and "children"; one feels a dusty void in that "questioning", deadening children's faces, as it were, and their serene but inquisitive minds. The questioning—that parrot-like rehashing of the text, their shifting from one foot to the other, and their immense boredom. I, as the youngest and least experienced teacher, sought to imitate my older colleagues and to ask at least as many questions (more, if possible). That was why I would ask two pupils to write their answers in outline on the classboard and two others to write their answers to questions written on cards, one more pupil answered directly to me at my table and two more contributed what the one at the table did not know. So seven persons in twelve minutes—that was a normal rate and even a good one. As the lesson's wheel moved on I would plan the way in which to begin today's lecture; I had first to formulate the lesson's aim. I would explain the aim, while the children, exhausted by the questioning, hardly attended sleepy and indifferent.

All of this was followed by an analysis of my lesson and the Director's principal observation: generally not bad, except that home assignments were given after the bell rang. Dear Parfenov, a delicate, sensitive man as you were, you somehow lost the element of creativity in this blind adherence to rigid organization and to methodologies that put above all the structure of individual lessons rather than their essence and the awakening of interest in schoolchildren.

Teaching is like love. It is a form of love. Just as it is impossible to love by order, so one cannot communicate in accordance with a specified pattern. Different educational principles matured somewhere within me. Somewhere their tiny rivulets started their way out, flowing from my very soul. Unfor-

tunately I understood this only later. At that time I was making efforts to conform to the pattern, not to neglect the "organizational element" that actually only confused my pupils.

7. THE INDIVIDUAL APPROACH

I wish to stress once again that my memory operates in a goal-oriented manner; it highlights elements that are of vital concern to me today.

Today's pedagogics possesses a major shortcoming: it seeks to limit itself to school activities, but these do not extend to the entire educational process. This brings to mind Konstantin Ushinsky's wise words in his article "Concerning the National Principle in Social Education": "The influence on character development of education based on abstract or foreign foundations ... will be much weaker than will a system created by the nation itself....

"It is neither pedagogics nor teachers, but the nation itself and its great representatives who carve the path into the future; education only follows that path and, acting together with other social forces, helps individual personalities and new generations follow that path....

"Public education can be effective only when its problems become social problems for all and family problems for each. Systems of public education divorced from social conviction will be ineffective no matter how cleverly they may be designed, and will influence neither the nature of individuals nor that of society....

"An activation of public opinion with regard to education offers the only sound basis for all corresponding improvements; where no public opinion concerning public education exists there will be no progress of public education, even though there may be numerous educational institutions."*

The central problem of present-day pedagogics (I believe I am not mistaken in this) is that of ensuring a more individual approach in school matters. Of course, the teaching process in schools must be uniform. Still, initially a teacher should pay the greatest attention to his pupils' personalities, their mental gifts and abilities and their inner world. This requires a skilled and gifted educationist. One may object (and many have done so) :

* K. D. Ushinsky, *Izbrannye pedagogicheskie sochineniya (Selected Pedagogical Works)*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1953-54, pp. 110-11, 123.

"One cannot be oriented on talent. Where will you find so many gifted teachers?"

I can only answer this as follows:

"Each teacher can develop his abilities to the highest level."

In short, two ways are available—an orientation toward the highest level of teaching skills and an orientation toward students' individuality.

In recent years I held seminars on classroom practice for teachers from different schools.

"To become a remarkable teacher," I would say, "one merely has to know two things: how to understand childhood as a specific psychological state based on unbounded energies and a need for self-realization; and how to combine play and work in one's creative activities."

I referred to the paradoxical thought of an English teacher who stated that in order to teach one must throw away all pedagogics and replace it with play. I do not share his views although I am convinced that play (role playing and non-role playing, improvisation, dramatisation, inventiveness) can make the life of both students and teachers truly interesting and creative in ways that encourage involvement.

In his *Grammatica della fantasia* Gianni Rodari has shown the manner in which the invention of fairy tales can help children solve the major problems of creative education. I agree with Rodari. But I believe that there are also deeper connections which exist between a child's psychological state and that of a teacher seeking to make use of fantasy as a method for developing both the physical and intellectual powers of a child. In my own case, for example, it was a revelation to learn that such great writers as Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Faulkner told children a variety of stories, including fantastic ones, in order to present in an accessible form their own most cherished thoughts, the life of which they dreamed and the gnawing reflections that gave them no peace.

At a certain stage of my development as a teacher I suddenly realized that play activities themselves should rest on such whales as the teacher's sense of civic responsibility, his striving to find truth, kindness and beauty in this world, in himself and in children.

My very first year in school completely transformed my inner self, my mode of behaviour and my entire character. I found myself in a turbulent stream whose force was greater than my own. It carried me along in spite of my own wishes. Most probably that stream would have drowned my recently

acquired calling had I not begun to search for the origins of play activities.

I intuitively recognized that one should understand the nature of childhood through one's own primeval emotions and I sought to establish why I was attracted to children and why they were drawn to me. My thoughts continually turned to the past and I suddenly realized that my own need to play and fantasize was linked to the deepest and most secret layers of my emotions.

What a connection there was here with my former life, when I lived with my mother in a small room with a small window and the subsequent secret knowledge that no one should learn that you live in a small room, moreover one with a small window. People are ashamed of poverty; that is the tradition and such is life when one does not play. Actually, there is no life at all when one does not play. And my mother's words are always on my mind: "Do not feel shy, as long as there is life there will be everything—including larger rooms and bigger windows." "It is even better this way," I replied. "Everything is small as in a fairy-tale." And in that fairy-tale I found pleasure in reading Andersen, Pushkin, Tolstoy, Dumas, and Wells. In fact, there were few authors I did not read in our modest home, and each stimulated hope, imagination and dreams—and that was already a genuine game. And how closely that game came to be linked with my future life when I left our tiny room in search of myself within the vast game-playing and non-game-playing streams of life.

Let us pause at this point, for this is an important subject and I would like to show the inherent connection between play and non-play activities. I will try to analyze several life situations in order to establish the origins of pedagogical elements, including the corresponding aspects of play.

I recall the inner courtyard of the house at 34 Grekovskaya Street in Kharkov, where, as a student, I lived in the corner of a small room that I rented from Alexandra Nikolayevna Zlobina—a majestic woman. She lived together with her daughter, Efrosinya Fyodorovna, who was a doctor and whose own son, Volodya, was my age. I eventually left them because I found myself unable to repay their kindness—I am not even certain whom they loved more, Volodya or myself.

Everyone in the courtyard knew me and I liked to exchange

a few words with everyone.

"How is life, today?" I would ask Grigoriyevna, who was walking towards the clothes-line carrying a basin under her arm.

"What life can we old people have? It is youngsters like you who have a life to live, as for us..."

It crosses my mind that there was a time when Grigoriyevna was different. Today her husband, Matveich, sits in a grey greasy raincoat (even in the summer when it is hot), wearing a cap, always holding his cane and always staring at the same spot. He had been an accountant, and later a worker doing odd jobs. Now he spends the entire day sitting silently on a bench. He is seriously ill and his slightly swollen face expresses only suffering.

"Matveich was probably handsome in his youth. Indeed his facial features are striking."

"He was a military man," and Grigoriyevna is transformed as if a wave from the distant past reached her. "If you could only have seen how he rode horseback, and turned down from his saddle... One day I nearly fainted. He was riding and then suddenly his head is down under the horse's belly; he killed himself, I thought, but he was riding normally again as if nothing had happened," and Grigoriyevna's eyes were sparkling.

And then Uncle Vasya comes out into the courtyard wearing a T-shirt. His chest is pure bronze, and it is difficult to believe that his arms are those of a normal man, they are rather like a massive mold sculptured in a modernistic style; all proportions have been distorted as it were, his palms are three times larger than mine, and as for his muscles—I have never seen their likes. I ask him:

"Uncle Vasya, is it true that you can lift a one-and-a-half-ton truck with one hand?"

"Of course, where is it?" Uncle Vasya smiles, "but first let's play a game of dominoes." To Uncle Vasya a game of dominoes is the greatest source of pleasure. It transforms him completely and, like a child, he becomes angry if he loses, and radiates with pleasure when he manages to win in an elegant manner.

I liked everyone in that courtyard, all of the people whose entire lives had been spent there. I liked their fates. Children knew the lives of each of its families. This kind of life nourished them, exerted pressures, hurt them, renewed their strength, gladdened and pained them. In my talks with the children I sought to draw their attention to the remarkable qualities

that these simple people possessed; these people, whose attitude towards me was one of kindness and whom I truly loved. What was the unexpected force that guided my playful conversations with the children concerning the courtyard's unusual everyday life? I do not feel able to answer that complex question. I can only say this, that unless play is guided by a highly spiritual content it will always degenerate. This applies, it seems to me, to all games, even to the business games that are currently being studied by so many research scientists.

...Today it is my turn to cook the soup. As I carry an enamel pail full of water, a knife and a bag of potatoes to the arbour in the courtyard the children run towards me and I begin to tell them stories, some invented and some real. Sitting motionless beside me are Tolik, little Katya, and Grishka from the neighbouring courtyard, as well as Kolya, who is almost a grown up lad—all captivated by my narrative. As I toss the potatoes into the pail splashing water in all directions, little Katya winces and presses her lips together, her cheeks aflush.

"I do not need your help, I will achieve everything by myself!" This, from a critical part in my story. It is about a boy who lived in a house without windows. But he was so good and pure that his heart shone, and this light enabled him to read and write, and although the light was invisible it made him so strong that he could lift two heavy trucks simultaneously.

"Just like Uncle Vasya," Katya interjected with great seriousness and resignation.

"Just like Uncle Vasya," I agreed, "but even stronger because it was a magical light. The boy then mounted a horse but an artillery shell was fired and he vanished. His enemies looked and saw no boy only his head was hanging under the horse's belly. Dead, it seems. But actually, as soon as the shell had been fired the boy had pressed the horse between his legs and dived down under the belly—this was a trick he had practised many times."

"There really is such a trick," comments Grigoriyevna's nephew, and everyone looks in the direction of Matveich.

"When his enemies saw that the boy was again on his horse, they became so angry that their legs turned into wood; they could neither bend nor unbend them. The boy continued to ride until suddenly a light flared in his soul as he sensed that in a moment he would see little Nellie, who had been kidnapped by the wooden-legged enemies. And indeed a formation of

wooden enemies suddenly appeared on the road. By that time even their heads had turned to wood and sawdust trickled from their ears and nostrils making the road yellow in colour, just like that," and I point to the sawdust by the carpenter's door. "A coach rode behind them carrying Nellie. When she saw the light of a close friend she began to cry from happiness and also because she was afraid that the enemies would seize the boy and execute him.

"As for the boy, he hid in the bushes plucking the petals off a daisy: if the number of petals is even he will fight the enemies and if it is odd he will wait for a while. But when he reached the next to the last petal, light flowed from his chest and took the form of a human voice: 'You should be ashamed to ask yourself whether you should save another human being or not!' The boy cried from shame and threw himself at the formation. But everyone there continued to stand at attention, for everything within them had become wooden, and while they would have liked to seize the boy they could not move a hand. They could only push him with their bodies, but with no result. It then occurred to them (for some bits of brains had remained among the sawdust) that they could perhaps crush the boy and cause their horses to stamp on him with their hooves. But the boy grasped the coach in one hand, and, giving Nellie just enough time to jump out, began to wave it about like a clothes-line. The horses neighed, the coach's shafts struck the enemies' wooden bodies, and the coach broke into a thousand pieces so that it could only be used to make a tool box. The boy seized Nellie and seated her on his horse. As they trotted away Nellie asked: 'But how did you know that I was in the coach?' 'I sensed it. When you believe strongly in something you also sense everything correctly.' 'But how did you sense it?' 'My heart began to beat strongly, and my chest felt warm. I thought: "I am sure that any moment now I will see Nellie." 'And I, too, thought that as soon as we reached the rock over there I would be sure to meet you.' 'It always happens this way when you love someone very strongly,' replied the boy."

I am so serious that a shiny glitter appears in the children's eyes. Katya's flush deepens as she draws closer to me and confides:

"I, too, can think of things. I think of something and it then comes true."

The boys look at Katya without breaking in and wait for me to go on with my story, but their mothers and grandmothers

are already calling them: "Tolya, Kolya, it is time to come home!" and my reply: "Just a sec! Yes, right away!"....

I now invite the reader to reflect a little with me. In the course of time, states of the highest inner intensity accumulate within a creative person's psychological "baggage". And it is precisely these states that can appear as new facets in a game. In actual life such states may be produced by suffering, but in play activities they emerge in a new light as an aesthetic renewal, as a catharsis. No teacher can live without poetry. Unless he is able through play, to even slightly distance himself from his own suffering and to protect himself, if in the least degree, by assertive aesthetic intonations, his human essence will be destroyed. The spiritual force of play elements long continues to be a source of comfort. For play holds hope, and anticipation of pleasure.

I have known skilled teachers and have had many conversations with them. These were people who had lived a strenuous life, filled with searchings, successes and failures in communicating with children. They shared a breadth of interests, a love for man, and an insurmountable need for creativity, but this was impeded by the bustle and routine of the numerous school duties, and occasionally by stereotyped constraints.

In order for play activities to become effective allies of schools, children, society and the state, one must not be afraid to go beyond the boundaries of constraints and encounter unexplored interfaces. One must make an in-depth analysis of play activities and this calls for a knowledge not only of psychology and sociology, philosophy and genetics, the theory of management, and systems approach, but also of the way in which psychological elements that are specific to children combine with those that are specific to adults; how unconscious impulses grow into goal-oriented conscious creativity, and intimate personal elements of some stimulate the creative energies of many.

In teaching, as in poetry, a person's ability to create is realized only when his spiritual forces develop to the full. It is during these moments that genuine discoveries are made.

Only through high spiritual development can the teacher become closer to a child's heart. At times a teacher is unaware that it is precisely a need for purity that draws him closer to children.

It is in this context that I will turn to perhaps the most impor-

tant point. It was my painful search for the origins of play activities that brought me to the hidden sources within my own self that contained the best of what my soul had accumulated: my dreams, my hopes, my love.

It is to this that I will now turn.

8. A TEACHER'S HEART MUST BE NOURISHED BY LOVE

I recall the remarkable rainy day when coming home thoroughly drenched I was greeted by the kind voice of my landlady, Aleksandra Nikolayevna, inquiring whether I would like some hot tea.

"No thank you, I must go. I am in a hurry."

"Should you in such weather?"

"No, no, I must go."

As I went out into the evening rain I felt a warmth in my chest, for somehow I felt completely certain that around the corner on which Zeida sold cigarettes each morning (he was a tiny old man who gave me cigarettes on credit) I would meet Olya. But, at the same time, I also felt slightly doubtful: "What nonsense, Olya does not know where I live. She lives in a different world; she has never lived in a small room, so I am simply imagining things..." But this feeling of doubt was very weak, while the hope that she would be there, around the corner across the street from the barber shop, was almost a certainty. The barber had once very accurately foretold my future: "There is so much happiness in store for you." "What makes you think so?" I had asked, and he replied: "You will see." Well, I faltered as I approached the fence on the corner of Rybnaya and Grekovskaya streets. I could imagine Olya walking around the corner, her light blue coat, high fur collar, her infinitely beautiful face, the unusual slant of her eyes and the luminous fragrance around her that absorbed everything, and me as well, and I would be dissolved in the feeling of happiness that she radiated. I slowly turned the corner, and indeed I saw Olya walking towards me.

Words failed me. I was completely stunned. She sensed my confusion, but fortunately darkness would not let her see my eyes.

"I came out to meet you," I said.

"That's wonderful."

"I cannot understand how one can sense such things."

"I, too, felt certain that you would meet me."

I could see her hand even though she held it in her pocket. Her entire soul seemed to radiate from that hand. It was that hand that conquered me six months ago. The moment she quietly placed it on my palm, the moment that she touched me with her tiny fingers, I thought: "For the sake of that touch I am ready to walk into any fires as long as I live." And in an instant that feeling was transmitted to her. Perhaps against her own will she was drawn towards me forever.

I felt dizzy. Two days earlier I had finished the last remaining portion of noodles. Since then I had not eaten. That was why my legs were wobbly, and somehow this made my feeling of happiness even more intense.

While Olya was describing an orchestra conductor, a concert which she had been out to and still other things, I revelled in the sound of her voice and felt happy, for I still could not recover from my odd intuition. I do not remember what Olya told me nor how we arrived. We walked up the stairs. I stood on a small mat that absorbed the water from my feet. I was offered tea and I heard someone inviting me to a birthday celebration. I fell asleep on a couch and when I awakened I saw my shoes and socks drying in a corner. They were out of place in this room. I felt that utter helplessness and dull pain that overwhelmed me could be seen in my eyes. But what was most frightening was that I knew that Olya sensed what I felt, and that it was painful for her to know that I knew this. She left the room. I quickly put on my shoes.

"You mustn't," Olya stopped me, "You have a fever."

"No, I will go."

Olya accompanied me for a short distance. She turned to me as we reached the other side of the house. Her fragrant radiance engulfed me and I seemed to become weightless. I heard myself speaking and asking for something, while Olya asked in reply:

"And what will happen next?"

I did not know what would happen next. I staggered home.

Life's lessons produce layers within man that constitute his spiritual essence. And subsequently, it is precisely this spiritual element that will form the core of his moral force.

Once again my mind turns to Kharkov and I see myself entering the courtyard.

Small children flock about me.

"Please tell us the next part of that fairy-tale."

"All right, come closer, all of you. Today's episode will be especially interesting."

And as if they are enchanted my small birdies fly towards me as I begin to tell them how Nellie learned that her friend lived in a tiny room. She embraced him and kissed him and then said: "Farewell. We will never see each other again for I cannot be friends with someone who does not even have a proper room."

"And that is all," I add.

The children are silent. Never before have my fairy-tales ended in such an awkward way. Tolik looks at me as if I have stolen his most precious possessions: two bolts, a broken switch and a new rubber band for his slingshot. Kolya is silent. He has not understood a thing and is weighed down by my own unexpected sadness. Everyone is silent, including Katya. But then she states with conviction:

"This is a bad fairy-tale."

"That is not true," I reply. "Was the entire fairy-tale bad?"

"No. At first it was good."

"It was ruined because of that Nellie," Tolik adds.

"No, it was not," I say. "The fairy-tale is good and so is Nellie. It is simply that a spell has been cast on her by one of those with the wooden legs and sawdust heads. And in my next story, I will free her from the spell."

"Be sure to remove the spell," says Katya as she claps her hands.

And once more I asked myself: how did this need to communicate with children develop? Why did I feel such delight at mingling with them?

Could it be because in some respects they were closer to me than adults? Or because it is possible in an indirect way to share one's own feelings with them? Or is it because I was captivated by the purity of their own world as one can be captivated by the purity of the sky and the transparency of sea water—it may seem that there is nothing special about them and yet one can watch them for hours and feel drawn to their primeval living force and feel rejuvenated and rested from that form of contact. The longer one lies on the green or sandy bank of a river and the longer one runs along the resil-

ient and cool sand beach, the water licking your bare feet, the more happiness one feels; a type of happiness that will continue to live within you throughout the year until the next grass, the next beach, and the next walk in the sea's cool waters.

Or is it that my tendency to fantasize could only realize itself among children, since they accepted any fiction providing that it expressed a living thought.

9. A TRUE TEACHER ENJOYS COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN

It was later that I would begin to reflect on the mysteries of the need to communicate with children. In responding to that need one's very essence craves for the purity that only children have, but such a feeling can arise only on one condition, namely, that one gives in return the best within oneself. No emotions other than those that are absolutely the highest are needed in order that barriers vanish.

No, this is not self-sacrifice. But rather a happy discovery of the teacher within oneself, or more precisely, of new active principles. I expected that my discovery would make everyone happy. But in actual life not everyone shared my raptures and my novel ideas. Moreover, I, too, began with something else.

...I am walking straight along the corridor and am looking down out of the corner of my eye to see who there is not yet silent. And under my gaze, as in the case of other teachers, everyone trembles with fear. As I enter the classroom I freeze everything with my stern stare. I open the class register but, at the same time, keep my eyes on Romuskov who sits in the last row. And simply for the sake of general order I say quietly, hardly moving my lips: "Romuskov, making trouble again..." Romuskov quickly and timidly adjusts his books, though they had already been lying neatly, and grumbles something to himself. In the meantime, looking at the class register I quietly and slowly ask Romuskov to rise. As he does the entire class is quiet; that is discipline, order, and now I can work. And a few weeks later other teachers will tell me: "Well, you have succeeded in what matters most; you have taken control of the class."

To my inexperienced ear the words "taken control" resounded like a victory, and yet to take control is not the same thing as to gentle in the sense of Saint-Exupéry, to win a person's liking in Tolstoy's sense, to awaken in the sense of Chernyshevsky. It is to override the will and wishes of another. It is only later that I understood that teaching activities can develop in two directions. The first is based on natural authority, in the sense of the authority that I commanded when telling children fairy-tales. This is an emancipative, unrestricted development in which spiritual values become a means of communication, of uniting and drawing closer, and which opens paths to human freedom and ensures the full play of a personality's spiritual and physical forces.

The second is authoritarian. It places emphasis on constraint and on strengthening various forms of dependence on the teacher.

I have often asked myself why is it that many great writers were so attracted to children?

What explanation is there why Tolstoy, not Tolstoy the artillery officer, but Tolstoy the great writer and philosopher who had already written *War and Peace*, was so drawn to children and spent so much time with them. ("Now bring up some mud from the river bottom, Your Excellency," a peasant boy orders, and to redeem his forfeit grey-haired Tolstoy dives, brings up some mud and shows it to the other children, then someone would shout "Sacks on the mill!" and everyone fall in a heap on the Count.) And the great author received untold happiness from his play with these delighted children.

There is also the case of William Faulkner, a most talented American writer who, as a scoutmaster, created something like a children's colony. He would spend hours each evening telling the children fairy-tales. It seems to me that the more outstanding an author, the deeper he understands childhood psychology and the stronger is his need to be with children. In effect, that need is a measure of his degree of culture and of society's spiritual development.

In all countries, progressive forms of pedagogics are creating humanistically oriented games. In the very first years of the founding of the Soviet State, Nadezhda Krupskaya, an experienced revolutionary and gifted educator, the wife and associate of Lenin, actively supported the development of games designed to educate future citizens and working people. It was her view that games were mostly evaluated in terms of some specific type of activity, physical education or technical

creativity, while there was a need for games that would foster the team spirit in children and would serve their spiritual development and enrichment.

Games serve to put to use a reserve energy potential that Anton Makarenko, an outstanding Soviet educator, described as "a major key". And today Soviet pedagogical practice makes wide use of this potential not only at school but also at summer Pioneer camps for rest and work. This is vividly apparent at the widely known international children's camp Artek.

I groped for my understanding of game empirically. At some point I defined that in order to come closer to the spiritual world of a child one should always remember the best experiences of one's own childhood. And that which one wishes to convey to children should be combined with the best experiences of one's childhood. We forget the shocks and discoveries that we experienced as children. We often betray that which was pure in our own development. We are occasionally embarrassed by the remarkable flashes of sincerity that we experienced in our childhood. We do not revive those states that were accompanied by children's tears, now expressing joy, now hurt feelings or purification.

When a teacher turns to his own childhood to revive the sensations of that age within himself he is brought closer to children and carries out his educational objective. This presents us with a certain contradiction. For, on the one hand, the posing of any educational goal betrays a rational approach, while on the other, sincerity and purity in approaching children removes the rational aspect, as it were. Frequently a teacher's creativity becomes an art. And here, any paradoxes or violations of logic can only help establish what is most important—whether the teacher's efforts yield results.

And a final observation. The development of a teacher's skills requires constant effort and patience, as well as fearlessness. One's calling must withstand a long series of challenges. What is most difficult is to overcome one's own inner constrait, and a tendency towards authoritarianism.

10. OVERCOMING ONE'S OWN AUTHORITARIANISM

Among my ninth-grade students, who were generally not very tall, Vanya Zolotykh was altogether tiny. This was

emphasized by the way in which he was dressed and by the way he carried himself.

He sat by himself in the first row, wearing a pale-green shirt with blue dots. Buttoned to the very top, its tight collar jutted into his chin. His worn grey jacket was also too small, revealing the cuffs of his shirt sleeves. Perhaps that was the reason Vanya hid his broad, reddish hands.

Short but thickset, wearing patched felt boots and eager to please, he looked straight into my eyes and I could not tell what his look expressed with greater force: devotion or understanding.

The subject of the lesson was to describe the image of Andrei Bolkonsky in Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace*. Vanya spoke faintly and slowly as if expressing doubt after each word. I, on the other hand, asked him to speak loudly, for loudness, according to established school traditions, was an asset; it was supposed to indicate sureness of one's knowledge. That was why I tactlessly insisted, playing it smart for the rest of the class:

"Sound, make it louder!"

But Vanya, looking at me through his pure eyes, that strangely enough were also green with blue dots, merely widened them slightly as his lips began to move even more slowly.

"In reverse," I said humourously, without sparing his feelings, as if he carried a regulating knob in his pocket that could be turned in either direction.

The other children understood the meaning of "in reverse", and were nodding and giggling in approval how funny our teacher was. But Vanya shifted from foot to foot in his patched felt boots, his hands becoming even redder. His face began to burn and the fine fair down on his cheeks stood out more clearly. He continued to speak about Bolkonsky, the hero of *War and Peace*, describing how he fell mortally wounded and watched the clouds floating in the infinitely beautiful blue sky. Vanya quoted Tolstoy word for word, and I sensed that Prince Andrei Bolkonsky's suffering reached into his own soul, but at the same time I could not reconcile myself to the fact that Vanya was speaking in a faint voice. For this spoiled everything. What I wished to hear was a round of machine-gun fire as in the classes of other teachers that I have attended. This automatically produced the highest grade. I felt a prisoner to that standard and this made me forget that Vanya's voice had carried deeply meaningful intonations. I waxed on explain-

ing that one had to train one's voice and speech, use one's chest in speaking as well as one's throat (I demonstrated how one could shout without straining one's vocal cords), I mentioned Demosthenes, who used to put pebbles in his mouth to learn to speak distinctly. The children laughed, for they liked such digressions. But Vanya stood, unoffended, looking at me shyly as if he enjoyed my mockery, and his eyes seemed even more loyal. Perhaps for that reason my feelings towards him grew even warmer. I gave him a four plus and told him that his presentation had depth and understanding in reading Tolstoy. Vanya was radiant. He looked at me with loving eyes and nodded assentingly when I proposed to work with him after class.

"For some reason you are not sure of yourself, Zolotykh." (At that time I addressed all students by their surnames as was the general practice in schools. To address them by their first names was viewed as excessive familiarity and as a cheap way of winning popularity with the class.)

Vanya remained silent and lowered his long white eyelashes. He quietly stroked one hand with the other. He looked undisturbably calm, and that irritated me. Seeking to undermine his calmness I suggested:

"Perhaps that lack of sureness means a lack of knowledge, perhaps you cannot really imagine Bolkonsky?"

But how could Vanya imagine Bolkonsky? He had never even seen a city, had never left Solenga in his life.

"Try to imagine that Bolkonsky is someone that you know personally, that you value him for his noble qualities. How do you imagine him, whom does he resemble?"

Vanya opened wide his white eyelashes that shimmered in the sunlight in gold and silver tones. His green pupils expressed timid submissiveness.

"He is like you," Vanya replied.

I did not expect this and was almost taken off my feet. Of course, the authoritarian teacher in me was flattered. But my all too straightforward "fairness" continued lashing Vanya's burning cheeks.

"What are you saying, Zolotykh!" I burst out. But I felt sick fearing even to admit to myself that I had swallowed both the hook and the line.

Vanya looked at me as if he did not hear my voice and repeated:

"Bolkonsky is like you."

"Alright, Zolotykh, you can go. You can be sure I'll call on you next time."

Vanya did not hurry to leave, and remained as if frozen. Then he quietly gathered his books into a torn brown school bag and tied it with a long piece of string so that he could carry it over his shoulder to free his hands for ski poles; he was to ski home six kilometres. He bid me farewell and left.

One part of my self—the one that I left outside the school entrance—understood Vanya's vulnerable integrity, while the other, the classroom one, experienced a strong feeling of irritation. This ambivalence in my attitude towards Vanya expressed itself again a few weeks later when I was hunting with my friend Irinei. Actually, our hunting expeditions never amounted to much, but they did produce a semblance of hunting. I would arrive at Irinei's home the evening before the hunting and we would spend hours at the scales preparing powder, wads, cartridge cases and caps. We also prepared our skis and clothing, doing everything as required. But we usually returned empty-handed. And on that occasion, too, there were no partridges, rabbits or foxes. But then it was interesting to talk with Irinei and hear his simple short answers.

We were lying in an old hay-loft made of logs and without doors or windows.

"There is one thing I can't understand," I said. "With such a natural potential, fresh air, and pastures, why is everything so undeveloped?"

"Have you ever visited a village in our North?" asked Irinei.

"Well?"

"There is one some three kilometres from here in that direction. We'll be there in no time and you'll see for yourself."

The village spread along the bank of a small river. We were standing on a hill, chimney smokes rising straight up from some of the log houses below. As we skied down we discovered that the very first house was that of Vanya Zolotykh.

Vanya was embarrassed, blushed, and invited us to come in. Even though the house seemed very large from outside, inside there was one large room with a Russian stove, wooden benches, an old icon in the corner, and a score or so of photographs in a single frame hanging on the wall. A man was sleeping curled up on the floor near the stove, his head resting on the sleeve of his sweater. He was tiny in size, his face was reddish-black and wrinkled, and his hands, of the same colour, were freshly scratched.

"He has been drunk since last night," explained Anastasia, Vanya's mother. "Petya, wake up, we have guests!"

"He won't wake up," quietly commented an old woman sitting in a corner, who was untangling yarn. She looked ancient and greatly resembled Vanya. Her face resembled Vanya's by its calmness, and her movements, too, were similarly unhurried. While we were warming ourselves Vanya was helping his mother by the stove. And when the meal was ready Vanya's father had awakened. He rose, looked around the room and left for a moment.

At dinner Petya described how he caught fish, what good hay he had recently brought home and how he would soon have to carry more hay by the snow road. Vanya was flushed and tense as he listened to his father's words. His calm eyes seemed to be saying: "This is how we live... I sleep on the bench over there, sometimes on a mattress and sometimes without. There are not enough sheets for everyone, but then, we eat well. There is always fresh bread and codfish, potatoes and mushrooms, mainly milk-agarics and saffron milk caps. I do my lessons at this same table, as does my sister and my younger brother, Vasya. I help them do their lessons and my grandmother is pleased when I help them."

From time to time I glanced at Petya. He was helping himself with gestures trying to explain how he cut the grass, brought firewood, and caught a grayling. Vanya looked at me as if saying: "Don't be harsh on my Dad. Please understand him, as well as my Granny and my Mom...."

Suddenly something stirred within me that made me want to be congenial with Vanya's embarrassment and his grandmother's holiness, to say something kind and encouraging to Vanya. But instead I continued to chatter feeling sick of myself for this, I could not stop because my glib tongue was stronger than the tiny feeling that was lurking in the depths of my non-school self.

As Irinei occasionally nodded his approval of what I was saying I felt so intelligent, nothing less than a torchbearer of culture, and I went on and on, unable to stop and making everyone else silent. And I enjoyed my sermonizing. While I must have found different words, conveyed some warmth to Vanya Zolotykh so as to remove his embarrassed flush and let a different light come to his face. Perhaps I could have said simply that I, too, came from the human species, that there was only a small window in my room, that I slept in the same bed with my mother and that because of the freezing cold my mother always proposed that we lie back to back, in this way one becomes warmer more quickly. I have had such a light-filled room,

and even such a bench with a mattress, such a father and such a grandmother, for it was a great fortune for any man to be able to live with his own father and with such an uncomplaining grandmother who had seen so much during her long life.

Vanya's mother added some codfish to my plate and poured me tea.

Later Irinei and I slept on the floor. We declined an invitation to sleep on the warm stove, for we planned to leave early.

It the morning we took leave of the grandmother, Anastasia and Petya, and together with Vanya we proceeded along the frozen snow crust. It was blue, pink, and brocade white, and reflected the shimmering shadows of the pine trees. Vanya looked at the sky and proposed that we stopped, for the frozen snow crust would soon vanish; it would collapse as the sun continued to shine on it. Everyone awaited my decision and I said that we had to continue. Once more we did not find any game. We only saw a half-sick rabbit hopping sideways.

In the meantime the sun grew warmer, melting the snow and turning it into large glassy grains (as you stepped on it your foot sank to the ground). One could see red bilberries in the patches where the snow had thawed. Vanya gathered some and offered them to me:

"They are tasty and frozen. Now I'll find some cranberries."

There was pleasant and infinitely live freshness in the air. But it became impossible to move on. We had better stop and wait until the snow froze over!

I was utterly exhausted and my feeling of shame was increased by Vanya's presence. His eyes conveyed sympathy. There was not a trace of a smile or of superiority on his face. I already had blisters on my feet, and my back was wet, I stuffed my scarf and sweater into my backpack, and I felt ready to throw away both my cartridge belt and my gun. Vanya noticed that: "Let me carry the gun, give it to me." He also offered me his own wide skis—two scraped boards with slightly upturned ends, and two wide leather straps, with leather laces tied in the middle... I agreed "to try them on"—and it became easier to walk, but I was still ashamed. I was ashamed of my physical weakness as well as my omniscient chatter, and that I had offended Vanya at school. Yet Vanya forgave me everything, for he saw that I was ashamed: he seemed to straighten himself inwardly and stated reassuringly: "Just a little while longer, and then it will be easier."

Irinei, too, was red and silent, probably because he was angry at me. I had been told that we should wait and that there would not be any snow crust. He was tired, saving his strength, but occasionally he paused waiting for me and pointed to Vanya:

"None the worse for it he is."

I met Vanya on the following day as I was hobbling on my unbending legs to school. Now that he was once more Zolotykh the pupil he avoided me. In the meantime I had already donned my teacher's mask of superiority and informed him condescendingly:

"The hobby group will meet today, Zolotykh..."

At the group's meeting after class I was carried away once more. I was oblivious of realities as I uttered the longest phrases with many names and problems. I saw how the students' attention gradually dwindled; they did not understand what the new teacher was saying nor to whom he was addressing himself.

Vanya sat in the first row, as during the lesson. He was looking absent-minded to the side as he stroked his arm with his hand. Finally, I announced a break, and everyone rushed away except for Vanya Zolotykh and Zina Shugayeva.

Vanya remained at his desk as if nothing had happened, waiting for me to continue my story. But everyone had left and this meant that my story was not interesting. I felt engulfed in a feeling of shame that was made even more bitter by my knowledge that Vanya Zolotykh understood everything. I wished to remain alone and I said to him:

"The boys are waiting for you."

"They have already left."

"How will you go home alone?"

"I often do it."

"You are not afraid?"

"No."

I saw how Vanya disappeared into the darkness of the woods, and also Zina, together with a group of other girls who had waited for her. And I remained alone to face my pedagogic defeat.

A teacher's calling possesses its own soul. It develops through encounters with the souls of children, producing sparks of creativity, altering the teacher's entire world, as it were, and leading him to enter a new phase of his existence, that of discoveries and illumination.

11. THE GENERAL AND THE INDIVIDUAL IN TEACHING

Every pedagogical phenomenon is individual and specific in terms of its patterns and its shades. Accordingly, it requires that already established means be applied creatively.

What defines the uniqueness of pedagogical phenomena? The use of pedagogical methods is required by the logic of the process of interaction between adults and children, and each of these is unique and individual. In working with children educators take into consideration their particular characters and the level of development of relations within the collective.

A teacher may be said to have command of teaching skills when he applies individual means rationally, mindful of the specific conditions and situations. It is only in the context of actual situations that a method develops a living unique tissue of characters and relations, and interacts with other methods. Thus, a method may be viewed separately only in a conventional sense. A teacher is in full command of his skills when he is able to define and timely note the nature of this interaction.

In order to consciously develop one's teaching skills, a teacher must learn to distinguish both general, recurring, traits of children and those that are unique and individual.

Gilbert Highet, a well-known British pedagogue, argues approximately as follows: if you wish to influence children to a certain degree you must convince them that you know them individually. And the first step in that direction is a knowledge of names and faces... And the best way to know students is to divide them into types. Only experienced teachers succeed in doing this. A beginner first thinks that all students are different. Next he notes that Clark resembles Johnson and that Verney and Lennox react to problems in a nearly identical manner and even write almost similar essays. Then four or five years later the teacher notes another Clark in his class; he resembles the first Clark (but differs in that his hair is red), laughs at the same anecdotes and also writes in large letters. Except that his name is Macdonald and he comes from another place.

This will continue and with each year the teacher will discover different types of students. And after fifteen years he will already possess an entire gallery of types which either singly or in groups will match 85 per cent of the class. To classify stu-

dents by types is very difficult and in no case should this be simplified. Some teachers (unfortunately not many) begin this work in their first class. They begin to observe the most general character traits and seek hidden identical traits even among students that appear to be different, they compare them with earlier characteristics and observe their pupils's progress from grade to grade.

But even after a teacher has studied the basic types and subtypes he will always meet individuals who would not fit any class. This is both the joy and sorrow of teachers.

It should be noted that this classification, though definitely interesting, is largely based on subjective intuition.

Current pedagogical theory and practice make it possible to establish that each educator who wishes to acquire a full command of his skills employs a number of typical approaches. Let us list the most important ones:

an ability to correctly assess those processes which are taking place among children, within each individual child in various pedagogical situations;

an ability to analyze the relationship between the objective, means and the result;

an ability to organize the lives of children;

an ability to demand and trust;

an ability to quickly assess the situation and to switch the children's attention over to some other subject;

an ability to play with children;

an ability to identify that which is essential among diverse pedagogical facts;

an ability to rely on a variety of approaches within a given situation;

an ability to accurately convey one's mood, feelings and thoughts by words, facial expressions and body motions.

A high level of a teacher's skills implies an ability to apply not only specialized means but also methods that are based on a teacher's general level of training in such disciplines as psychology and social psychology, management theory and creativity theory. A teacher's knowledge of politics, art, sciences also develops through creative activities and self-education and this plays a very important role in his practical work.

Teachers usually progress gropingly in their profession. Each one asks the same questions: How to establish contact with children and with colleagues? How to win the children's favour? How to obtain a reliable picture of relations among children in a short period of time? How to make children comply with

the teacher's requests and do this with a will? How can a teacher maintain good form professionally and be reasonable in spending his energies?

To answer these questions the teacher has to display exceptional effort, persistence, a research-oriented mind, sincerity, directness, and honesty.

Recurrence is an objective condition for enriching the subjective factor in education and for developing the teacher's individual creative qualities. Recurrent pedagogical phenomena always serve to fill the store of both positive and negative experience. An analysis of one's own experience and a critical evaluation of actions plays a particularly important role in the development of one's teaching skills.

Practice points to the existence of two tendencies in analyzing recurring events in school life. On the one hand, we find a mechanical or "bad" repetition mainly attributable to empirical rationality in analyzing living facts, and on the other, we find repetition viewed from a dialectical position. Both the theory and practice of education largely depend on the way in which the problem of repetition is solved, dialectically or empirically.

12. A TEACHER'S SINCERITY AND TECHNIQUES

I am convinced that the most important features of an educator, and hence of the calling itself, are civic responsibility, culture, humanism, and professionalism.

Such a teacher is a true citizen, who responds to the concerns of his class, his district, his country and those of the entire human race. I fully agree with the often repeated idea that he is a citizen who has the gift of hearing his age. To this I would add an ability to discern the echoes of the past and voices of the future, and selfless service to the noble ideas of a world order based on justice.

It was this kind of civic responsibility, which no techniques can replace, that I strove to develop as I read pedagogical classics.

In one of his essays Makarenko described the teacher of literature Mefody Nesterov, who could exert a powerful influence on his students. He was a simple old man and children associated his appearance with that of Russia's passionately patriotic revolutionary democrats—Nikolai Chernyshevsky, Nikolai Dobrolyubov, and Nikolai Nekrasov. In describing heroic

events he used simple and precise words and seldom turned to explicitly emotional phraseology. Yet, there was so much feeling, truth and intelligence in his expressive face, and so much pent up inner force, that the children could not take their eyes away from his face, on which more than once they could see the tears of emotion. And they valued his sincerity and their faith in him was infinite.

There are many teaching methods in didactical science. But what system of means can describe a teacher's surge of emotion which influences what is best in children? What psychological teachings can explain and recommend as a method that spark of common impulse and convergence of views that can be observed in relations between adults and children and that may play the most important role in the moral development of both?

Far from being specific cases in teaching practice, such phenomena constitute those essential particles through which one can see the main thing—the teacher's ideological conviction, his patriotism, and the effectiveness of his style in communicating with children, working, teaching, and expressing his feelings.

Children respond to the teacher's sincerity when he addresses them not only as adults but also as citizens of their country. And it is this—the teacher's sincerity and open expression of feelings—that constitutes the inner core of an effective style of communicating with children.

There are teachers who advocate such sincerity in all situations and are categorically opposed to a reliance on teaching techniques. Natural feelings of this type are juxtaposed to "unnatural" ones restrained by reason, culture, and adopted rules of behaviour.

Yet, when we refer to "culture of feelings" we emphasize precisely the point that our natural emotions are placed in the frame of ethical norms which have been developed by the history of civilization, and which are assimilated by individuals in the course of their development. In the case of teachers, this also includes an ability to apply specific professional techniques in expressing their emotions.

In short, the problem of two alternative approaches to creativity—the use of techniques versus the natural manifestation of feeling—does not exist. The problem is rather to determine their relative proportions in the manner of Denis Diderot with respect to the theatrical arts in his famous *Paradoxe sur le comédien.*

Of course the actor and the teacher use different techniques.

While the actor relies on various forms of "reincarnation" when playing some other person, the teacher has no choice; he cannot hide from children his real face, his own self. For with the help of knowledge, emotions, and actions the teacher guides and regulates the social behaviour of his charges. Moreover, it is precisely his emotions that best bring out his value orientations, needs and motivations, desires and expectations and make visible the passion and devotion underlying his work and search for more knowledge. To say, of course, that a teacher must always be himself, that he must always sincerely share the joys and griefs of his charges without ever substituting techniques for emotions, is very attractive.

Yet both teachers and parents will agree that when facing conflict situations they must carefully consider their behaviour. Teachers must first "enter" into such situations and distinguish the essential components before defining their own line of behaviour. In such a context it is useful to recall similar situations in the experience of the given collective or examples described in pedagogical literature. In short, it is vital that one weigh and consider carefully one's words and actions. In addition it is important to consider how the class collective's resources may be organized to resolve the conflict; the children's idea of what is moral, their hatred of injustice, their propensity for action and their love of truth.

This occasionally requires a clear organization of one's self, including one's style in addressing children, raising one's voice, etc. Pedagogical techniques refer to corresponding forms of organization.

It should be stressed that when facing tense conflict situations experienced teachers apply such professional techniques in ways that at first appear to be spontaneous, because they are helped by both habit and acquired skills. But one should keep in mind that the dynamic character of conflict and the concrete situation may also call for an instantaneous change in the chosen techniques. This, too, will depend on the teacher's experience.

13. KNOWLEDGE OF WORLD CULTURE IS THE CORE OF EDUCATION

A feeling of purity came to me in Solenga that was especially precious after my painful experiences. I wanted to treasure that feeling and to begin a new life. And I threw myself at books,

reading them in a state of self-oblivion and always threatening someone mentally: "Just you wait! You'll see!" It did not matter who "they" were. I also threatened myself: "Just wait, I will beat everything out of you that is possible." And I threatened the children as well: "I will awaken you, and make you quiver with happiness and cry from your encounter with the purity that I will bring to you!"

The further development of my inner thoughts required some material. I turned to my tiny stock of cultural properties: a collection of postcards and reproductions of paintings, and some clippings from journals. These small relics were especially dear to me, they were permeated with memories of my childhood. I began to collect such "pictures" when I was no more than ten years old. My stepfather had many old journals and a stack of postcards tied with a string depicting various fantastic subjects: gods, nymphs, angels, warriors. The postcards, made of firm paper, almost cardboard, had a glossy surface and were cracking at the corners. They had golden edges that had worn away in places and smelled just as warm and musty as the old frayed books that I had read at night. They conveyed a sense of mystery and of ancient wisdom.

I did not show these postcards to anyone. Some of the children had laughed at their naked figures, and my mother had told me not to show them to anyone. She often took them away and hid them. But I would find them again and store them in a cardboard box.

Later, when I was a university student, I discovered that these postcards were reproductions of classical works of art by Raphael, Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, and Rembrandt. And I would go to the library to read about these artists. There is a special tie between what penetrates deeply into one's soul as a child and the new knowledge that one acquires as a young man and later as an adult.

When I saw that large, solidly-bound volumes contained the same images as my own postcards, but in brighter colours and carefully covered with tissue paper, when a slight rustle of papers suddenly uncovered what had first been given to me in the distant past, I would recall my stepfather's words to my mother: "Leave him alone. There is something in him ..."

I remembered this "something within me", and "it" remained with me, living its own life. There was a time during childhood when I was seriously ill. I remained indoors for weeks, and the doctors had already told my mother that I would not recover. When I began to feel better, I would ask for my pictures and

with tears in her eyes my mother would bring me the precious cardboard box. I did not understand of course why she was crying. I would lay out my pictures, sorting them in a different way each time. For hours I would gaze at their mysterious figures: a woman flying in the clouds, or more precisely, walking gracefully on clouds; another woman holding a sword and a man's severed head (on one postcard the woman was stepping on a severed head, while on another she was advancing calmly holding a sword, followed by another woman carrying a basket with a warrior's head); and various depictions of Christ, surrounded by crying faces, nailed with large nails to a wooden cross, his legs slightly bent at the knees and blood pouring from his wounds. And I could not understand how anyone could hammer nails into living flesh and why he then should be removed from the cross so carefully, why people should weep, and wrap his body in such clean white shrouds, in which the dead body seemed to fly, like the woman in the clouds. The delicate hands holding up the body had unusually long fingers and thin soft skin, while the clothing's folds were coloured deep red, unworldly blue and yellow, and whitish pink. The eyes expressed suffering. And I felt drawn to these pictures and remembered them because they merged with the images from my readings—with Claes' ashes, with Don Quixote's calmless soul (my feeling for him was always one of pity), with the secret Inquisition torturing and interrogating, and with other events and heroes in books that I had read.

These were the images that, together with others that had come later, stirred in my memory as I prepared to meet my pupils in Solenga.

And I intended to begin my first introductory lecture by drawing their attention to art's more general principles. Accordingly, I wanted them to note the delicate lines in both Italy's Botticelli and Russia's Vrubel who achieved realistic perfection through seeming disproportion, when elongated figures and hands appeared to produce a merging of fantasy and reality, and of decorative monumentality with an intimate-lyrical theme.

I could already see my pupils: Vanya Zolotykh, his lettuce green eyes opened wide, completely captivated by Botticelli's miraculous melody; Zina Shugayeva all curled up at her desk, how the teacher could show such things to her, a Komsomol organizer; and also Romuskov, turned red as a lobster at the sight of naked figures; and Prismotrov, suddenly alive and curious while normally he would be half asleep, his head bent

backwards and his long legs in brown felt boots stretching under the desk in front of him...

And my small postcards projected on the wall were more in place than the most perfect reproductions; the fact that they were worn made them even more interesting, as if the five hundred years that separated us from the original paintings had left their imprint on them; and even the cracks in the paper, the worn corners, and the fissure through Botticelli's three graces seemed appropriate!

There was so much to tell in this dark classroom alive with the warmth of the pupils' breathing and their glistening eyes. My words, associations and comparisons acquired deeper meaning, for I was conveying more than what was expressed by Vasari, Signorelli, or Vrubel. Names, dates and titles easily came to lips in this inquisitive silence (I felt this subconsciously and warned that there may be mistakes that students might later find occasion to check). Of course, I was actually speaking not about artists alone, but also about what I myself saw in life, my dreams and hopes, and my own understanding of the world around us, as events from my life quietly slipped into the narrative.

This entrancing intertwining of delicate hands that seem to barely touch opposed everything that was evil and frightening in this world. I was referring to Botticelli's three graces. Standing beside them, I explained, was young Mercury. The graces were probably in love with this handsome youth, but to no avail. He turned away and this made them closer. Instead of quarrelling, they were joined by their common rejection, which was so close to humility. Perhaps Mercury needed another dream, searched for greater perfection, but then he might simply be still uninterested in such refined creatures. He was still a boy and it was not clear whether he was simply caught in his own thoughts as he looked upwards or whether he was examining the fruits in the trees. He resembled the graces, his face was calm, his figure expressed innocence and possessed the inner light that was characteristic of Antiquity's heroes.

While speaking about Mercury I stressed that everyone should have such a light, that it comes to life in one's youth and should be carefully preserved.

I deliberately stressed Mercury's spirituality, for there were also Mercuries in my own class. But these live Mercuries were torn by rivalry, and in particular Kolya Lekarev was watching me. We saw each other in the dark and I was merciless in my analysis, while he seemed to be pleading: "Enough of Mercury." I did not stop and made an educational error.

Next I turned to people of small stature—Napoleon, Suvorov and Pushkin, for my class included Vanya Zolotykh, who suffered from his own small size. He was excluded from games, some of the girls laughed at him and he tended to generally keep to himself. I explained that a person's height was of secondary importance in comparison with his moral stature, his purity and his ability to carry a burden that was just a bit heavier than what one could normally carry—it was that which made a man. I also spoke of exceptional challenges; as soon as it took hold of a person it transformed him completely, for then he was no longer alone but supported by his other self which always sustained him, gave him strength and enhanced him in his own eyes. And both Vanya Zolotykh and Zoya Kraeva, who was known as Birdie, slightly straightened out their shoulders; they were grateful to me. In a few moments I would turn on the lights and Olya Samoilova would first lower her eyes and then suddenly raise her lashes as if saying: "I know very well whom you had in mind when you were speaking about the pictures. It is not my fault if I am pretty. Your Mercuries stick to me like burs but I do not care for them. And in general, I will do what I like."

And Alla Dochernayeva would turn up her nose, raise her shoulder, and blow a lock of her hair with her Mona Lisa lips and walk past me.

Two "Mercuries"—Kolya and Sasha—would suddenly start vying with each other for the favours of all the graces of the class displaying their prowess. They would jump on desks, touch the ceiling with their fingertips and then one of them would carry the other on his shoulders.

And only Vanya Zolotykh would approach me and ask blushingly:

"But why are there holes in Mercury's slippers?"

"What slippers?" I asked amazed.

"He is wearing something like socks or else boots, but only without soles and one can see all his toes. Everyone else in the picture is barefoot."

"Can it really be," I wondered, "that all this time he was looking at what all personages were wearing on their feet?" Indeed, I had not noticed that everyone but Mercury was barefoot and I told him that this was a special kind of slipper, whose sole was not visible.

"No," Vanya replied, "there are no soles. I had a good look."

I looked at the picture again but also failed to find them and finally replied:

"But does it really matter!"

Vanya and I continued looking at each other as he again repeated: "There are no soles," his eyes glued to my face.

I was long unable to forget about Mercury's "slippers", or my stupid reaction. I should have been delighted by Vanya's keenness, put aside my sense of superiority and told the children: "How wonderful! I have been looking at this reproduction for a dozen of years and have never noticed that only Mercury is wearing sandals, while Vanya did, what a remarkably sharp eye he has."

This would have alerted the other children (is the teacher serious or is he sarcastic ?), and everyone would have begun to search for something that either was not present in the picture or was barely visible.

"What is that design on Mercury's clothes ?"

"They are tongues of flames."

"How does one call this kind of clothing ?"

"It is a toga !"

"But why are the flames pointing downwards ?"

"This is true, they are upside down ! Does this also mean something ?"

"Of course..." (another clarification follows).

I did, in fact,describe many things to my pupils. But my narrative was lacking a basis for combining my own thoughts with their naivete and thirst for clarity. Vanya Zolotykh's question concerning the slippers had come from a timid soul and expressed an elemental need for knowledge. That tiny question allowed one to see a person's inner world, that of his present-day values, clearing the way for future values. This is a fundamental point concerning the essence of pedagogics: should one proceed from tangible and living elemental needs, or from vague abstractions? It is needs that must bring people to a search for knowledge without which human soul would not develop. And there is only one way—not acquaintance with culture, but recreation of culture within each personality through a hierarchy of accessible and understandable values based on directness and simplicity, in short, on Mercury's slippers.

At that time, during my first year in Solenga, I did not understand this. I thought that I had found a refined form of influencing children's souls; that if I succeeded in entering a pupil's spiritual world through art and that if he accepted me inwardly, the result of my influence would inevitably become positive. On

the surface my half-baked pedagogics seemed attractive but it lacked wisdom, and that required experience—my own experience, made up both of successes and defeats.

14. DEVELOPING SKILLS

The choice of instructional media is determined by the objectives of education. But in addition, the choice is also influenced by the teachers' individual traits. That dependence exists objectively and becomes evident when teaching practice is subjected to analysis.

Each teacher develops his own unique style, his own individual manner of employing various media, his own vision of anticipated results.

As in any art, much depends on individual characteristics of the creative personality. Teachers differ from each other not only in terms of the "stock" of techniques they use but, above all, by the manner in which these are implemented, which is marked by their individuality. For it is not accidental that one and the same "effective" instructional medium may yield positive results when applied by one person and negative when applied by another.

Let us consider, for instance, the use of visual materials. When applied by one teacher this becomes a powerful factor for developing children's cognitive abilities, but in the hands of another it becomes brake on their mental activity.

It is widely known that individuals possess not only different temperaments and characters but also different casts of mind. In particular some persons' minds operate easier with concepts and categories and seldom build images; but is somebody to blame for this or can this type of mind be described as "good" or "bad"? Others are more inclined to live by images and senses, are impressionable and emotional and most often have visionary thinking; this does not prevent them from assimilating the most abstract propositions, but the world of tangible, directly observable entities helps them characterize abstract concepts more vividly and effectively; is this a "good" or "bad" cast of mind? There exists an objective correspondence and dependence between a teacher's individual traits and the instructional media and teaching techniques that he chooses. Does that dependence play a decisive role in the teaching process? Perhaps this question may be formulated more accurately as follows: does that dependence constitute an obstacle to acquiring developed teaching skills and mastering individual media that re-

quire vivid emotions, a lively mind, inventiveness and quick orientation? Before answering that question let us note immediately that there is no medium that would not require a lively mind, vivid emotions and inventiveness. But at the same time these creative properties express themselves in each person in ways that are specific and individualized.

This question can only be formulated as follows: either the teacher will remain a slave to his temperament, his type of nervous system and his character, or he will be able to subordinate specific features of his self to the objectives of education.

It is hardly likely that expressions of temperament are unchangeable and given once and for all. Don't we often observe that so-called phlegmatics suddenly begin to display great activity in the pedagogical process, quite often greatly resembling choleric individuals? Probably no other profession exerts such an influence on a person's temperament. This is because the entire structure of the teaching practice defines common demands for all teachers: to be whenever necessary lively, bright and socially responsive, abrupt, gentle, kind and strict.

Consider the young specialists who are just beginning to teach. One is struck by the almost instantaneous changes that take place in their behaviour. Someone who had developed a reputation of being the life of the party, suddenly becomes reserved, while a young girl who had been shy in a school environment becomes a leader and an excellent organizer. After another year or two it will be difficult to recognize them; each will develop his own manner of teaching and his own style, as well as his preferred methods and approaches. Occasionally purely accidental factors influence their development; an approach that happened to be particularly effective on a certain occasion may subsequently be widely applied, while an entire range of other methods remains ignored, as if they were inaccessible.

Each teacher experiences successes and finds unexpected original solutions in communicating with children. But a striving to repeat these solutions often produces negative results. What is the reason for this? What are the types of errors that recur in creative activities, and to what can they be attributed?

Let us consider the relatively common error of a "fetishization of a means". The process of "fetishization" is inherently associated with such phenomena as keenness on, enthusiasm or even fanaticism about one's pedagogical career. It is the reverse side, as it were, of pedagogical abilities. One finds, among creatively working teachers, individuals who, having mastered

a particular pedagogical approach, view it as the key to all educative process and as a panacea for all problems. Some are carried away by self-organization, others by games and still others by organizing work activities, hobby activities, and fostering team spirit. Yet when we speak of a teacher possessing fully developed skills we have in mind a multiplicity of knowledge and an ability to educate individuals harmoniously by applying a system of highly diverse means. True mastery expresses itself in an ability to rely on the most various possibilities and occasionally on some that are diametrically opposed. Unless a teacher possesses such an ability he will find it difficult to avoid a fetishization of a particular means or approach.

Let us try to analyze the mechanism that underlies errors resulting from a fetishization of individual educative means taken in isolation from others.

In this connection I will turn to my own experience of relying on the use of games in my work with a collective. Earlier I have mentioned the advantages that the game-oriented approach possesses. Games help children become active, contribute a spirit of joyfulness to a children's collective, as well as an element of competition, develop the team spirit and mutual assistance, and provide teachers with an opportunity to overcome elements of authoritarianism in their work with children. Yet, at the same time, the particular approach to games that we employed also carried much that was negative. In particular, there were cases when children carried out particular assignments not because they had come to understand them and recognize their significance, and not because of a sense of duty, but simply because this was required by the game situation.

Perhaps there would have been less harm if such games had been less frequent. But when, over a prolonged period of time, children find themselves in game-defined relations the development of contradictions between the game and life itself is unavoidable. While the substance of that contradiction was evident, we largely relied on the following logic: whenever a child acquires useful habits and whenever the outcome is positive the means to such a result must be justified. Soon, however, we realized that this was not so. This was particularly evident during periods between games; many of the children responded to school requirements, their duties and responsibilities with less interest and less motivation than during games.

Beyond this, game situations became such a strong stimulus to child activities that both individuals and individual class collectives were ready to carry out unthinkingly any assignment

whatever. Children interpreted this as a need to "reach the mark", "achieve a victory", accumulate the greatest number of points, or "earn" a pennant. Games resembled races and made superfluous the existence of separate personalities and a need to view each other with respect. The games asked no questions but merely demanded that its own dominant rhythm be unconditionally accepted. And the more refined and colourful a game was, and the greater its effectiveness as a means, the more its negative side became apparent, as did the need to balance it with non-game activities and to control its results with such other means as self-management, the influence of the collective, personal communication with individual children and well structured forms of self-education.

Of course, it is not only games that constitute a two-edged weapon. When overused (for example, when endlessly repeated), any educative means, especially such as collective forms of influence, reward and punishment, or work and self-management, can produce negative results.

Let us recall that we are not referring to the essence of any particular educative means, but rather to the form in which it is present in a teacher's creative activities.

The teacher must be certain that at every moment, any selected system of means operates in such a way as to affirm moral norms. In that connection it is important to define the measure and direction of selected means. Creative approaches require accurate appraisals and constant analysis. Only then is it possible to avoid errors.

The process of the application of means, particularly in the case of teachers who are just starting out, often involves a struggle with one's own self in overcoming personal dispositions. Young teachers find it necessary to restrain their ardour, suppress their anger and control their emotions. Experienced teachers will never display sudden emotions unless, of course, this is required. In addition, they are able to express their emotions in measured doses. Even when angered they may turn to humour, that is, find such a form of expressing their feelings that will contribute to the effective operation of an educative means.

In short, the teacher applies his skills in a goal-oriented manner according to the situation and method required at a given instant. This does not mean, of course, that educative means dictate a teacher's actions. It is the teacher himself who chooses these means, and while they are partly autonomous they are subordinate to him.

A creatively working, fully-developed educator never becomes a slave to either his own individual traits of character or to the means that he prefers and that he himself has chosen.

Risk is perhaps an inherent condition of educational creativity, for no matter how developed a person's skills may be he will still be unable to take into account and estimate accurately the influence of numerous and especially secondary means and conditions. Errors may be avoided only when individuals applying particular means with a known degree of risk recognize the possibility of failures, anticipate "points of weakness" and direct their attention to them.

15. CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND THE CHILD'S CAPACITIES

Education is the purest and most sacred of all tasks. And the world of a teacher's calling is an especially pure world that requires a high degree of spirituality. We have already noted that a teacher influences children through everything in his own life. But the child,too,,is more than simply a schoolchild; a teacher encounters all aspects of his existence, not only those that relate to school. How then can he learn to see the full complexity of a child's life, and to recognize his joys and griefs?

Because of its generalized nature, the theory of education cannot, of course, provide a recipe for each concrete situation in school practice. And even two or three volumes of pedagogical psychology cannot characterize the millions of children's personalities and the unique situations that teachers encounter.

But a teacher, equipped with a system of means and a knowledge of psychology, will always be able to explain specific complexities that he may observe in a child's life.

Konstantin Ushinsky considered the basis of the art of teaching to be a comprehensive knowledge of a child in all his relationships, namely: "...the way he actually is, with all his weaknesses and in all his grandeur, his day to day miscellaneous needs as well as his noble spiritual demands. A teacher must know individuals within their family, in society, in their relation to people as well as to the human race, alone with their conscience, in all situations, in happiness and in grief, in full health as well as in sickness, in the grandeur of success and in humiliation, in the fullness of hopes as well as on the death-bed when words of *human* comfort are powerless. He must understand the moving forces of both the basest and the noblest deeds, the origins

of criminal as well as lofty thoughts, and the course of development of every passion and temperament. Only then will he be able to find within man's very nature the vast means (and they are boundless) for influencing a person's education!"*

The observations about children written by Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Dickens, Faulkner, Gorky and Chekhov contain genuine psychological analyses of children's lives.

When I read Korchak and Makarenko I believe their words, for I see the children to whom they have given what was best in them. I am persuaded that the method of artistic generalization is destined to become the most important means for making pedagogics and psychology accessible to anyone who is interested in problems of education.

In Solenga I suddenly experienced a series of joyful and unexpected successes in the spring. Everything to which I had given so much thought, which I had accumulated within myself and within the children, suddenly began to come together spontaneously, smoothly and in a natural way.

But there was also another source of joy. I was able to draw closer to the students and this was especially important.

At times I felt a strong need to believe that man can achieve anything. And since I was myself not able to realize this I felt happy when it was realized in the lives of my pupils.

I wanted to dismantle that which was conventional, disconnect what had already been formed and recombine it in a new manner. Why was it that Vanya Zolotykh's well-being should depend on ten missing centimetres in his height? His entire life had to depend on these ten centimetres. Five and another five. The size of two matchboxes, of two shoe heels set one upon the other that could completely alter his life. Why do the girls follow such a strict stereotype: if a boy is two centimentres shorter than a girl then it is embarrassing to stand next to him, walk with him, and be friends with him. If you are missing the required ten centimetres then do not come near me. But he approaches even though he knows that he is missing the required ten centimetres, harbouring, moreover, some kind of expectations. And instead of sitting down so as not to show his height, he purposely keeps walking about and will even stand on the lowest possible place when he can choose one that is higher—such is the

* K. D. Ushinsky, *Izbrannye pedagogicheskie sochineniya* (Selected Pedagogical Works), in two volumes, Moscow, 1974, Vol. I, p. 247.

impertinence of Vanya Zolotykh. What if he does study well, and what if he is kind and gifted—what difference does this make if he does not have the needed ten centimetres?

"I will give you, Vanya dear, the needed ten centimetres. You will have them. In a year. I promise you."

A silly promise? No, I truly believed in these ten centimetres, the size of two matchboxes.

Vanya's body was strong, resilient and clean. It only needed a suntan—something inaccessible to this young northerner. Could it be that this was where the missing ten centimetres were hidden?

"In life anything can be stretched, in length or in width as one wishes," I would say to Vanya jokingly. "I can guarantee, Zolotykh, that by summer we will grow five of these centimetres."

Vanya would arrive at school by six-thirty. At twenty to seven my voluntary lessons in physical development began.

Again I would repeat to Zolotykh: "For God's sake! If you really want these ten miserable centimetres then we will make them for you!" I said this with such aggressive assurance that he no longer had any doubts whatever that this would be so. (Twenty years later Vanya Zolotykh would say to me: "How could you risk promising this with such assurance? What if I had not grown?" "That is the very point!" I would answer. "One must believe absolutely, without reservations.")

Vanya ran, jumped, stretched, and did pull-ups. He was boxing, spending much time outdoors, taking cold showers, rubbing himself with a towel,—and if it had not been for those silly jackets that he wore (he had no others), he would have looked like a real athlete. How quickly a child's body changed. In the course of a single year he added an ease of movements and a sports-like trimness to his earlier strength.

"Come over here, Vanya, we will measure you. What did I tell you? Five centimetres are in the bag!" How happy we both were! But we told no one, this was our shared secret. Who knows, perhaps Vanya would have gained these five centimetres even without my lessons. Actually I do not think so.

And I had already made further plans for developing the strength, energy and spiritual qualities of my tenth-grade students. For it is true, there lives within each person both a poet and an artist and also a great worker.

The boxing group that I led soon included all the boys in the

class. They become my helpers and began to recruit groups of fifth- and sixth-grade students.

At seven in the morning before classes began there was an hour of exercises, and for the small fry there were lessons in punching and moves.

There was similar training in the evening, followed by lessons in painting, music and poetry.

One day's topic was Vrubel and Lermontov's "Demon". Vanya Zolotykh explained, following a narrative of what he had read, that the demon was a symbol of the restlessness of the human soul. And on the screen a prophet appeared—Vrubel's illustration to the poem, then an angel with six wings and also Pan, and finally the powerful image of the demon. Together we began to explore and think about the pictures, when Vanya suddenly pointed out that both the seraph, the prophet and even Pan resembled each other in a way.

The children noticed that their postures were similar, and Alla Dochernayeva added that while it was understandable that the seraph and the prophet resembled each other, they were also somehow similar to the demon, and not in their colours, but in some kind of aloofness.

Carried away, I explained that this was not accidental, for Vrubel's soul was full of love. This theme was then developed by Anechka Kleimenova, who had read excerpts from the artist's letters to his wife.

I then reflected out loud that it was here that we could find a key to understanding Vrubel. His heroes' eyes expressed love, silent hope, and sorrow, a striving to achieve the unachievable. The artist believed that truth was beauty, the beauty of man's creative strivings. True art was always more perfect than the life which man already knew. And Alla Dochernayeva then asked: "Does this mean then that art is, after all, more beautiful than life itself?" My answer was: "Art is itself the greatest form of life. It is not a copy of reality, nor a detailed description of ways of living, even though it does not exclude this. It discovers new laws of beauty and a new moral inspiration in man."

The next day my upper grade students would go to pupils of lower grades to discuss poetry and painting with them, and my efforts acquired a novel dimension. There was a new type of communication and a new attitude towards oneself and one's body (had one ever heard of young people devoting hours of attention to the development of their physique)—and all this as a

result of teaching activities.

Unwittingly my teaching line was out of accord with existing traditions and brought confusion into the tested rhythm of school life in Solenga. And while Parfyonov, the Director, generally understood that this line might somehow become out of the ordinary and constitute an additional facet to his system, he, nevertheless, perceived it as a threat.

I remember that on one occasion the collective farmers responded sceptically to a project to prepare one hundred, or perhaps two hundred peat-compost pots for seeds. And I recall my preposterous enthusiasm: Let's make a thousand, two thousand of these small pots. I mentioned this to the children and my entire boxers' battalion threw itself into making these pots. It got to be one or two in the morning, and we were still continuing our work. In the morning there was a scandal; both the parents and the school were indignant and complained to the Director. Parfenov was silent, for he liked the burst of energy that I had awakened in the children and was also pleased that the collective farm had expressed its gratitude. All the same he had to reprimand me, but he did it quietly and in a friendly way. And I did not mind this reprimand, for it was a mere formality.

But now I was under the dangerous spell of having the children obey my power; they would do whatever I said, and I was thrilled with the secret pleasure of commanding others not by ordering them, but through their passionate involvement. I saw myself as a person inspired by lofty motives, for I received no compensation for the work outside class; neither for sports activities, nor art, nor the long hours of work over those pots, nor for making toy furniture for the kindergarten. I expected that everyone would be pleased with my work (since my activities were described as work) but I was mistaken. The secret forces of destruction born by power operated according to their own laws; they divided, sowed mistrust, jealousy, and even envy. Although I did not yet know about this, the seeds were alive and were soon to sprout.

It all began with the growing number of students joining my extra-curricular sessions.

First came the girls.

"We, too, want lessons in physical education like the boys!" said Zina Shugayeva.

"Alright, we will begin this evening in the gymnasium and then we will continue together tomorrow morning."

Serdelnikov, our physical education teacher, shrugged his shoulders and gave me the key to the gymnasium. I didn't even notice his look of displeasure. I assumed that I was helping him since I was encouraging physical education.

I hardly recognized the girls when I came to the gymnasium.

Anechka was not embarrassed by the skimpy gym clothes, for everyone could see her strong points.

She approached the rope, stretched herself as high as she could and with only a slight touch of her feet floated upwards. Her stomach merging with the thin line of her spine, she appeared unusually flexible and slender. During this entire performance Alla remained silent in a corner with her friends. Without her street clothes, Alla was unprotected—she pressed her shoulders together, and hid her awkward knees. Why is she so afraid of everything? I suddenly understood, she had an inferiority complex concerning the imperfections of her body; not enough in some places, too much in others...

I repeated my words that a human being could achieve anything that he decided. Every individual should be beautiful. It was a must for everyone. Beauty was physical fitness and spiritual health. It was a search for harmonious solutions. At that point the students began to make suggestions.

"What if one combines everything?"

"Combines what?"

"Everything! Art, theatre, physical education? ...All of this together!"

"A marvellous idea," I replied, for I had tried to bring the children to this thought on earlier occasions.

Soon we began rehearsing special performances that called for an integration of training, learning roles and exercises.

"No, Anechka, no, the colour of your dress does not suit you in this performance. It does not go with your eyes or your hair-do. Which shade would be better?" I ask Alla and Olya.

"Pale blue, of course," Olya replies.

"Pink," Alla suggests.

"Pink is probably better. But slightly lilac."

As Anechka appears on the stage the audience voices its unanimous approval...

Still each person seeks self-expression in a specific way. Alla was not enthusiastic about our lessons in comprehensive development; she was self-conscious about her body, and soon refused to come altogether.

In general there were many problems in education that sprang in Solenga and I did my best to solve them all.

16. SOME CONCLUSIONS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING

Soviet children are taught to be independent by the pattern of their lives. Pupil self-management is a feature of Soviet schools. It is true I am not a proponent of a slow "stage-by-stage" development of independence. Everything is decided by concrete challenges. In Pioneer Camps the establishment of effective self-management is a matter of three days. It always develops when children are joyfully meeting a common challenge whose wider implications they understand. A wise teacher will not issue orders but may rather say: "Let's try to do this ourselves, for it is very interesting!"

I am persuaded that one should least of all announce one's trust, for it must always find a material embodiment. Each teacher should clearly decide for himself precisely what the children can be entrusted with. The measure of trust also defines the nature of relations and the element of romanticism in them. Children are maximalists and in trusting them one should not be afraid of a certain element of risk. One must learn to say to them: "We trust you in everything." And then one must prove it. And also explain the logic of such relations; the more one trusts, the greater the responsibility and the obligations of those who are trusted.

The correctness of such actions is borne out by practice and the examples are many. Excellent work has been done in Moscow at the "Chaika" school factory. Throughout the country many camps for combining work and rest have been established for older students. They are based entirely on the initiative of adolescents in organizing both their work and leisure. In Taganrog special work places have been set aside for schoolchildren at a factory producing combines. Together with their fathers and older brothers they familiarize themselves with the fascinating world of technology and with the best workers' traditions. In Stavropol student brigades who are assigned experimental plots of land and equipment learn to be careful tillers of their native land. Unfortunately, this type of valuable experience is merely described in our press but insufficiently studied by pedagogical science.

Experience has shown that a measure of the effectiveness of teaching is provided by a teacher's ability to evolve such an educational technology whose methods and micro-components would fully reflect the principle of morality to which the inner

world of children's emotions is so responsive. A vivid example is provided by the work of Vasily Sukhomlinsky, who was director of the Pavlysh village school. In his remarkable work entitled *To Children I Give My Heart* he shows in considerable detail how each member of a child collective can be led to ascend the steps of morality. This is achieved through cultivating an appreciation for books, fostering devotion to one's mother and to one's homeland, and speaking of good and evil, conscience and human dignity. He encourages the development of an ability to recognize suffering, alarm, hurt feelings or loneliness in the eyes of another person and teaches respect for fathers and grandfathers, for their wisdom and difficult self-sacrificing lives. He considers the development of patriotism, civic responsibility, and internationalism as the crowning achievement of his teaching activities. Each of his humanistic ideas takes root in simple everyday activities.

Today many other Soviet teachers are discovering this harmonious solution. They argue convincingly that the same meetings, expeditions, and contests that contribute so much to knowledge can also be a great source of joy for children if their initiative and independence are encouraged.

Personalities develop and express themselves through action. But as we design and organize creative challenges we must always keep in mind that their effect will depend on how well we are able to correctly assess the inner attitudes of children. Students must be interested participants in social activities, combining the roles of creative organizers and performers. Whenever this aspect is neglected and "events are planned" without knowing how students will react to them, they will hardly succeed. A failure to recognize the importance of a child's insistence on "doing it myself" will always produce miscalculations.

Why is this proposition stated so categorically? Because children acquire and recognize moral norms and ideals only through practical participation in managing their own collective affairs. And a teacher develops his creativity to the full precisely when organizing collectives and when enhancing children's independence and initiative.

Part Two

THE SOURCES OF A TEACHER'S MASTERY

In the northern settlement of Solenga I began to seriously study the theory and history of pedagogics. I needed theory for two reasons. On the one hand, I needed to lay a foundation for my debates against the pedagogical opponents that had appeared, while on the other, I was searching for theoretical allies in whom I could find inner moral support. And I began to read Plato, Aristotle, Marcus Aurelius and Montaigne, Fourier and Owen, Ushinsky and Chernyshevsky, Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy, Shatsky and Makarenko, I could not list them all here.

I would like to foreword this section with an account of two masters of education who influenced my own development at that time. They were Ushinsky, the renowned Russian democrat and educationist, and Makarenko, the Soviet teacher and writer. In some ways they contradict each other, while in others they complement one another. One viewed pedagogics as the greatest of arts, while the other argued for a closer link of educational activities with reality, and advocated a mastery of teaching skills. I believe that in order to gain an insight into the very essence of Russian and Soviet pedagogics, one should have some knowledge of these two outstanding educationists. It was there in that northern settlement, as my experiments caused heated debates, that Ushinsky and Makarenko helped me by strengthening the faith in my calling that was then being born.

1. KONSTANTIN USHINSKY, THE FATHER OF RUSSIAN PEDAGOGICS

It was over a hundred years ago, when tsarist Russia was awakening from its sleep, and its revolutionary democrats were calling for a struggle to free the people from serfdom and bring

them enlightenment, that the passionate voice of Konstantin Ushinsky (1824-1871), the father of Russian pedagogics, was also heard.

Viewing education as the greatest of all arts, he maintained that there is an indissoluble connection between science and the art of education. This theme recurs in all his works, beginning with his initial and brilliant *Concerning the Usefulness of Pedagogical Literature*, and including his most significant, unfinished study entitled *Pedagogical Anthropology*.

He was convinced that the human race, and his own country especially, was already standing on the threshold of a temple of pedagogical art and that efforts were needed to finally step inside. He recognized that such a step represented a law of life itself and a condition of progress, that it must be dictated by the conscience of each citizen and his obligation to help his people by contributing to their development through education, culture and upbringing.

This is why the principle of service to the people dominates both his theoretical studies and his practical activities.

He was above all a patriot of his country and a democrat, and only secondarily a teacher and theoretician.

Imagine an extremely nervous, thin young man of more than average height. His pale thin-lipped face is strikingly white against his jet-black hair, and his piercing eyes seem to see through anyone they look at. His every movement expresses his strength of character and indomitable will. To this, one should add his lofty aspirations—to do everything for Russia, for his beloved country, his irreconcilable hostility to mental stagnation and to official routine science, as well as his high level of education. Only then will one understand the reasons for his thorny path in conditions of somber political reaction.

At the age of twenty-two (1847) Ushinsky became an Acting Professor of the Chair of Encyclopedia, Law and Finance at the Demidov Juridical Lyceum in Yaroslavl. In his lectures he voiced democratic ideas and in passionate speeches he criticized the existing order and the state of teaching in the Lyceum. This met with the condemnation of a reactionary Ministry of Public Education.

He was dismissed from the Lyceum at the age of twenty-five. A year later, in 1850, he managed with great difficulty to find a clerical position in the Department of Foreign Faiths. However, four years later he was dismissed from that position too.

Throughout this time he worked on pedagogical problems and dreamt of teaching and being in direct contact with young

people. He was ready to move to any provincial city, but all his inquiries were met with refusals. Finally, in 1854, through a lucky set of circumstances, he found position at the Gatchina Institute for Orphans. Subsequently, in 1859 he became a class inspector at the Smolny Institute for Girls of Noble Descent in Petersburg.

In that position he succeeded in securing the cooperation of persons who subsequently became prominent teachers and scientists, including Vodovozov (philology), Semyonov (geography), Modzalevsky (literature), Pugachevsky (physics), and Busse (mathematics). These men formed a tightly-knit group of like-minded persons struggling for a new democratic school. With their help Ushinsky introduced a number of changes in Smolny Institute: he developed a new curriculum that reflected the current level of development of science and technology, emphasized a linking of the study of sciences with studies of the Russian language, introduced object lessons and experimental practice in physics and the natural sciences, and introduced new methods of education and upbringing.

The most reactionary teachers, including the local priest and the Directress of the Institute, were outraged by his actions and accused him of "disseminating godlessness and immorality".

In 1862 Ushinsky was suspended from his functions and asked to defend himself against all charges. That struggle was unequal, sharp and irreconcilable. It was the struggle of a man of crystal-clear honesty against obscurantism.

The school was an exact reflection of the society of that time, including its political orientation, culture, economic structure and level of development of science and technology. What Ushinsky saw at Smolny Institute was a miniature replica of the stagnant swamp that was tsarist Russia. That swamp was perpetuated, on the one hand, by the brutality of serfdom, and on the other hand, by blind submission and ingratiation to those in power.

It is difficult to imagine the full scope of obstacles that prevented the development of a scientific pedagogical theory and a restructuring of the entire educational system. The task that Ushinsky himself viewed as central at that time was to secure the participation of wide sections of the population in the educational process.

In short, the central idea of Ushinsky's pedagogical system was its national character. He described its foundations in a number of studies and especially in one of his earliest articles entitled, "Concerning the National Character of Social Edu-

cation" (1857). It should be noted that in developing this principle in public education, Ushinsky at the same time opposed the one-sided tendencies of both the Slavophils and the Westernizers.

It was his view that scientific truths are common to various peoples and that psychological and methodological techniques developed in various countries could be employed by any people. Yet, the overall system of education is specific to each people and reflects its national features, the level of social development, traits of national character and the creative potential of various social groups.

He wrote that "...forms of education that are created by the people itself and that are based on national foundations possess an educative power that one will not find even in the best systems based on abstract ideas or borrowed from another people".*

Ushinsky defended the originality of the Russian people and deeply believed in its creative potential. He warned against a blind imitation of other nations and sought to awaken in his colleagues and all teachers generally a sense of genuine patriotism, of national consciousness and of civic and human integrity.

In his view it was desirable to borrow from the nation of Goethe and Schiller, Hegel and Schelling such traits as a striving for an in-depth knowledge of the foundations of science, and a propensity for abstract thinking, but one should absolutely reject such element as petty formalism, disciplinarianism and an inclination for official pedantism, for these negative traits were already abundant in Russia at that time.

French schools had succeeded brilliantly in training artillery officers and technologists, mechanics and engineers. At the time no other European school came close to the achievements of the French Polytechnical School founded in 1794. Over a short period of time it turned over four thousand highly trained technologists. But to be sufficed with training alone was criminal in terms of the wider overall needs of the people. And in Ushinsky's view the works of Balzac, Zola and Hugo illustrated and condemned the shameful immorality of Napoleonic France.

In his view public education in France was greatly influenced by the excesses and vain glory of the aristocracy, and the profit-seeking and self-important conceit of the middle classes.

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* K. D. Ushinsky, *Izbrannye pedagogicheskie sochineniya*, Moscow, Vol. I, p. 120.

The Russian people, who possessed their own language and culture, had to build a system of education free from the above influences.

Nor did Ushinsky accept altogether the English system of education, which was constrained by traditions of medieval scholasticism and available in its best form only to the aristocracy.

He also sought to closely follow developments taking place in America, noting the democratic elements in female education, the introduction of courses in physics, astronomy, biology and chemistry and a separation of the school system from the church. At the same time he was struck by the excessive variety of curricula and the absence of the type of scientific system that he saw in Switzerland and Germany.

He noted that while Western theories contained many scientific propositions and facts that were correct they also contained a large number of groundless, fantastic conclusions and an even larger number of harmful recommendations.

As a truly national teacher he clearly understood that even the most interesting systems and scientifically grounded theories could not be mechanically transferred onto Russian soil from the West.

What is then the criterion for borrowing scientific achievements in creating a national system of education and upbringing? What can serve as a foundation of pedagogical theory? The answer is national character, as a deep faith in one's country's creative potential, and, following from this, the imperative that the task of organizing public education be turned over to the people itself, that it be freed from bureaucracy and an orientation on rank, and allowed that a new system of education correspond to the specific features of the country's various nationalities and to its historical conditions.

In Ushinsky's pedagogical legacy the national principle provides a key to understanding his system and a criterion of the correctness of his views.

Yet, before examining his concrete pedagogical views in such terms I would like to cite Ushinsky's own conclusions, taken from his teaching on the role of the national factor:

"By itself public education does not resolve issues put by life and does not guide history, but follows it. It is neither pedagogics nor teachers, but the people themselves and their great representatives who pave the road into the future: education only follows that road and, acting together with other social forces, helps individuals and new generations in following it.

"Public education can only be effective when its issues become public issues for all and family issues for each person. No matter how clever it may be, a system of public education that has become separated from public convictions will become powerless and will influence neither the character of individuals nor that of society. It can train technologists but will never educate useful and active members of society, and should these appear this will not be a result of education.

"A stimulating of public opinion in matters of education is the only sound basis for corresponding improvements: wherever such an opinion does not exist there will not be any public education, even though there may be a large number of educational institutions."*

It is probably true that with regard to dominant issues, those relating to the meaning of life and the aims of education are vital for each generation. They were posed especially sharply at the time of Ushinsky's most creative period. The polemics surrounding them gave birth to Russia's educational movement of the 1860s and developed in the context of a struggle against special education for the privileged.

Ushinsky observed that while everything seemed clear and simple so long as one was speaking of the general aims in education, much of this vanished instantly the moment one faced a concrete child, and a concrete educational practice.

Society entrusted children's pure and impressionable souls to educators. Accordingly it had the right to ask them what objectives they envisaged, and what means they would rely on. The answer had to be clear-cut and even categorical.

According to some, the principal objective was to make people happy. Yet even conceptions of happiness varied greatly. Their similarity was only on the surface. When one looked closer, each person had his own individual conception of happiness. It was influenced by a person's character and world view, and by the entire life structure within which he had been raised and educated.

Since people tended to differ in their views about the ideal, a similar lack of precision was to be found in the opinions of teachers who stated that the principal aim was to make children better and more perfect.

Nor could Ushinsky agree with Jean Jacques Rousseau's theory of "natural education" which was very progressive for those times.

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* *Ibid.*, p. 123.

"Can it possibly be," he exclaimed, "that our ideal is the world of savages with their vile and violent passions and their dark and often bloody superstitions?"*

Teachers work tirelessly to teach children the wisdom of science. But why do they do this? For the mere purpose of making their students educated? To give them an opportunity to pursue their education further?

Ushinsky rejected categorically all pragmatic and utilitarian approaches to defining happiness, the aims of education and the meaning of life. Both in his theory and in his practical activities he sought to solve the problem of objectives from a philosophical as well as a genuinely democratic point of view.

He considered the aim of education to be a harmoniously developed individual whose greatest happiness was to serve his country, who shared the interests of his people, was kind, noble and honest and who acquired happiness through work and love for others. To raise a happy person was to teach him to be happy even when he was poor, when he had sacrificed his welfare for the sake of lofty objectives and when he had helped his neighbour at his own expense.

"A person may have the reputation of being an excellent teacher, but thought is usually not given to the source of his powers and of his art. For this can only be understood through one's own practice. Is this not like some of the tricks of our women sorcerers? Can it really be that the art of education, concerned with the development of consciousness and will, is to remain at such a low level and not even rise to that of medicine which collects facts but is based on knowledge?"** These are the types of questions that Ushinsky addressed to all of Russian society in his brilliant first article entitled "Concerning the Usefulness of Pedagogical Literature". In what sense then are Ushinsky's views on the role of teachers relevant today?

We see Ushinsky, as he reflects on the role of teachers and on their basic qualities, from two sides, as it were, that also characterize the genuine character of a teacher today, of the type of teacher that today's schools require.

On the one hand, he is a thinker who developed in a philosophical environment and who came to know the full complexity and dialectical nature of the teaching process. And as a thinker he understood that there could be no prescriptions and dogmatically defined rules in pedagogics. A child's personality

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* K. D. Ushinsky, *Izbrannye pedagogicheskie sochineniya*, Vol. I, p. 237.

** *Ibid.*, p. 17.

is shaped by its principal teacher—life itself. He stressed that the moment "baneful influences" were removed, and an atmosphere of freedom and creative work established, the individual's mind would become receptive to enlightenment and his character would acquire nobility.

But provision of conditions for fruitful activity and wholesome influences and a mastery of even the most modern methods for influencing individuals were not yet sufficient in producing the desired results. This might be seen from the example of the methods of Jesuit education. In the context of those times, Jesuits sought to create excellent conditions in their schools, and had also mastered the art of influencing children. But this was an "art" that was inimical to man's very nature and to the very idea of humanism. In the hands of the Jesuits, the art of education turned children into blind instruments of an alien will and into obedient slaves.

A refined manipulation of children and an exploitation of their purity of motives and impressionability produced the horrible pathologies of human degradation and the sinister ruling castes, the educational results that were subsequently denounced by all progressive educationalists.

Indeed it is difficult to overestimate the importance of a teacher's ability to penetrate into the inner world of children in order to then delicately shape the development of their character.

But this is just as dangerous as to use authoritarian methods in suppressing a child's will. For by entering into a person's inner world we are able to not only pollute it with our own negative experience but also to implant traits that are not inherent in a child's own nature, to distort the delicate pattern of its own unique individuality, and instead of developing creative abilities develop primarily abilities to comply and imitate.

This was why Ushinsky returned again and again to the following question: could it really be that the foundation of any system of education was a replication by the child of the teacher's own spiritual world? In his view the proposition that the teachers' task was to produce individuals similar to themselves was false. He invited educators to consider their own biographies, the innermost depths of their conscience, their actions, and their behaviour in life's critical moments and noted that educators could hardly boast of any great achievements in their own development, on the contrary, the results, more often than not, were "poor and rueful".

That was why the teacher should "strive to find ways to

make children better than we are". And that was why each teacher needed a rigorous analysis of himself and a constant impartial critical revue of the outcome of his activities. He could be a teacher who was able to see his own shortcomings as well as those of children. To bring his art of teaching to its highest level he had to be able to respond in full honesty to civic challenges no matter what the consequences might be. It was not enough to be educated, possess knowledge, follow rules and methodological prescriptions, no matter how excellent they might be.

History, Ushinsky noted, provided examples of this. Seneca, the philosopher, possessed a brilliant erudition and was one of the most educated persons of his time. But he was the teacher of Nero, the tyrant. And Ushinsky accused Seneca of contributing through his refined but meaningless discourses to the "terrible moral distortion of his sinister charge".

Proceeding from a deep analysis of current philosophical systems (Mill and Spencer, Hegel and Schelling, Belinsky and Herzen) and from his own practical experience as a teacher, Ushinsky formulated what might well be the main contradiction in the nature and essence of a humanistic education.

On the one hand, the teacher should not impose his convictions, for that was an act of violence over his charges' minds. At the same time one could not develop a child's soul without introducing some kind of convictions. Denial of the authority of moral norms could only produce sceptics convinced that moral principles were unnecessary.

As a teacher, Ushinsky himself was extremely outspoken and uncompromising when he came across ignorance, stagnation or poor taste, but he could also be an extremely considerate person when communicating with children and with colleagues who shared his progressive views concerning education, science and people.

He possessed genuine pedagogical tact and considered that without this no teacher could become a good practical worker.

The problem of means and factors of education has concerned teachers for many centuries, and it continues to do so today.

Let us now consider the extent to which Ushinsky's teachings continue to be relevant today and the measure in which the system of means and factors of education that he developed continues to be valuable. According to Ushinsky, the means of education and upbringing derive from the child's own nature and from his active essence.

As a genuinely democratic teacher, and as a leading humanist of his age, Ushinsky viewed teaching activities in the context of their contribution to the freedom, independence and initiative of children.

In appealing to parents and teachers to develop in children a striving to be active and equally a striving for freedom, Ushinsky stressed that freedom did not imply that adults had to remove all obstacles on the child's life-path. More than that, it was his view that freedom was achieved not by the removal of any constraints but by acquiring the experience of overcoming them, and that as this experience grew, a child's striving for freedom was to strengthen and develop.

He noted that while teaching was one of the most important means of education it was only effective when it was associated with the development of a child's cognitive abilities and independent thinking.

Let us consider some of Ushinsky's thoughts concerning means of education. His view that the study of the native language should be pivotal in learning the other subjects proceeded not only from the importance of the national factor in education but also from a striving to make learning accessible and understandable to students. Students took over from earlier generations an immense legacy of knowledge, experience and instruments and means of production. They faced the task of mastering them. And of course a good school and intelligent parents sought to explain the surrounding world to children in the clearest possible way. Moreover, it was desirable that these explanations be made visually tangible in order to reach not only the minds but also the feelings of children.

That was why Ushinsky recommended that teachers turn to the natural sciences to choose topics for their classroom talks. He believed that pupils learned more from an interesting story about potatoes than from an abstract discourse on subjects the children could not understand.

He also closely related a child's learning activities to his moral upbringing and to an awakening of a thirst to do what was good, as well as to the development of aesthetic taste and of the feeling of joy that each person experienced when engaging in free, creative work.

We have now approached one of the major educational means in Ushinsky's system. The free work of a free individual is the objective, the means and the outcome. A growing individual must spend usefully even his leisure time. Periods of mental work should be changed by physical work which may pro-

vide the greatest support to learning.

One of Ushinsky's best studies, *The Psychological and Educational Significance of Work* is a true hymn to labour.

In Ushinsky's conception, work is the source of all forms of joy and happiness; it carried the vital spiritual force that awakens human dignity. And one cannot buy that spiritual force produced by work "with all the gold of California". Only those can acquire it who personally engage in work.

Reading Ushinsky's works suggests a number of conclusions.

When a child does not work as much as his strength and state of health permit one should not expect good educational results.

If a child's environment does not encourage work, if there is an atmosphere of idleness in his family or in classroom, of empty and meaningless discussions, this will inevitably produce a negative influence on education.

When a child prefers to work only physically the entire day, rather than to allot a few minutes to mental activities, then it is time to alter the teaching method employed.

If a child is ready to stare at a book all day or memorize entire pages in order to avoid independent thinking, then something has already dampened his cognitive abilities.

The reasons for such shortcomings in teaching may vary: they may include the influence of the environment and the poor example of adults, or an inhibition of the child's own forces, possibly from fear of punishment.

To avoid educational errors, children should be taught to work, to be active of their own accord, and to think independently as early as possible. They should do what they are able to do themselves.

Children enjoy working. Even in their games they are learning to work. They also combine serious activities with their games. Sometimes they are so carried away with the game that they cease to distinguish it from serious activities and may derive the greatest satisfaction from cultivating plants, picking berries or making toys.

This is precisely the combination of play and work that parents and teachers must use as a means for developing children's activity and as a means for introducing children to useful work.

In examining Ushinsky's pedagogical legacy one is struck not only by the encyclopedic character of his thinking and views, but also by the depth of his anticipation of future developments and the exceptional intuition that made it possible for

him already in his time to delineate the basic outlines of the theory of collective education.

If one summarizes the thoughts on education contained in his last works, for example in his *Pedagogical Notes on Switzerland,* one may conclude that he did in fact view an intelligent organization of the lives of children on a collective basis to be one of the most important methods of education.

He stressed that well-organized interaction between children and their collective work produced a number of results: they learned to be kind to each other, and grew up cheerful, sociable, and self-dependent.

Ushinsky also referred to children's independent activities and to the need for corresponding pedagogical guidance.

He believed that it was extremely difficult to find a form of school life that would allow students themselves to actively contribute to the management of their school affairs. This required not only an adequate structure of organization but also the wisdom of educators who were able to provide guidance "without undue severity but also without indulgence—with humour and kindness but firmly..."

Unfortunately his thoughts concerning the influence of a collective on the shaping of an individual, like many others, did not get the chance for further development. Ushinsky died at the age of forty-seven.

Many of his projects remained uncompleted. But then they could not be realized under the conditions of tsarist rule. Yet what he did contribute was immense and represented truly titanic work for one man.

He produced remarkable readers, *A Child's World* and *The Native Language,* that came to be used in schools in spite of the objections of official authorities and of society's loyal circles.

These were books that came to be loved by parents as well as teachers and children in Russia and that could be found in schools and families over several generations.

Ushinsky was the first to establish the need for combining a teacher's theoretical and practical knowledge. He produced a fundamental study entitled *Man as an Object of Upbringing.* This work is unique in the history of social and philosophical thought in terms of its objectives as well as its ideas, method of exposition, integral approach to the child personality, and an organic combination of pedagogical and psychological analysis.

Ushinsky's great mission was similar to the one carried out in the seventeenth century by Komenský, the outstanding Czech educationalist. That is why we view Ushinsky as the founder of

the Russian school of pedagogics, the teacher-educator. That is why his name lives in the hearts of every teacher, remembered in every school and family of the vast Soviet land.

And that was why I was so captivated by his works precisely during the period when I was striving to master the technology of teaching. But, for me, the creator of true modern teaching technology at the time was Anton Semyonovich Makarenko.

2. THE NOVELTY AND TIMELINESS OF THE WORK OF ANTON MAKARENKO

For many years I was captivated by the outstanding pedagogical talent of Anton Semyonovich Makarenko (1888-1939). I admired his scintillating love of life and the combination of latitude and restraint that he embodied. And I admired his character: "nerves as strong as cables" (his own words); an iron logic and uncompromising approach to moral issues; an ability to laugh together with children from his heart; and an unflinching severity towards charges who did not recognize that they had committed an error.

I also admired his advice: do whatever it takes but be happy, for only a happy person can help develop a genuine individual; all agonies of the heart are of no use in bringing up children——teaching skills are needed; in Makarenko's opinion, there is not much reliance on evolutionary processes—what is needed are explosions and "categorical imperatives", even if these make a person balance on the "edge of an abyss"; individual actions should be measured exclusively by the interests of the collective.

To understand Makarenko one must know the manner in which he responded to various situations. In 1905, at the age of seventeen, he completed a teacher course and began to work in a school in Kryukov, a small railway town in the Ukraine near Kremenchug. There he also set up a summer camp for the schoolchildren and organized various festive events. He also openly opposed the school's director, accusing him of inertness, lack of culture and corruption. As a result Makarenko was transferred to a railway-station settlement where he served as a teacher. In 1914, having acquired considerable life and professional experience, he entered the Teachers' Institute in Poltava. Upon graduating in 1917 he received a gold medal and the following testimonial: "A student with outstanding abilities, knowledge, development and diligence; has shown particular interest for pedagogics and the humanities."

The Socialist Revolution in October 1917, Makarenko would later recall, "suddenly opened before me vast opportunities for developing free human personalities and for educational work."*

After his graduation from the Institute, Makarenko returned to Kryukov where he directed the railway vocational school until 1919. At that time he was invited to become Director of a college (1919-1920) in Poltava training teachers for elementary schools.

During the first years of the new Soviet State the country suffered from hunger and destruction. Thousands of children lost their parents. Without a home, clothing or food they became thieves, robbers and vagabonds. In such a context Makarenko turned to one of the most difficult educational tasks. In September 1920 he established and became head of a labour colony for juvenile delinquents where he created an integral system based on sound theory for the upbringing of children united in a work collective. In 1922, the colony was named after Maxim Gorky, the renowned proletarian writer, who corresponded actively with members of the colony and later began to visit them.

Beginning in June 1927 Makarenko participated in the organization of a children's labour commune named after Felix Dzerzhinsky, assuming its leadership in September 1928. In this commune education of children was successfully combined with their useful production activity. In 1935 he became Assistant Head of the Labour Colonies Division for the Ukraine. He moved to Moscow in 1937, where he became deeply involved in literary as well as educational activities. Makarenko died of heart failure on April 1, 1939, in the prime of life, with many of his plans still uncompleted.

But let us return to his works and his pedagogical ideas and views. Makarenko possessed an exceptionally fortunate combination of traits. He was an inspired and fighting truth-seeker as well as a versatile scholar who closely followed developments in philosophy, foreign and Russian literature, the theatre, history, politics, economics, psychology and physiology.

But one should also note his creative approach to practical activities, his living knowledge of children, and of course his immense experience with children. These are all components of a full mastery of teaching skills.

Researchers in Makarenko's pedagogics emphasize that his creative work embodied the most important integral unity, na-

* A. S. Makarenko, *Sochineniya v 7-i tomakh* (Works in 7 Volumes), Moscow, 1957-58, p. 293.

mely, that of life and education. Makarenko reasoned as follows: above all a child is born to live rather than be educated; therefore his life should be organized and he himself taught to create conditions that will stimulate his learning, work and physical and spiritual development.

Makarenko was firmly convinced that until a collective and its organs of self-management were formed, and until traditions and elementary habits of work and everyday life were instilled, a teacher had both a right and a duty to turn to compulsion. He also believed that one could not base educational activities entirely on interest and that the development of a sense of duty often conflicted with a child's interests, especially in the way in which they were understood by the child. Makarenko proceeded from the need to develop hardy individuals who could carry out even unpleasant and uninteresting kinds of work when required by the interests of the collective. Moreover, he met with great success in carrying out the propositions of his theory of the Gorky Colony and the Dzerzhinsky Commune. Naturally, the teachers who worked with him also shared his views, but beyond this Makarenko's assistants included his own former students, many of whom subsequently became teachers themselves.

This was brilliantly described by Makarenko himself in his novels *The Road to Life* and *Learning to Live (Flags on the Battlements)*.*

In reading *The Road to Life* one sees the great effort, intelligence and tact he applied to organizing collective forms of living for children—a central method in his pedagogics. He argued for the development of diversity in children's interests and labour skills as well as for self-organization and initiative. These are precisely the creative elements that his charges acquired as they became involved in many types of work and technical and artistic creativity.

At a time when there was a general thirsting for renovation of life, when individuals wished to "reshape" and "restructure" everyone as rapidly as possible, Makarenko wisely warned that "no means may be expected to be positive unless its operation is controlled by all other means and unless the specific character of a collective is taken into consideration. A system of means can never be an inert and frozen norm. It is always developing, if only because children, too, enter into new stages of personal and social development."

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* A. S. Makarenko, *The Road to Life*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, A. S. Makarenko, *Learning to Live (Flags on the Battlements)*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1953.

This provides an answer to many controversial issues of pedagogics today.

In order to understand the essence of Makarenko's work, detailed in *The Road to Life*, one must imagine the situation in which he and his contemporaries found themselves. They were not so much engaged in discussions on the harmony of the spirit, as were confronted by pressing need to actually help children, to save thousands of children's lives. By what means could this be achieved? How should new Pedagogics be developed?

Makarenko's own behaviour provides a model of pedagogical courage, uncompromising adherence to moral norms, creative responses and civic courage.

Through his own actions he showed his charges that there is no more important truth than the common truth of a collective, no greater joy than its common joy. In the morning he would rise together with the children, chop firewood, cook, launder shirts, study at lessons and play with them during leisure periods. He talked and listened for hours, trusted the children, but was also uncompromisingly demanding. And as a result they came to view him as a very close friend and a member of the family, as it were. This represented a victory of Makarenko's value-orientations, the winner was not compulsion pure and simple, as some of his opponents asserted, but a sincere trust in his charges, the manner in which he gave himself to the children and in which they reciprocated.

Because of its many aspects and ambivalence, Makarenko's work is extremely contradictory. His own account of it is by far not smooth, and reading it is rough sailing, indeed.

The reader should be warned to make allowances when drawing general conclusions from the many extreme situations described in *The Road to Life*, in which both Makarenko and the collective turn to drastic measures; Makarenko strikes a member of the colony, Zadorov, and the colony members beat Prikhodko.

But even in these extreme situations resolution of contradictions through sharp conflict gives further impetus to the development of a collective and inspires it with optimism. In fact, according to Makarenko, a close-knit collective gains further strength even when it happens to make a faulty step.

Let us turn to the case of Prikhodko, a colony-member, who failed his collective and trampled upon its most treasured attribute—trust. It must be remembered that Makarenko trusted Prikhodko, as he did the other colony-members, and proudly

told everyone that not a single one of his charges would turn to highway robbery, for that was a past stage.

And when peasants once came to the colony complaining that colony-members were robbing travellers along the highways, Makarenko shouted indignantly: "Lies!"

"One evening," wrote Makarenko, "the door of my office burst open, and a crowd of lads hustled Prikhodko into the room. Karabanov, holding Prikhodko by the collar, pushed him violently towards my table:

" 'There!'

" 'Using the knife again?' I asked wearily.

" 'Knife—nothing! He's been robbing on the highroad.'

"The world seemed to be tumbling in ruins over my shoulders. Mechanically I asked the silent, trembling Prikhodko:

" 'Is it true?'

" 'Yes, he whispered, almost inaudibly, his eyes on the ground.

"Catastrophe arrived in the fraction of a second. A revolver suddenly appeared in my hand.

" 'Hell!' " I exclaimed. 'I'm through with you!'

"But before I could raise the revolver to my temple a crowd of yelling and weeping lads was upon me.

"I came to my senses in the presence of Ekaterina Grigoryevna, Zadorov, and Burun. I was lying on the floor between the table and the wall, with water streaming all over me. Zadorov, who was holding my head, lifted his eyes to Ekaterina Grigoryevna, saying:

" 'Go over there—the boys... they might kill Prikhodko...'

"In a moment I was out in the yard. I got Prikhodko away in an unconscious condition, covered with blood."*

Later Makarenko came to an unshakeable conclusion, viz., that the process of educating, and the more so of re-educating, could often be compared to a surgical operation, it was painful and required prolonged treatment. And in this complicated, painstaking work the teacher's role was that of a citizen actively intervening in his charge's life. In analyzing his educational failures, Makarenko stressed that they resulted from his "poor preparedness as a teacher, an insufficient mastery of teaching techniques, and a poor state of his nerves as well as desperation."** While creating an optimistic pedagogical science, he could not fail to see the tragic components that were so abundant in the lives of his charges—former vagabonds and lawbreakers.

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* A. S. Makarenko, *The Road to Life*, Part One, p. 170.

** A. S. Makarenko, *Sochineniya v 7-i tomakh*, Vol. 5, p. 149.

The Road to Life is a work written in a major key, and yet even there Makarenko is contradictory. Let us try to clarify this. One of the work's central themes is the joy experienced by children. Makarenko could not conceive education without their joy of working, of tying their first sheafs of wheat, of commissioning a factory of their own or a new factory shop, of fulfilling their work commitments, or without his own joy of communicating with children's souls, of demanding from individuals and trusting them, of knowing there was both a common task and a personal dream as well as a private project for his own life, and of feeling at one with his collective.

Today we know that the degree of optimism also depends on the extent to which contradictions within a collective are resolved and by what means, on the amount of care with which a collective's so-called alienated children are treated and on the extent to which a child's personality is protected in the collective.

In short, an individual's life does not develop along optimistic lines alone. It is inevitably accompanied by losses, pain, despair, and sadness—and the way in which a personality will develop depends much on the manner in which both the teachers and children in the collective view these phenomena.

It is in such terms that my colleagues and I repeatedly tried to analyze the tragic incident with Chobot. Chobot, a colony-member, was hard-working, reliable, honest and persistent. He fell passionately in love with Natasha Petrenko, who seemed to reciprocate, but nevertheless wavered and turned to Makarenko for advice: should she leave with Chobot, or remain in the colony. Makarenko avoided a direct reply, even though Chobot had told him: "If Natasha does not leave with me I will kill myself." Yet Makarenko did not press her and would have preferred that she remain in the colony. He believed life within the collective was more important for her. The outcome was that Natasha remained, and Chobot committed suicide. Makarenko was horror-stricken by the collective's matter-of-fact reaction: "A fellow hangs himself, very well,—strike him off the rolls! We must think of the tomorrow."

This led Makarenko to note courageously: "A full-grown crisis seemed to have sprung up in our midst, and many of the things I valued most were threatening to hurl themselves into an abyss—things bright and living, created almost miraculously during five years of work by the collective, things the immense value of which no conventional modesty could make me conceal from myself."*

* A. S. Makarenko, *The Road to Life*, Part Two, p. 168.

That incident provided a lesson to everyone, the teachers, their charges and Makarenko himself. He knew how to analyze situations and individual acts soberly and self-critically, with due account of the long-term development of both the entire collective and individuals.

Makarenko gave much thought to the place of the personality within a collective. He wrote: "In my educational work I saw that there should be both a 'standard' general program, and individual adjustments to it. For me the question did not arise whether my charge should become a courageous person, or a coward. There I accepted as a 'standard' that each person should be a daring, brave, honest, and hard-working patriot. But how does one approach delicate aspects of personality such as natural gifts?"* Makarenko repeatedly stressed that in shaping the personality, and personal qualities of future citizens of a socialist country, teachers should be extremely attentive and possess a keen political sense. He viewed this political sense as "the most important attribute of our teaching competence."**

Personalities can only be formed by other personalities. This thought was expressed by Ushinsky. It is well known that Makarenko was against so-called "paired pedagogics", since he considered that in a paired "teacher-student" relationship, there is a narrowing of the educational domain within which numerous collective interactions must also be taken into account. His reasoning concerning teacher-student relationships was as follows: first, "win over" a child's soul, make him your ally, involve him in collective life; and then, together, enrich it with new content; thus would value orientations long continue to unfold within the child's soul, as it were, and be transmitted to others, to his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Several years ago I was a consultant for a documentary film about Anton Semyonovich Kalabalin, the director of the vocational technical school at Podlipki (Moscow region). Anton Kalabalin was the son of Semyon Kalabalin (named Semyon Karabanov in *The Road to Life).*

It gave me a start when I saw Anton dancing the hopak. This was precisely how I had imagined Semyon Karabanov, as he began to dance—wearing a red shirt, with black eyebrows, ruddy cheeks and a broad, winning smile. I was also struck by something else—the son shared with his father a common manner, specific to Makarenko, of communicating with children. Both

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* A. S. Makarenko, *Sochineniya v 7-i tomakh*, Vol. 5, p. 119.

** *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 353.

deeply believed in their teacher's legacy, both were tormented by their search for new approaches to education, and both constantly referred to Makarenko's practical experience.

Makarenko's relations with Kalabalin amply characterize the professionalism and high humanism of his method of individual approach. I remember Semyon Kalabalin's description of his first meeting with Makarenko. At the time, he, Semyon, was sitting in a prison cell awaiting trial. He was nineteen and had a long line of previous convictions. He was waiting to be called for further questioning, when suddenly an unknown person in civilian clothes appeared, asked him his name, and began to repeat appreciatively:

"Kalabalin! What a superb family name! How good it sounds!"

Kalabalin could not understand who this fellow was or why he had come. At the same time, he was pleased; never before had anyone offered such open and sincere words of praise.

The stranger then sat down and proceeded to discuss a variety of matters, saying finally:

"This is precisely the kind of bold individual that I need."

"For what purpose?" Kalabalin asked.

"Let's go," the stranger replied. "The matter is extremely important, it cannot be delayed." And Makarenko walked towards the door, absolutely certain that Kalabalin would follow him, as he in fact did, walking alone without guards. He could easily have turned at a corner and vanished forever, but the person who had invited him to accompany him possessed some kind of remarkable attractive power.

As I listened to Semyon Kalabalin's narrative I recalled the episode in *The Road to Life* in which Makarenko described how he entrusted the former criminal Semyon Karabanov to deliver first five hundred roubles and later two thousand to the colony.

Karabanov described his own feelings to his teacher as follows: "If you only knew! If you only knew! All the way I was galloping along the road I kept thinking—if only there was a God! If only God would send somebody out of the woods to attack me! If there were ten of them, any number of them... I would shoot, I'd bite. I'd worry them like a dog, so long as there was life left in me... and you know, I almost cried...."*

And then Semyon left the office, singing at the top of his voice.

I have mentioned two episodes that characterize Makarenko's range of creative skills and his trust and love of his charges. It should be noted, however, that in both cases the pedagogical

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* A. S. Makarenko, *The Road to Life*, Part One, p. 232.

approach was the same. The closest possible communication with the other individual's inner self. A communication that removes all barriers, conventions, elements of distrust, and ill intentions.

Every teacher needs to possess this moral quality—a generous soul. Makarenko possessed that quality.

Another remarkable property of a teacher's profession is an ability to be like a child. This is a highly specific state of the human mind. It is synonymous with an ability to be creative, and is accompanied by a display of such virtues as cheerfulness, bursts of creativity, a desire to do what is good and a readiness to become involved in any useful project.

Can one imagine the best historical or literary personages without these qualities! For example, Don Quixote or Einstein, Pushkin or Dostoyevsky, Saint-Exupéry or Korczak? This is precisely the psychological state that unites adults with children. To be able to find this state in oneself, and to reveal it to children is a mark of a genuine approach to the development of one's teaching gifts.

Makarenko was once amazed by what a group of children liked most about him. They said to him:

"Do you know what it is that has won us over?"

"What is it?" asked Makarenko, perhaps expecting to hear how well he organized life in the commune (games, useful labour, self-management, the friendship of children, the teachers' kindly attitude).

"That time the lights went out," one of them answered, "you said that you would count to three and they would turn on again. You counted and they turned on at the word 'Three'."

"And what is so very special about that?" asked Makarenko.

"What do you mean! And what if they had not turned on again? But you did not hesitate, and you guessed correctly; the lights did turn on."

This may seem a trifle. But it expressed a multiplicity of nuances, an ability to play and daring, and especially, an ability to take a close look into children's souls.

In seeking to resolve the problem of relationship between a collective and a personality, Makarenko also developed his ethical conception, which centred on the proposition that collectivism is a principal moral quality, an ethical norm that "becomes truly effective only when the individual's 'conscious' period merges with a stage of common experience, tradition, and habit, when that norm begins to operate quickly and accurately with the support of an established collective opinion and collective taste."*

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* A. S. Makarenko, *Sochineniya v 7-i tomakh*, Vol. 5, pp. 435-36.

3. EACH CLASSROOM SESSION IS A CHALLENGE TO A TEACHER

At the time when I was teaching in Solenga I felt constantly electrified, so to say, with new theoretical charges. Though I did not make a parade of the knowledge and discoveries I gleaned from my readings, I did gain in self-respect. And self-respect is a cornerstone of a teacher's skill. But how difficult it was to acquire this ability to behave with dignity! How difficult it was to avoid the errors that were ready to discourage a beginning teacher at any moment. This is what I would like to tell about.

...The news spread through the school that an inspector was arriving. Not on a scheduled inspection, but simply passing by. All the same, everyone was preparing for the visit. Classrooms, halls, windows were washed, cabinets were moved and the dust underneath them swept, bulletin boards were put in order, classroom registers were brought up to date with lists of subjects that had been covered. The commotion was indescribable. Faik, the Head of Curriculum, was sitting at his desk.

"Your register shows a missing lesson. Was there a test? No marks were recorded. The sixth grade's daily reports are not signed, in the ninth grade the parents' signatures are missing. I am asking everyone to fill out the required information on attendance."

Everyone was busy. For the inspector was to record his findings in writing. And a copy of that document had later to be sent to the school. But only after it was scrutinized "up there", in the District Public Education Department. And woe to anyone who would be mentioned as a malfeasant.

After school I headed out to the fields where the children would be waiting for me. On the way I met Afonya.

"You must be going to see Sofya Nikolayevna? She has arrived."

"Who is Sofya Nikolayevna?"

"She is now an inspector. But once she was a teacher here in our school."

It was an exceptionally fine day, the land radiating with happiness in the waves of warm air. I walked straight towards the children who were waiting for me. Our lesson began. My game was in full swing; surrounding hillocks and gullies were marked as competition points with crude stakes with signboards on them: "Poetry", "Agility", "Physics", etc. A score of fifty points would qualify a player to enter the quarter-finals. This was followed by the semi-finals and then the final game.

I had long formed an image of the inspector— Sonechka and now Sofya Nikolayevna. Everyone was eager to say a kind word about her. "What a kind heart she has! And what a beauty, you wouldn't find the likes of her nowadays!" "And the songs that she could sing!"

And there she was, speaking with the children, probably asking about the game. I could hear her laughter.

I went on over to her. She was wearing a red dress with an open collar. Her first words to me were:

"I am so happy to meet you."

This made me feel awkward. Why should she be happy?

"I am at your service. Can I be of any help?" My words were dry and guarded. She understood this. I had expected to meet someone my own age but she was some ten years older, well-groomed, and seemed happy and carefree and unable to understand the problems that troubled me.

"This is remarkable," she said. "A school in the open air. Of course this will produce frowns, but just the same it is interesting. I have already looked at the children's poems and drawings and at the notebooks that they use to record their discoveries. How marvellous—each child has a notebook for writing down discoveries. Did you think of this yourself?"

I remained silent. I had the feeling that she did not expect answers. She was speaking, reasoning out loud and summarizing her conclusions:

"You have enchanted the children. At first I was wondering how you achieved this, but now I understand. I can imagine the reception that you found in Solenga. How does Parfyonov take your experiments?"

"I make no experiments," I replied.

"But are not the games an experiment?"

"In that case one can call a teacher's every step an experiment. I simply do what children find interesting."

"That is probably not enough."

"What is not enough?"

"That they be simply interested."

"If we are speaking of interest in work, learning and art—is that not enough?"

"Do you plan to go on to post-graduate studies?"

"I have never given it a thought."

"That's strange."

"What is strange?"

"What are you seeking to achieve in life?"

"Please wait a moment, I will give the children their assign-

ment and then I'll be free."

I called Vanya Zolotykh and Alla Dochernayeva and asked them to continue the game without me. Sofya Nikolayevna and I then walked along the edge of the wood. The question that she had asked me would not leave my mind. I wanted to understand her train of thought. I therefore asked her:

"What do you want from me?"

"To sort things out."

"In what way?"

Behind us we heard a burst of laughter. We looked around and saw that Vanya Zolotykh was reading one of his humorous poems.

"You are teaching children to write poetry? That is nonsense. Why produce graphomaniacs?"

"Do you think that no one taught Pushkin to write poems? Or Griboyedov and Lermontov?"

"That is altogether different."

"There can be no development without a child's attempts in writing."

"But what if the poems are bad?"

"Let everyone sense the beauty of his native language. We began with poems corresponding to a specified rhyme. If you like I will show you some of the children's poems. There is a remarkable inventiveness in them."

"I have brought you a dictation. Can this be done tomorrow? Only I'd like to conduct it myself." She looked at me slyly with a tinge of both coquettishness and distrust. As if she planned to trap me. That infuriated me. Did she really take me for a liar?

"Very well," I replied. "You may even invite the watchman to conduct the dictation, for that matter, but the papers have to be checked in my presence. And now please excuse me, I am busy. Good-bye."

I knew that I was rude. But she had made me angry with her "dictations".

The next day I was asked to come to Parfyonov's office, where I also found Sofya Nikolayevna and Faik.

"We have discussed a few things," Parfyonov began, "and have decided that the teacher should conduct the dictation."

"I refuse to dictate."

"Why?" asked Faik.

"I was already told yesterday who would read the dictation."

"But now we have changed our minds," Parfyonov said firmly.

"Sofya Nikolayevna will be present, together with Faik Samedovich."

I was silent. Sofya Nikolayevna was smiling. Faik, too, tried to smile. The silence was becoming unpleasant. Something within me prompted me to make a decision:

"I will be very happy if Sofya Nikolayevna will read the dictation."

"Very well," she suddenly agreed.

I brought up the rear in the procession to the classroom. Parfyonov was walking first, upright, severe, exuding fairness. He let us into the classroom but did not enter himself.

For the first time I saw my students as an outsider, as it were. Another person was standing in the place to which I had become accustomed and to which I had given my heart. I now merged with my students. And facing us was that attractive woman in a trim grey suit. I was listening to Sofya Nikolayevna as she read. She read in a soft, deep voice with clear pronunciation, and I became certain that my students would write the dictation well.

And indeed, shortly afterwards Sofya Nikolayevna stated in the teachers' room:

"A high level of literacy."

"We do our best," replied Faik with a sour smile.

I showed no sign of my feeling of triumph. But within me everything was singing. I stopped at my classroom for a short moment. The children were silent.

"Not bad at all," I said and quickly left the classroom.

I felt deeply relieved; there was, thank God, at least something positive. But still I felt as if there would be some kind of trap. Nothing of the kind happened. On the contrary, everyone's attitude towards me appeared to improve, as though I had been promoted from the status of a young, inexperienced teacher and placed in a different category.

I long cherished an idea to combine lessons in Russian language with lessons in literature. At that time my pupils were refreshing their knowledge of Lermontov. It was precisely while I was conducting these refresher lessons that Sofya Nikolayevna came in.

Our game at finding artistic details and parts of a sentence was proceeding lively, the children were raising their hands, asking questions and commenting on the answers. And even though everything was going well, I felt slightly ashamed because I had, after all, followed the advice given to me by my senior colleagues on earlier occasions: "In the presence of a commission try to ask the children the questions to which they know the an-

swers." And I guided them towards questions that we had already noted last time.

Of course, to return again to Lermontov's landscapes, in which words were combined in such a contradictory fashion, was not a useless activity; to understand the language of a great writer one must return to it over and over again. But still... During the lesson Kostya Laksheyev repeated a thought that had already been expressed:

"Pushkin's landscapes are filled with sunshine. While Lermontov's remind one of the moment before a storm."

He was using my own words, and I seized this opportunity to continue.

"In what way does it remind one of the moment before a storm? Is the approaching storm felt everywhere? Then is it rather a premonition of a storm?"

"Yes. In Lermontov's work, even in the calm landscape associated with his description of Pyatigorsk," Kostya picked up the book and read, " 'Where the air is pure and fresh, like a child's kiss,'—even in this calm description one feels the tension of a storm..."

"Where?" I asked, and looking into their texts, the students raised their hands almost to the ceiling: "Let me answer!" "Ask me!" "I know where!"

"Here!" replied Tolya Barashkin. "Mashuk covered the entire sky with its furry Persian cap, and everything turned dark..."

Others interrupted him and offered different arguments.

"May I say something?" that was Olya Krutova. "How should one understand the words 'The mountains loom bluer and lazier?' "

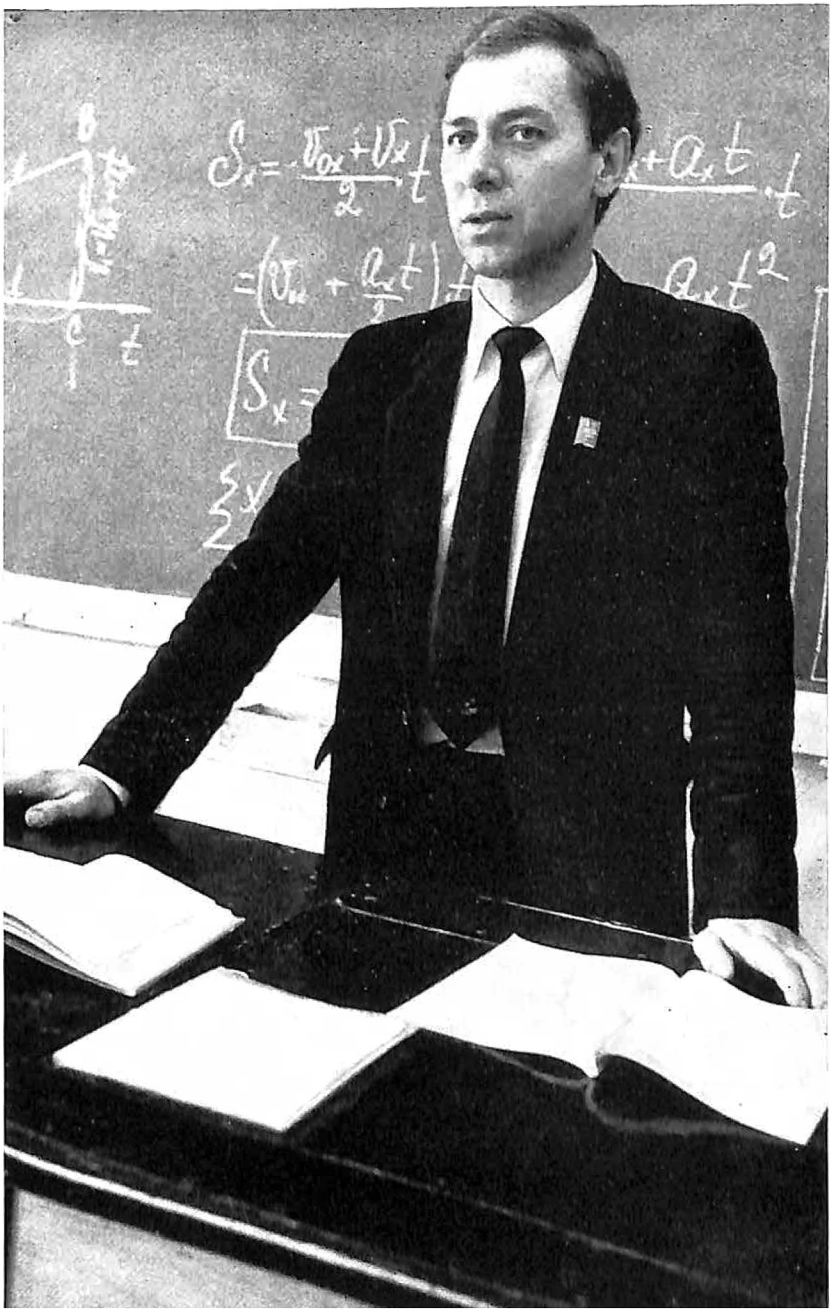
"Let us think about this," I replied, but nothing occurred to me that could explain the words "The mountains are looming blue." I had never noticed this phrase earlier. "Well, who will tell us?"

The children were silent. Both Faik and Sofya Nikolayevna were looking at me. I was expected to provide the correct explanation.

"Lermontov has cast quite a lot of haze on all of this," interjected Barashkin, and the entire class laughed. But I did not feel like laughing. I could not think of a good explanation and I was ashamed to parade as the teacher who knew everything and could answer all difficult questions. I delay answering and ask the children again:

"Perhaps someone will tell us?"

"Lermontov applied to prose the principles of poetic speech,"


$S_x = \frac{v_{0x} + v_x}{2} t$
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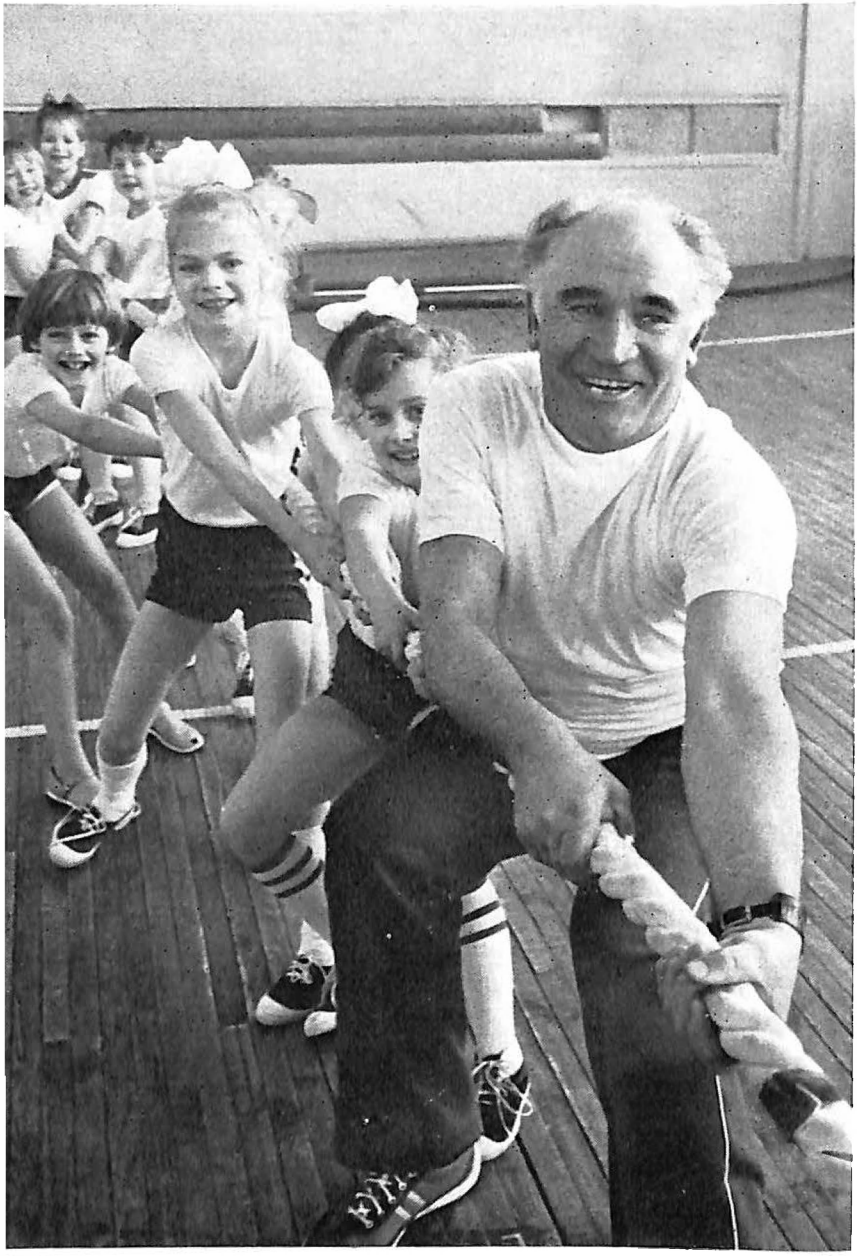

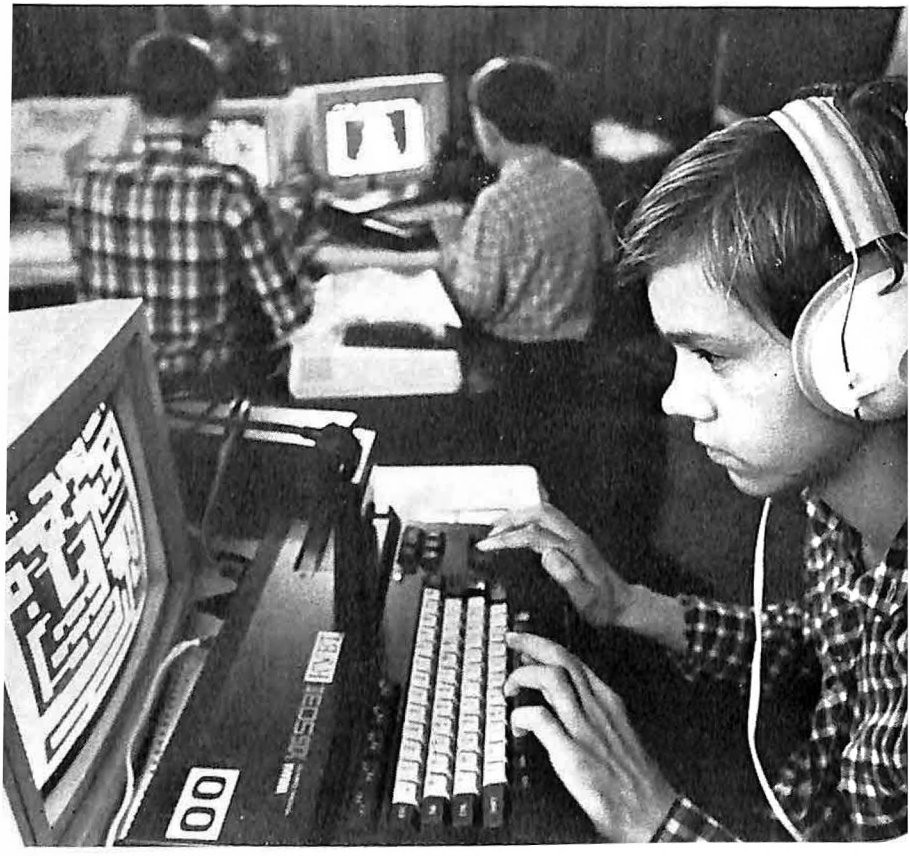

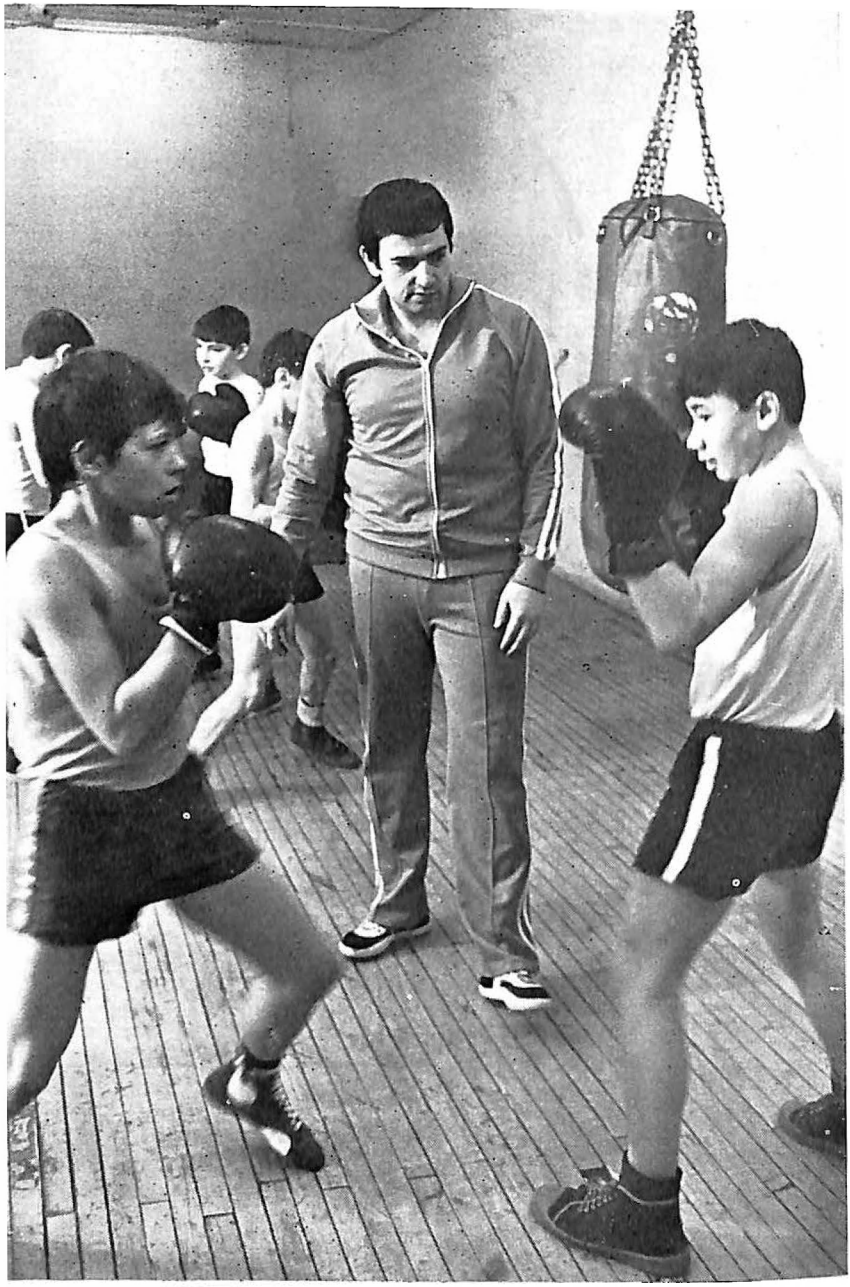

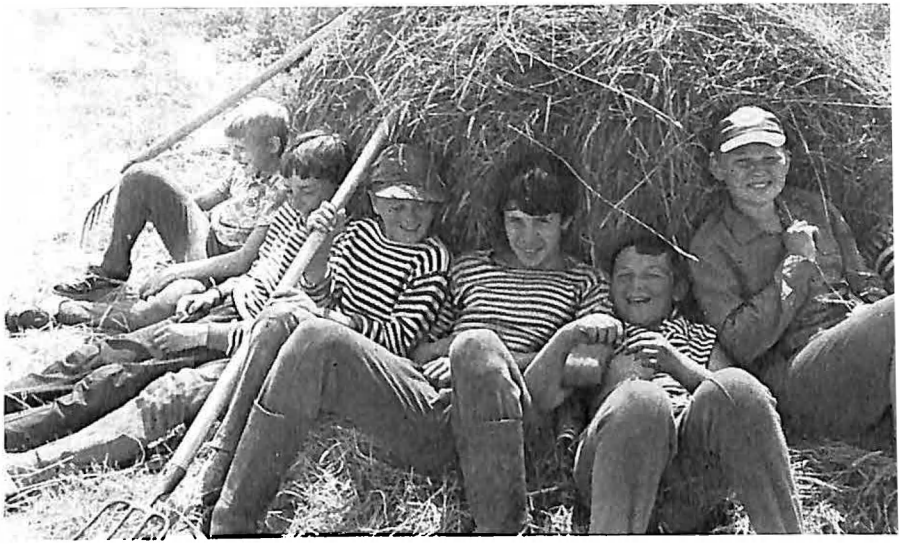

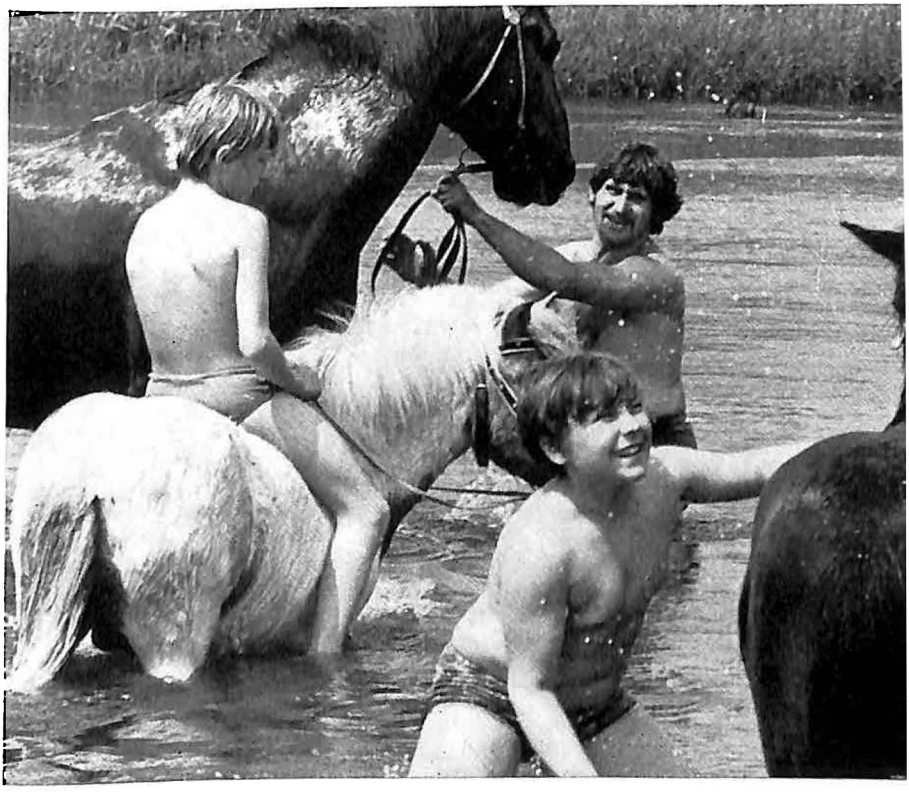

that was Victor, my nephew, who rose to his feet. We had discussed this last evening. And I had said something to that effect concerning another passage. I had also told him that Lermontov's range of colours included dark blue, black, blue and gold, and now Victor saved me as he explained: "In the case of Lermontov, colours play a special role. We find the most unexpected contrasts such as: 'White is the lonely sail in the sea's blue mist'. The mist is a colour blank (once again my nephew was using my own words), greyness, as it were, while blue stands for clarity and sunshine, so how can one combine them? Tolstoy said that one could call Lermontov a poet of genius even if he had written nothing except that single line."

Victor's reasoning was persuasive.

"Victor is right," added Kostya Laksheyev. "In his poetic language Lermontov combines the uncombinable!"

"Explain," I asked.

"We find this in the same poem, *The Sail*. 'The waves are breaking and the wind is howling'. That means that it is almost a storm, yet deep down there is 'a stream lighter than sky blue', once again the colour blue, and 'the golden ray of sunlight'."

"Lermontov builds everything on extremes. He always expresses both longing and suffering, love and hatred," that was Olya Krutova.

"Lermontov always expresses hope. Wherever he describes darkness and night there are also tiny rays of light coming through," that was Tanya Kosichkina rising to her feet, an extremely reticent girl.

We revelled in Lermontov's prose and recorded the best sentences, in which there were so many participles, and so many comparisons, and the meaning was so clear. And everything was going well. My happiness, however, was premature. Tolya Barashkin rose to his feet and said:

"There is a mistake in Lermontov! Let Krutova write the sentence on the blackboard." Tolya read: " 'Both on the right and on the left there darkly loomed sinister mysterious precipices and mists, whirling and twisting like snakes, crawled down the folds of neighbouring cliffs...' "

"And where is the mistake?" asked Olya Krutova.

"In that, like Lermontov, you did not place a comma after 'precipices'."

"And why is it needed?" asked Olya. "There is no comma in the book either."

"Because it is only the sinister mysterious precipices that loomed darkly, while the mists whirled and twisted like snakes."

"What do you mean?" children shouted from their seats.

"Nothing much," Barashkin retorted with a challenge. "If one does not add a comma then precipices and mists will be common parts of the sentence, objects referring to the predicte 'loomed darkly', and if that is so then *precipices* will be whirling and twisting like mists, that is, like snakes, and *precipices* will be crawling down the folds of cliffs."

Together with the children I closely examined the text. For me this was an entirely new discovery; no mistake about it, here was a glaring incongruity that one would not expect from Lermontov.

The class was in an uproar as the children voiced all kinds of guesses. But I could no longer think clearly. My head was muddled, I stared at the text without seeing anything, my vision became blurred and I felt that the sweat was oozing on my brow.

I caught Faik's malicious look and it would not leave me. In my mind it merged with those precipices and mists. I also sensed Sofya Nikolayevna's look: how will the teacher respond to this, what will he say, how will he resolve the contradiction?

I was absolutely confused and could not utter a sound. I was paralyzed with embarrassment. I should have simply replied: "This is a complicated question, children. Let us give it some more thought, consider it carefully, and then decide tomorrow..." But my lack of experience did not allow me to find any other words except for an awkward: "No, everything is right..."

"How can it be right when it makes no sense!" Barashkin insisted at the top of his voice. And I did not know where to hide from shame, and could find no explanation... (Later I found out that in that particular book there was indeed a misprint—a comma was missing.)

The bell rang and I left the classroom. Sofya Nikolayevna and Faik preceded me. They were arguing about something. Approaching them I asked:

"When will discussion of the lesson take place?"

"Sofya Nikolayevna will attend another of your lessons in literature in the same class. You have no objection?" Faik said with a smile that bode no good. "Parfyonov, too, will come."

I realized that if I made myself comfortable, the outcome would be sad. That was why I decided to continue my lessons in the same vein.

I began by recalling that Lermontov was accused of opposing God and adhering to Nietzsche's philosophy, of not loving life and hating people. "Who will disprove these accusations?" I asked. "You may use your notes and textbooks."

I could hear the rustle of turning pages. One after another children raised their hands. Two girls sitting near Parfyonov, Katya Zamuruyeva and Galya Gribovets, did not raise their hands, although I could tell by their faces that they were simply afraid to answer. I asked:

"And what does Galya think?"

She began shyly:

"Lermontov was always torn by doubts. He wanted to love people, his country and life. But he was not sure..." Galya hesitated, she wanted to mention something that was very important but could not express what she felt in her soul and what she had derived from earlier lessons.

"Very well," I replied. "And who will develop this thought further?"

The children began to argue. Their debate expressed their helplessness, ignorance and lack of understanding in dealing with the complex processes that had taken place in the nineteenth century among Russia's upper aristocracy. But it also expressed their sincerity and deep concern, as if they were seeking to protect what was closest and dearest to them, their home, their friends and their families.

"He loved everyone but was stifled by the bad people who surrounded him."

"It couldn't be that they were all bad. Why was it that Pushkin found good people, and Lermontov did not?"

"There were more progressive people in Pushkin's time..."

"Lermontov was loved by his true friends," that was Katya speaking. "His grandmother loved him dearly."

This produced animation and laughter.

"There is no cause for laughter," said Kostya Laksheyev rising to his feet. "The poet's grandmother, Elizaveta Alekseyevna Arseneva, was a woman who held progressive views. Her two brothers, Dmitry and Arkady were close to the Decembrists and counted Pestel and Ryleyev among their friends. When one of the brothers died just on the eve of the Decembrist uprising, Ryleyev dedicated a poem to his wife and published it in *The Northern Bee.*"

Kostya Laksheyev had recently moved from a large city into our settlement. The way in which a single student could change the atmosphere in the class was striking. Kostya was not only well read, but also possessed some kind of knowledge that set him apart from others. He possessed a special type of integrity. He spoke with teachers as an equal. But this was accepted, for he not only studied well but also participated in social activities.

The other children liked Laksheyev. There was no doubt that he contributed an element of freshness and stimulation to that eighth grade class, whose overall quality was altogether different from the one in the graduating tenth grade that I also taught.

In the tenth grade class one always sensed the sturdy peasant thoroughness of the mind and this was tiring. I was tired of their silence and frozen rigidity. In contrast one felt a fresh breeze, as it were, in the lively eighth grade class. And it came not only from Laksheyev, but also from four others who had recently arrived (their parents were geologists). But still, in modern terminology, Laksheyev was the leader.

"Where did you learn all this?" asked a surprised Barashkin.

"You should read commentaries at the end of books."

I was pleased that this talk of commentaries and footnotes had come up. Before this, the children gave no heed to commentaries, but later they began to look for new information in them.

Once again Faik whispered something to Sofya Nikolayevna and looked at his watch. I caught the words "marking time". They were referring to my discussion with the children. It was time to summarize. And yet everything became confused in my mind—questions, answers, opinions, and my own thoughts. Where to begin? My words were disjointed and hurried, as if this were my last hour. I only hoped that the bell would not ring, for I wanted to finish, I wanted to defend Lermontov from past and future enemies. To defend him from indifference. I wanted to reach the children's hearts, and in that perhaps I succeeded.

In those days open lessons were in fashion. Everyone was trying their best, laying themselves at. I had seen many teachers at such open lessons. They were on fire, their faces were aflame, and a burning spirit poured out of them. And the children got used to such performances by their teachers, but they themselves only played the role of obedient extras.

In preparing for this "inspection" lesson I had spent much time in thought. Because of my deep concern with Lermontov's poems, his contemporaries' opinions of his and the works of other poets, I had not slept all night. I was preparing for something that was much more than a simple lesson. What meaning was there in poetry if it failed to reach people's hearts today? Why should I not have a right to the same feelings that the poet himself experienced?

During the lesson I wanted to associate both the children and myself with the purity that shone in the poet's immortal lines. It seemed to me that both poets and teachers lived by the same law, they awakened spiritual hunger and then satiated it.

Concerns that preoccupied a teacher and strongly felt emotions that occasionally shook him also agitated children. Without this kind of agitation there was neither education nor personality nor native land. It was with precisely this kind of love and this kind of feeling that Lermontov's poetry was filled.

And perhaps the very meaning of literature, pedagogics and culture lay in understanding how "the links of a common clan unfold". That thought was expressed by Alexander Blok, a great Russian poet. I was struck by his reflections: it was only at the cost of personal tragedy and of failures in one's own life that an individual was able to affirm what was new and valuable for society. In saying this I was again inserting a certain meaning behind the lines of my own narrative that was evident to children. I said this as if I had been completely certain that they all were ready to take that last step that might require them to give up their last crust of bread and even their lives for the sake of truth and justice. I saw the inspired and resolute faces of Barashkin and Kostya Laksheyev, Tanya Kosichkina's quiet self-abnegation, and Olya Krutova's and Zina Shugayeva's decisiveness.

It was later that I would be told that one should not aggravate problems, that one should protect the child's psyche and avoid the development of adolescent maximalism.

But now the bell had rung. My lesson was the last one scheduled that day. And I told the children that I had a secret for them. I wanted to reveal the secret of how one should live in this world and create one's self.

I saw Parfyonov, Faik and Sofya Nikolayevna close their notebooks and prepare to leave. Well, if they did not need my secrets then let them go.

The inspection team left. And as soon as the door closed behind them I felt a relief. I felt an even greater joy at the presence of children. I asked with good humour:

"Perhaps we should skip the secret?"

"No! Tell us!" the children shouted.

"Perhaps next time?"

"No, today!"

"Very well, then listen. Like you, I have often wondered over the riddle: why is it that one person becomes famous while another does not? Where is the secret? It was Lermontov, a teenager of fifteen, that revealed it to me. I will now read some lines from his poems in which the secret is revealed.

" 'From infancy, as I remember it,
My soul was in search of wonder...'

'And more than once I cried
Disturbed by mournful dreams...'

'I have to act; it is my wish
To make immortal any of my days...'

'My life seems short to me,
And fear lurks inside
That I shall leave undone some things...' "

"What a gifted writer," said Tolya Barashkin.

"A genius," I corrected him. "And as one he was to fulfil his extraordinary purpose. Each individual must have his own special purpose which lies within his capacities. But it must be 'special'. You might ask me whether I know what my own purpose is? Not completely. But still I sense that to approach one's own objective continually, even though it may not yet be clearly formulated, means fulfilling one's purpose each day. Do not each of you have a right to have his own goal in life and his own cherished dream? Let it remain your own secret. But the real secret and the real genius of young Lermontov, as a person and as a citizen, was that he succeeded in defining the particular task that lay within his capacity. The assignment for tomorrow is to write a short essay entitled 'The Secret of Genius in Children'."

4. TEACHER MUST BE ABLE TO DEFEND HIS CONVICTIONS

Now I had definitely ceased to care what Sofya Nikolayevna and Faik would say. I imagined Faik would say nothing. In every way, as curriculum inspector, it was not to his advantage to find fault with my work. And in any event he was prone to agree with his superiors.

I felt like a condemned man waiting for the review of my lessons. They were sitting in the office, frowning, and avoided looking at me as if embarrassed. I prepared to defend myself.

"We will follow the usual procedure," said Parfyonov, "and will invite the teacher to speak first, what do you think, Sofya Nikolayevna?"

"I have no objections. Please, Yuri Petrovich. Incidentally, Faik Samedovich, do you often hold double lessons?"

"In this case we met the teacher's own wishes. Yuri Petrovich could not manage to complete the lesson in forty-five minutes. If you do not think that this is right we will correct the matter next quarter."

"No, there is no need," Sofya Nikolayevna replied amicably.

I began by explaining that my lessons were games only on the face of it. The classical authors taught that the entire life of children's institutions had to be built on games.

"It should be noted that not all classical authors hold such a view," Sofya Nikolayevna smiled. "Ushinsky for one insisted emphatically that games and teaching should not be combined."

I chose not to argue, although I had encountered a number of passages in Ushinsky's works describing the need for games. Faik, too, had a dig at me:

"I have told Yuri Petrovich repeatedly that learning is a hard task and not a game. Perhaps there is something I fail to understand and am too old-fashioned?"

"No, not at all, here you are entirely right," Sofya Nikolayevna said. "Continue, please, we will return to this point later."

Parfyonov remained silent. I felt no desire to speak. It seemed to me that anything I would say would be considered wrong.

"You know," I admitted, "I find it difficult to analyze this by myself."

"Very well," Sofya Nikolayevna agreed. "Then let us ask Faik Samedovich."

"I will consider a number of points in order," Faik began. "In their order of occurrence during the lesson. Of course, I am not a specialist in literature and I have therefore only noted methodological aspects. There is no doubt that the teacher knows his subject and also that the children like literature. The principal shortcoming, and I am prepared to argue this in detail, is that the teacher disrupts what is the basic form in all school work, namely, the lesson, and does this in all respects. For example, the organizational aspect. On this point, the role of a teacher has been obviously played down. We enter the classroom and the children are already conducting the lesson. This is an inadmissible diminishing of a teacher's authority."

"How else," I object, "can one develop in children a capacity for spontaneous collective activity?"

"Learning is not spontaneous collective activity," Faik replied. "We are a school not a club. The teacher violates universal standard requirements in relation to classroom activity established by the State. The very first source of disorder is that he allows children to move their desks. A child should learn to have a permanent place. Moving about in a classroom should not be allowed. But in Comrade Azarov's class students rise, walk about, and ask questions without raising their hands. This is not right, comrades. In this way all discipline would go to pieces in no time."

"Which discipline," I asked, "that of creative efforts or that of conformism?"

"Please, Yuri Petrovich," Parfenov interjected, "do not interrupt. We are prepared to listen to you attentively, but first listen to us."

Faik continued: "Explanatory parts of the lessons are conducted by unauthorized methods. In what methodological handbook did you read this? Show us! No, Mikhail Fyodorovich and Sofya Nikolayevna, I can no longer accept responsibility for what Comrade Azarov is doing. Of course, if you should decide to permit this and make a note in the inspection act to the effect that Azarov has been permitted to conduct lessons in accordance with these methods, then it is a different matter... This is the main point that I wished to state as Head of Curriculum. I also have a number of minor observations. I do not know how you feel, but I find it scandalous that the children behave in such an unruly manner during lessons. This is inadmissible and improper. And finally, the most unpleasant point: a teacher who makes assignments after the bell has rung is no longer a teacher."

"There is no need to be nervous, Faik Samedovich," said Parfyonov. "I agree with you. I would also like to note that the teacher knows and likes his subject, spends much additional time with students, yet there are mistakes in his work that cannot be disregarded. Yuri Petrovich uses methods that are borrowed from university teaching. This is difficult, sometimes abstruse and beyond the reach of children, and therefore constitutes a serious violation of didactic principles."

"I was reminded of my own youth," Sofya Nikolayevna added. "It is striking how all young teachers make the same mistakes! We all want to convey everything to children immediately, teach them everything, educate them! I was reminded of an occasion when I tried to compress a vast number of sources into a single lesson. And how harshly I was scolded. Remember how I cried in your office, Mikhail Fyodorovich. I could not agree with you, when I was lectured like a little girl: 'This is not a university! Here you are not allowed to give assignments after the bell has rung, or to wield elegant words. You have to meet standard requirements.' The very same situation, and the very same errors. And actually I am grateful to this very school's collective, for it was here that I learned to be disciplined, and to listen to the criticism of colleagues and friends. Do not be angry at us, dear Yuri Petrovich. There is much pride and haughtiness in you, for a teacher this is a disaster. I can't argue with the fact that you

have succeeded in many ways. Much of what you do is simply talented. The children know to work with their books independently. This is a major achievement. But you are still very far away from a genuine mastery of teaching skill, and if there is no self-criticism, there will be no such mastery."

"It is time to finish," Parfenov said. "Do you agree with the comments, Yuri Petrovich?"

"Why should I agree with the comments when I do not accept them?"

"It seems then that none of us understands anything, but you alone know everything?"

"That is not what I said. I might have agreed with your criticism, but they were not made in the way they should have been made. You mention the school bell, and of course it was a matter of poor timing on my part, but I was trying to solve a more important problem, more important for the children, and you did not even ask me what secret it was that I told them, and what truths it revealed. If you wish, after the bell had rung I told them what had always been on my mind. You will say I should have found a better time. But I say: there was no other time. That was the most appropriate, perhaps unique, occasion when everything developed in just the right way in class. I may be young and an inexperienced teacher, but I have convictions that I shall defend whatever the cost may be."

That evening Sofya Nikolayevna invited me to join her for a walk. Our conversation began innocently enough.

"What are you reading at the moment?" she suddenly asked.

"Classics essentially."

We began to discuss the uniqueness of the district library, which had been started before the revolution. When she had first entered that library Sofya Nikolayevna had expressed the greatest surprise at the number of rare books it contained. And the librarians were so friendly, such nice women.

We began to talk about various books, the forests and swamps, about museums and theatres, and I could not find a way to turn the discussion to what was really tormenting me. Sofya Nikolayevna continued to ask me about my relations with the settlement's inhabitants and about the plays that I staged in the club. She listened and then remarked:

"You are very fortunate."

I was happy. Perhaps she would help? I must not be sent away from Solenga at a time when everything was going so well. I mentioned this to her but she remained silent as if she didn't hear me. I sensed it must be late already but I did not dare look at my

watch because this would remind Sofya Nikolayevna about the time and she would suddenly say: "It is late," and what was most important for me would be left unclear. Suddenly I decided to address the issue directly.

"I am so happy that you have understood everything. And I feared that this was my undoing."

"What have I understood?"

"That Parfyonov and Faik are not right."

"What makes you think that this is what I have understood?"

"You have seen much more than I expected. And you felt ashamed that you came to prepare a recommendation..."

"What recommendation?"

"To transfer me from here."

Sofya Nikolayevna's expression changed completely. Her warm friendliness vanished, and she fixed me with a cold inspector's stare.

"What makes you think so?" she asked in a tense voice. "You are too self-important! I think some modesty would not hurt you."

"Well, what's it all about modesty? I don't quite understand," I mumbled in confusion. She was distant and angry. She no longer listened to me. She even moved away slightly to one side to the very edge of the road's high embankment, which made her appear taller than I was by half a head. She was wearing a very wide navy blue raincoat with broad sleeves, and that raincoat flapped in the wind as if an enormous bird of prey were circling over me about to destroy me.

"Everyone is trying to help you, but you... We have dozens of gifted teachers like yourself and none of them are counting on a special attitude on our part as you are..."

I was nearly crying with distress. In this situation the only thing for me was to say good-bye Sofya Nikolayevna and go away but I could not find the courage to do so, the more so that we left Solenga far behind us, for she had taken this walk to have another look at the native hills before her departure. We walked in silence. Gradually her eyes became softer. She looked at me out of the corner of her eye, but I remained silent. What could I have to say after such an outburst from her!

"I beg your pardon," Sofya Nikolayevna suddenly said. "I, too, have problems with my nerves. Forgive me. I should not have spoken to you like that. Don't heed me. Do as you think right and I will try to help you. I cannot promise anything but I will try. Not everything is as simple as you seem to think. Perhaps you will be lucky. For my mart I must admit I was not lucky." will be lucky. For my part I must admit I was not lucky." Her

Her voice trembled. I was looking at her and saw that her eyes again were kind and beautiful.

"I have lost, I admit this to you, everything that was valuable in me. I have lost it. Scattered it. What was most important is gone. And meeting with you was like rediscovering my own youth. I do not hide it, I envy you."

I could not believe my ears. Then she did approve of something in me, otherwise she would not have said that she would try to help.

I remained silent, in fear of spoiling a moment of sincerity.

"There, we have arrived," she said suddenly and gave me her hand.

"But there is still quite a distance!" I replied with surprise.

"I will go on by myself. Try to calm yourself and, if you will, do not mention our talk to anyone..." She gave me a broad smile and pressed my hand strongly.

She left the next day and I began to wait. Events in school became confusing, full of unpleasant anticipations, unexpected de-developments and changes.

5. THE HARMONY OF MEANS AND ENDS IN VASILY SUKHOMLINSKY'S PEDAGOGICS

The reform in Soviet schools that was launched in 1984 places a great emphasis on the need to further perfect school education. Participants in that difficult process include teachers and scientists, parents and instructors, and representatives of factories and social organizations. The successful outcome of this new challenge depends on their creativity, responsiveness, energy, culture and coordinated efforts.

In referring to the social aspect of pedagogics we have in mind the overall scale of the corresponding vision, the State approach to the development of a new generation, and the developmental prospects of our socialist society and our own destinies within it.

In referring to the specificity of educational activities, we have in mind those microphenomena and microdetails of the educational process which lie within the authority of specialists in psychology and medicine. These two levels—the overall and the specific should mutually enrich each other.

I would like to stress the striving of Soviet pedagogics for the indispensable harmonization of the objectives of education as defined by social requirement with the objectives as defined

by families, which have an unfailing orientation toward developing happy individuals; with the objectives as defined by schools, which teach collectivism and civic consciousness; and also with the objectives of the children themselves, who are influenced by a diverse and often contradictory environment.

It is precisely a striving to harmonize ends with appropriate means that constitutes the basis of the socialist approach to education. A vivid example of this is provided by the pedagogical work of one of our contemporaries, Vasily Sukhomlinsky (1918-1970).

From 1948 until the end of his life he worked as director of the rural school in Pavlysh. His biographers note that during that time he wrote 32 books and 340 other scientific publications. In his works, Sukhomlinsky describes how step by step, together with the children and his colleagues, he created in his native village and school the necessary conditions for ensuring the harmonious development of children. Each corner in the school, every patch of the school grounds must inspire love and beauty. Here is an example.

Sukhomlinsky liked flowers and plants and decided to transform the school into a blooming garden. His idea was met with support by the teachers and students. They prepared flower beds, planted apple, pear, plum and cherry trees, and constructed a nothouse in which flowers blossomed throughout the year. Sukhomlinsky wrote letters to botanical gardens, agronomists and other teachers. Soon packages began to arrive by mail containing different plants, seeds and seedlings. The school yard became an arboretum in which plants were raised not only for aesthetic reasons but also for scientific and experimental purposes.

At the same time the teachers equipped laboratories—in physics, biology and chemistry. They acquired scientific instruments, allotted space for children to keep their pets and built workshops.

Several beehives were acquired at Sukhomlinsky's initiative and a rabbit farm was organized. The children began to raise rabbits... They began to participate in useful work.

Together with these efforts to create a material base for the school, Sukhomlinsky turned to improvements in the teaching process itself. This led him to reflect more deeply on problems of method and to turn to scientific research in this area. It took him three years to study all subjects on the curriculum and solve all the math and physics problems given in the textbooks. He came to know the school subjects so thoroughly

that he taught many of them himself including history, mathematics, physics, biology and, of course, his own subject—the Russian language and literature.

In developing a children's collective, Sukhomlinsky sought guidance in the works of Nadezhda Krupskaya, Anatoly Lunacharsky, Stanislav Shatsky, Pavel Blonsky, and Anton Makarenko.

But on this issue as well Sukhomlinsky did not simply follow blindly his predecessors. He persistently strove to find his own approaches and methods in developing children's collectives, and in the course of years developed his own view on that problem. His pedagogical views, moreover, reflected the transformations that were taking place in Soviet socialist society, a society of real humanism. This society's greatest value is man himself.

It is in terms of a humanistic approach that Sukhomlinsky delt again with the problems relating to the collective and the personality. He introduced substantial amendments to the understanding of the nature of group influences and warned against possible mistakes.

In his work entitled *Developing Collective Spirit in School Students* Sukhomlinsky analyzed collective influences among children. He writes: "The students in an undisciplined class are definitely censured by their fellow students in each case of misbehaviour. We have had many occasions to see the very great role that this influence plays."*

He spoke, moreover, of the need for caution in applying educational means. "Not infrequently teachers seek to prevail upon children to approve collectivy the punishment meted out to a pupil, a semblance is created of unanimous agreement of children, and even attempts are made to punish on behalf of the collective. Such attempts cause great harm, for they contribute an element of disorientation into the limited social experience that students possess. It is much better when children learn already at an early age to interpret negative actions on the part of their fellow students and friends as errors and direct their efforts at helping them correct these errors. There may well be an element of condemnation in that help but it is marked by goodwill and will not produce undeserved humiliation. Experienced teachers can make skillful use of situations developing within a collective in leading the col-

* V. A. Sukhomlinsky, *Vospitanie kollektivisma u shkolnikov. Iz opyta selskoi srednei shkoly* (Developing Collective Spirit in School Students. The Experience of a Rural Secondary School), Moscow, 1956, p. 21.

lective to express its censure of the particular fault in a delicate and friendly manner."*

Sukhomlinsky proposed that a problem of collective influence be solved through mutual demands and expectations, through the genuine friendship that develops among schoolchildren. The development of a sense of moral beauty calls for great sensitivity on the part of a teacher, civic responsibility, and a passionate readiness to assert truth and justice.

He wrote that "it is the task of school education to create genuine moral civic relations within the collective, based on high ideals and on the moral values created, acquired and won by earlier generations. Moral values must become the spiritual wealth of each student.**

With regard to collective spirit, Sukhomlinsky emphasized the following points.

A collective is created through the joint work of students. This work gives joy to and enriches the students and develops their cognitive interests and inclinations. The shaping of a genuine collective requires an experienced, thinking teacher responsive to the concerns of his people. The development of a collective requires a humane attitude towards each other and harmonious development of each individual. There must be a cultivation of Man, Reason, Joy, Freedom, and Justice. Unnecessary activities, committee meetings that stultify the mind, discussions that suppress one's will and intelligence and evaluative sessions should be reduced to a minimum, while creative activities that children enjoy and that awaken their minds should be given as much scope as possible. The greatest emphasis should be placed on anything that serves to develop children's minds and souls and to bring out a child's individuality.

One cannot but share Sukhomlinsky's conviction that in a well-organized collective the sphere of "administrative intervention" into the lives of individual schoolchildren is reduced to a minimum. The experience of schools and other public institutions for children shows that a collective, in which moral norms play the role of regulators of student behaviour, can be created through the development of social opinion and

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* V. A. Sukhomlinsky, *Verte v cheloveka* (Believe in Man), Moscow, 1960, pp. 45-46.

** V. A. Sukhomlinsky, *Pavlyshskaya srednaya shkola. Obobshchenie opyta uchebno-vospitatelnoi raboty v selskoi srednei shkole* (The Secondary School in Pavlysh. A Generalization of Experience in Teaching and Educational Work in a Rural Secondary School), Moscow, 1969, p. 169.

manifestations of the power of collectives and of their capacity to protect genuinely humanistic ideals. The protection of each student within such a collective must be ensured through measures of public influence.

A correctly organized self-management constitutes the pivot of all student and teacher activities. The teacher must rely on the strength of his skills in forming the children's collective opinion. And this requires that children feel all the time that their teacher is fair.

What is the principal force that unites children into a collective? What is the force which knits people into a single whole that enriches them spiritually? What is it that creates a genuine harmony between what is personal and what is public? V. A. Sukhomlinsky answers these critical questions of the modern practice and theory of education as follows: "That force is man's concern for man. Man's responsibility to man. Man's responsibility before the collective and before society."*

Sukhomlinsky observes that when a person is aware of his participation in the life of a collective, in the life of a society and in its development, he creates not only material values for other people—he creates his very self. Self-education is inherently associated with the cultivation of one's sense of civic responsibility, and with developing a correct conception of the meaning of life, of man's purpose and of happiness. The quality of relations within a collective depends on what each member views as the highest meaning of life; what each individual views as an ideal and as a model to be followed; and how each conceives the highest achievements of moral integrity, valour and aesthetics. Accordingly, one should strive to develop a situation in which a civic world outlook becomes already in childhood years the mirror in which a person sees himself, in which he evaluates his behaviour and establishes his attitude towards himself in his thoughts, emotional experiences and actions.

The most important element, in Sukhomlinsky's view, is a harmony of emotional evaluations and emotional perception; the development of an ability to sense the inner state of others and to place oneself in their position in the most difficult situations.

A child, he notes, must find pleasure in his own good behavi-

* V. A. Sukhomlinsky, *Mudraya vlast kollektiva* (The Wise Power of a Collective), Moscow, 1975, p. 14.

our. At the same time he must develop intolerance and contempt for evil. Conceptions of good and evil must be developed on the basis of the views of society and of the collective. In other words, a harmony in emotional evaluations of one's own acts exists when a child is attracted to everything that his father, mother, teachers and friends like and approve. It is very important that relations between children and adults reflect what is valued by society.

An important aspect of harmonious development is an integral unity of ethic and aesthetic ideals in moral education. In Sukhomlinsky's opinion, the gravest failures in education are attributable to not having experienced, as a child, the joys of creating what is beautiful. In his *Birth of a Citizen* he writes that "life has persuaded me that when a child does not know the meaning of work inspired by the idea of creating beauty for others, his heart does not know refined feelings and is not amenable to 'subtle' ways of influencing the human soul. Instead it becomes coarse and responds only to primitive educational approaches: peremptoriness, compulsion and punishment. It is this that produces vulgarity and destructive instincts in adolescents. This is why I took pains to provide my future adolescents with inspired experiences and awe at beauty early in their childhood years, and in such a way that these feelings came from their personal efforts. Refinement and great diversity of emotional experiences of children, delight with beauty created by one's own hands and intolerance of coarseness, vulgarity and destruction of beauty provided the basis on which the emotional culture of adolescents was built."*

The social value and importance of Sukhomlinsky's creative experience lie in his success at showing concrete ways to realize the possibility of achieving a harmonious development of children's personalities, rather than merely demonstrating it at an abstract theoretical level. In further developing Makarenko's ideas concerning the impossibility of a genuine Soviet education without joy on the part of children, without a major key and without a true play of intellectual and physical powers, Sukhomlinsky elaborated an integral conception of education, in which work activities are inherently associated with various forms of human pleasure and in which a child's joy serves as a powerful stimulus in developing the aesthetic and moral foundations of the human personality. He notes that a child cannot live without joyful experiences, without hope for joy,

* V. A. Sukhomlinsky, *Rozhdenie grazhdanina* (The Berth of a Citizen), Moscow, 1971, p. 16.

faith in joy and his own idea of joy. He warns, moreover, that this does not refer to the consumer joy, which offers many dangers, but above all to the joy of creation, of working, of performing acts that bring joy to loved ones—parents, teachers and friends. Joy and kindness constitute the spirit of collective relations that make possible the emergence of generosity—an abundant sources of a collective's moral strengths, aesthetics and integrity.

According to Sukhomlinsky, beauty expresses that spiritual richness which leads to a renovation of both the individual and the collective, and to the noble and demanding responsibility of young citizens in their relations to each other. It is the chivalrous beauty of a man giving his care and attention to a woman, showing his fearlessness, courage, daring and readiness to defend the sacred human values.

"A school's mission," he stressed, "lies in educating individuals in a harmonious unity: as citizens and workers, loving and loyal spouses, fathers and mothers."*

"I considered the main success in my educational work to be that the children had been through the school of humanity, had learnt to hold other people's joys and sorrows close to their hearts, to love their homeland..."**

Sukhomlinsky's splendid idea that individuals should be taught a need for other individuals is close to the heart of all Soviet teachers. And there is hardly any doubt that the development of such needs is a universal basis of education.

Sukhomlinsky was deeply concerned with the spiritual development of individuals—a process that is inseparable from an assimilation of the entire cultural wealth produced by the human race. Sukhomlinsky's school as well as his own home became spiritual centres for the village. He had a library of more than twenty thousand volumes at home and could read in English, German, French and Polish. In educating truly enlightened persons, he encouraged each senior student to collect his own small historical library containing books about his country's glorious past and its loyal sons and daughters.

Sukhomlinsky arranged for the children meetings with hard-working and respected villagers. All of them, be it an old bee-keeper, or grain growers, or a woman who had lost her sons in the war but had preserved a remarkable love for life, taught the children universal truths: value your worker's integrity,

* V. A. Sukhomlinsky, *Mudraya vlast kollektiva*, p. 171.

** V. A. Sukhomlinsky, *To Children I Give My Heart*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1981, p. 436.

respect the work of others, help your parents and elders, do nice things for others. It is these truths that define the subjects of the ethical discussions that Sukhomlinsky formulated in aphorisms in the last educational plan he developed for his school: "If your grandfather or grandmother has died, know that a part of yourself, too, has passed away", "The greatest happiness that you can give to your parents is to live honestly, work hard and achieve success in learning and in work. Bring happiness into your home." In my opinion, Sukhomlinsky described the mechanism of interaction between what is universally human and what is individually specific in the moral development of children. In his school children covered the path from an assimilation of universal human values to actions designed to protect these values. A child discovers the concepts of kindness, duty and conscience in his daily interaction with teachers, parents and friends and assimilates them in forms that are more accessible to him.

Sukhomlinsky viewed words spoken by a teacher as a critically important element in the emotional and spiritual development of children. He made use, moreover, of the most diverse approaches to social education, combining his own words with living examples from the daily lives of ordinary people.

"In order that boys and girls learn the alphabet of emotional culture I visited other people with them. We met people in the fields, on farms. I taught boys and girls to listen closely to the words of their elders, to read their thoughts and feelings in their eyes, and to take close to heart anything that disturbed, troubled or was of concern to them. I found great joy in observing that a striving to understand a person's soul lends a noble quality to the feelings of boys and girls... On one occasion I described to my boys and girls—from the sixth grade—the bitter grief of a mother whose small boy had recently been maimed while playing with a bullet that he had found on the ground. Several days later Lyuda came to visit me, a small girl with blonde pigtails. She related with tears in her eyes:

"'Today my mother has been deeply sad all day. She sat at the table hiding her head in her hands; I called her name and asked: "What is wrong mother?"—but she remained silent as if she did not hear me. Please help, tell me what I should do...'

"The little girl had learned to understand suffering."*

Let us consider this episode in terms of Sukhomlinsky's

* V. A. Sukhomlinsky, *Rozhdenie grazhdanina*, p. 37.

most typical approach to analyzing educational practice, in terms of his philosophical-ethical system. A characteristic of his mastery of teaching skills is that he always associated the development of moral qualities with the child's own processes of reflection and practically critical way of thinking. A close study of his legacy confirms the view that what he offered to us was not an organizational technology for a particular activity, even though that aspect, too, is revealed in his work, but rather a mechanism for developing a new moral quality. In effect, he teaches us how to reach the most delicate chords of emerging potentials and inclinations in a person.

Sukhomlinsky thought in terms of such ethical categories as sympathy, compassion, guilt, responsibility, a loyalty to ideals, morality, humaneness, duty, conscience, truth, sensibility, good and evil, and an irreconcilable hostility to injustice, rather than such categories relating to method as perspective, expectation, influence, punishment, and organization.

Most probably Sukhomlinsky chose the ethical categories that have been listed because they provide an integral characterization of the moral aspect of the activities and the nature of man who must learn to see both good and evil. Evil, he believed, also expresses itself in the indifference and egotism of people. He taught his students to recognize any form of evil so that they might actively oppose it as adults, and so that they might contribute their share to good deeds. Sukhomlinsky saw fascism, that had also heavily scarred his own life, as the greatest evil on earth.

During the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) he fought at the front and was severely wounded. Several shell fragments became lodged in his chest forever. His young wife Vera was trapped in occupied territory. She circulated anti-fascist leaflets and was arrested by the Gestapo. It was in a Gestapo prison that Vera gave birth to a boy, who was killed before her eyes. Subsequently she was forcibly blinded and hanged in the prison yard. One had to be a truly great humanist in order not to become bitter and, while continually teaching students to hate fascism, to encourage a high sense of internationalism and humaneness. There is no such thing as abstract humaneness, humaneness must be irreconcilably hostile to any oppression, slavery or arbitrariness—it is always linked to culture and morality.

Sukhomlinsky revealed the complex dialectics of moral phenomena, explaining to children and demanding from them not to do evil to others or bring them humiliation, pain, alarm

or anxiety. "You should keep in mind that your own unreasonable and coldly indifferent words may humiliate, cause sorrow, produce confusion, shock or stun... One should not confuse human weaknesses with evil. Evil should be actively opposed. It should not be tolerated. To compromise with evil means becoming immoral oneself.

"Hypocrisy, servility and blind adaptation to authority are great evils. Learn to recognize these evils which have many faces and be intolerant and uncompromising towards them.

"Another great evil is to humiliate others and view oneself as a person worthy of respect and the other as a 'speck of dust'.

"A very great evil is laziness, carelessness, and a wish to live an easy life... Be intolerant towards that evil as well.

"Still another great evil is greed. A greedy person can be neither truthful nor principled nor courageous nor loyal to his duty. Learn to live without greed from early childhood."*

Sukhomlinsky's humanism is always active, without passive contemplation. And that active quality expresses itself in three ways.

The first relates to how the life of a child, his work and active interests are organized. Children study with joy, helping each other as well as teachers and younger friends, work in workshops, in technical circles, plant trees, cultivate gardens, observe the life of the plants and pets they tend, and help their parents and the collective farm.

The second concerns the development of correct relations among children and in the family which are based on respect, selflessness, and love for one's mother, younger sisters and brothers, grandfathers and grandmothers.

And the third is self-education stimulated by a moral enlightenment that produces a striving for further moral perfection.

In developing his theory of education, Sukhomlinsky made it possible for pedagogics to rise to a new and higher level, as it were. He was somewhat ahead of his time and was able to foresee what tomorrow would bring. This is why there is much in his theory that still calls for deep reflection and concrete embodiment in a wide range of practical activities.

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* V. A. Sukhomlinsky, "Stat chelovekom" (To Become a Man), *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 7 October 1970.

Part Three

A TEACHER'S PERSONALITY AND COMMAND OF PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

1. DREAMS AND REALITY

In the early 1960s I was invited to Moscow and told "You have learned much in the North. Now we offer you an opportunity to realize your pedagogical ideas in a new rural school in the south." And I accepted. I was given the position of Vice-Director for Educational Affairs in a boarding school in the village of Prelestnoye in the Ukraine.

I adhered to the following basic propositions: given the proper conditions every teacher and every student will be able to reveal their natural gifts; and a change in conditions stimulates a new stage in personality development generally and especially that of a teacher, for a new field of activity appears and new opportunities for expressing oneself. I was inwardly prepared to refine my practical knowledge and perfect my own idea of teaching skills. I had already developed a theoretical basis for this—the fruits of my passionate interest in the theory of pedagogics as well as my personal convictions.

Here are some of them.

When we speak of a teacher's mastery of skills and of his ability to analyze comprehensively the facts of children's lives we have in mind, above all, the level of his theoretical thinking, his ability to make generalizations on the basis of his understanding of collisions and relations of existing forces.

Like any thinking, active person, a teacher must not be satisfied with any positive conclusion, but must search to find out whether there are qualities and forces within the object about which he is thinking that differ from those that are evident at first glance.

A skilled teacher understands that his knowledge depends on his charges' changing conditions of life. Accordingly, he is always aware of the inadequacies of his knowledge, the imperfect nature of his skills, and the limitations of his work habits. His professionalism is in a state of continual develop-

ment. An ability to analyze critically and reject whatever is not appropriate for the given conditions, is one of the most important requirements for the effectiveness of his profession. It is through practical activity that pedagogical skills are developed, and the alloy of thinking and action constitute their core.

As a rule, however, the living reality, replete with the sound of voices, human expectations, misfortunes and sorrows of parents, teachers and their charges, takes paths other than those prescribed by theory.

...My new position at the boarding school once again convinced me of this. But I must note that at first I was in high spirits, and everything within me was singing. There was something of Don Quixote or perhaps, d'Artagnan within me. It was this joyful state that initially sustained me. A sense of humour also helped. This is because the individuals that I encountered were Ukrainian peasants, for whom life without humour was unthinkable. Because I somehow immediately adopted a rather ironic approach (mostly in relation to myself!), both children and teachers followed me and believed in my pedagogical ideas.

I will attempt to convey in a somewhat ludicrous form the first moments of my encounter with the reality that awaited me in the village of Prelestnoye in the Donetsk region.

On the very day of my arrival I had a lengthy conversation with the parents of two of my future students, Kamenyuka and Zlyden. They were working on the territory of the future boarding school, in a garden that was soon given over to the school. I invited them to my home for a talk.

"Our orders are to build a school of the future," I said.

"Right there in the weeds?" Kamenyuka asked sarcastically.

"We will root out the weeds. We shall begin tomorrow," I replied.

"People say that only ruffians are placed in boarding schools. How will you manage to keep the parasites inside?" Kamenyuka wondered.

"It will not work," Zlyden opined. "They will all run away."

Kamenyuka was savouring his victory in the newly born debate, glad to have Zlyden on his side. I then decided that the time had come for me to unsheathe my sword, and bring my pedagogical weapons into play.

"In these books," I said, taking books by Owen, Fourier, Pestalozzi and Makarenko from a drawer, "it is demonstrated

scientifically that the cause of many disasters is that education rests on a parasitic basis. Fourier, for example, states that domestic parasites, namely, women and children come first in this respect."

"Is this actually written?" Zlyden asked.

I showed him the book.

"Here it is in black-and-white, Petro!" Zlyden cried out. "I have always called my Varka and the children 'parasites'!"

"But how can you call your Varka a parasite?" asked Kamenyuka. "She works on the farm, and about the house, too, she works like the devil."

"Sure, she does, the parasite. That's true."

"But the children are not keen on work. Have lost all taste of it. I reckon, a good thrashing would put things right. Do you know of any other way?" Kamenyuka asked me mockingly.

"I definitely do," I said with firmness.

"But what is it?" Zlyden asked.

"It is simply that all children, from the very first grade will participate in productive work, engage in artistic activities and sports, and master various crafts..."

I gave myself full rein, citing figures and quotations, pointing to passages in the books. Fourier wrote that one must first pass a test before being admitted to the initial grades: wash 120 plates, peel half a pail of apples, sort rice or some kind of grain, perform in an opera and dance.

"But why 120 rather than 150 plates?" Zlyden asked.

"Fourier worked everything out scientifically. But actually, he is a utopian. For our own part we will adhere to Makarenko's method in this regard: economic accounting, a revenue of one million roubles, rural labour and real production activities."

"Production activities?" Zlyden expressed surprise.

"Perhaps a plant, or maybe even a factory."

"And what will Omelkin say to this?" Kamenyuka asked, making it clear to everyone that he was acquainted with Georgi Ivanovich Omelkin, the Head of the Office of Educational Institutions, whose jurisdiction included our own boarding school.

"It is Omelkin who has asked us to develop a project for combining work with studies and art," I replied with a feeling of importance.

"Has he really?" said Kamenyuka, rising from the table.

My new acquaintances took their leave, and I went out for a breath of air. A bewitching warm evening floated over the village. The weeds were motionless.

As I walked along the vast territory that was enclosed by a high fence with a gate, my inflamed mind was filled with radical reforms. The gate with symmetrical spikes was made of cast iron decorated with fine ornaments. This land, overgrown with weeds, but delightful in its abandoned state, heated by the sun and the warmth of the grasses was located at the very edge of the village. On two sides it was enclosed by the fence, the third bordered on an arboretum planted by a former serf-gardener, and the fourth was the bank of the Such river, all covered with reeds, with water showing only occasionally, sometimes quite deep, and vegetable gardens on its other bank.

I viewed this relative isolation as a gift of fortune. My thoughts concentrated about two points.

The first concerned the ecological aspect of childhood. My charges would be nature's children, children of the sun, and of that beautiful, warm and remarkable fertile land. In this free environment and open air, amidst fields and groves, small rivers and lakes, they would instantly develop strong bodies and clean souls. And that cleansing could then provide a natural basis for a genuinely harmonious development.

I could picture the health-restoring work in the fields, gardens, orchards and greenhouses. The boarding school was to receive two hundred hectares of land. This included old workshops and also farm equipment—old tractors, seeders, harrows and even a combine.

The second point concerned my belief that this relative isolation would make it easier to create a local educational environment. I saw the possibility that our own micro-world would influence the larger world. Should our labour-oriented experiment succeed, and I did not doubt for a moment that it would, then it could influence educational practice in the entire district as well, perhaps throughout the region, and possibly throughout the country.

I was in the seventh heaven: my ideas had been well-received in the District Office of Educational Institutions. I was promised that the best available teachers would be assigned to my school.

My general mood was very much in the spirit of d'Artagnan. Everything was singing within me and I felt a great impatience. I saw myself galloping across the land on a white steed wearing a red cape, imaginary aiguillettes tapping at my breast, deftly attacking the enemy with my sword—producing a million roubles in revenue, fashion-conscious young girls and young boys driving cars earned through joint labour. Perfect bodies,

noble hearts and rich minds. A harmony of personalities with the collective and with nature. And using Fourier's words, social enchantment. Each enchanted by another, by a girl, a young boy.

And of course I would produce, together with the children, an altogether different version of *The Three Musketeers.*

My knightly aspirations, fueled from within, were ready to challenge this pure air, and lead me into the castle, and under its arches, holding curving handrails, while my imagination had already begun to design gardens, place statues and delineate quiet avenues in the soothing shade...

I imagined arbours, verandas, underground passages and aerial structure. In one of the arbours, housing a Socratic school, there could be debates and discussions concerning the destinies of our native land and concerning man's soul; while in another, housing a school on Lobachevsky, parallel lines linked to each other in infinity would cross and diverge. In a third, there would be polyphonic poetry; one could hear the sounds of harps and choral renditions of leading classical works... While carpets of greenery would cover currently abandoned land, and on them young boys could be seen fencing, runners would run on cinder paths, while record breaking long-jumpers would spring into the golden sand beside them. Young girls, these butterflies with shining eyes, would turn on their toes—graceful, dancing an ode to early youth on frozen ponds. And then more singing, and art clubs, and the first formal dance. And of course horses with long tails and silky necks, with gilded harnesses and shiny leather saddles. And everywhere work, the great healer of the soul! Work at home, in the field, the most comprehensive and modern forms of work yielding a great variety of products. Patents, licenses, bank accounts, both personal and collective. And stemming from all this are joy and happiness, because everything is steeped in justice and freedom, and everyone is ready to protect these virtues...

My endless debates with both like-minded friends and opponents were now left behind in Moscow, where after addressing pedagogical scholarly sessions I would continue discussions until early dawn at someone's home, later meeting many more times to jointly develop a project for a new school. And we did, even though we argued violently. My friends would say:

"To start such a project in the backwoods is madness. It makes one think of Don Quixote, or else of Sisyphus."

"This is exactly the kind of madness that we need," I would object, "as well as Sisyphean patience."

Ultimately success depended not on officially approved projects and prescriptions, but the life situation within which a school would develop. Ultimately it depended on the spiritual world of its participants, and especially of its teachers.

Friends would mockingly say:

"These are all fantasies unconnected with reality."

"On the contrary, they are entirely real. If the material world is in our consciousness, and within our soul, if you wish, it ceases to exist in a form possessing high spiritual qualities, then as human beings we are doomed to a regressive mutation. Spiritual content extends to both objectives and means as well as to their outcome, and one will inevitably fail if one does not see this. To affirm this single and eternal truth is the only reason why I am leaving to develop a new school."

"You and your truths will be eaten alive. You will not last even a single year!"

I simply laughed, and the joy that filled my laughter in those years continues to give me strength today.

At that time my optimism found support in philosophy. The more gloomy and hopeless were the philosophical doctrines that I read the greater was the optimism that I felt within me, as I thought that I would now create, at least for myself, a new philosophy centring on joyful awareness of the surrounding world. My mind was filled so much with the ideas of Kant, Hegel, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Camus, Sartre, to mention only a few authors, that these ideas began to play the role of landmarks in my real life. I argued with shadows and objected to their views. Once, I recall, I even wrote a treatise against Camus. Unexpectedly, its prologue took the form of rhythmic prose. Today, I view these attempts to disprove the philosophy of the absurd as naive. But then I felt a vital need to do this. I liked Camus, and I could not accept his feigned despair. Probably because my own Sisyphus was pushing the sun rather than a stone. I was dreaming of a new moral enlightenment.

Once again, I reread philosophical and pedagogical literature with great avidity and felt as if I had already come to understand the springs underlying character development. I was feverishly preparing for the new school's opening. I had divided my earlier notes, reports, scenarios, writings on method and curricula into three parts. For this purpose I had started separate files entitled "Technology", "Relations", and "Personality".

The section on technology included all organizational aspects of the future school: its daily schedule, the structure of basic groups, its forms of self-management and the organization of different kinds of labour (productive, communal services, socially useful labour, artistic forms of labour). This would require workshops—for wood, metal, ceramics, as well as farms, fields, vegetable gardens and also a system for coordinating work in the workshops with that in agriculture. The technology of the teaching process was a separate item. In the elementary grades lessons would last thirty minutes and be followed by sports activities, rhythmic movements, artistic gymnastics, walks, lessons in the open air, and laboratory sessions merging with productive labour, lessons in essay writing, music, drawing and painting, dancing, theatrical arts and a combining of individual forms of activity with group and collective forms. I expected that all this should radically change not only the teaching process itself but also the relationships that shape personality development. I tried to incorporate into this technology only those elements that had already been tested in practice either by myself or by other teachers.

The development of ideal relations was a more difficult matter. I read and reread the works of the great pedagogues of the past. I understood, of course, that each new historical period also implied a new system of relations, a new pedagogics and new modes of communication, and that nothing could be gained from merely copying the past. I felt that the greatest contradiction would lie in a certain lack of correspondence between my ideal system and the particular individuals (adults as well as children) that would be carrying it out. Ultimately, I believed one must count on reality.

I had still another secret aspiration that I mentioned to no one. I believed that one could develop in any individual a talent for teaching, irrespective of his level of education. It is only a matter of developing such a talent, since the potential exists in everyone. A talent for teaching is that special ability which makes it possible for the human race to survive, and which, for example, also explains why even though people of Eastern cultures do not punish their children until they are seven years old, the children are obedient and respectful. It is an ability that rests directly on good, social human instincts and on such inherent human qualities as a need to love and a striving to protect this love. On many occasions during my work in other schools I witnessed how such a gift for teaching could suddenly appear in any individual, and how it was then impos-

sible to stifle it, because the need to repeat it, the joy of applying it became an irresistible force and acquired a form of despotic power over the individual. And there, too, I was continually haunted by an almost unsolvable contradiction. It seemed to me that I must, at all costs, keep secret my wish to create in others a gift for teaching. And I pretended to be naive in this regard so as not to frighten away a possible future educational genius.

2. THE JOY OF DISCOVERING A GIFT FOR TEACHING IN OTHERS

The first of my victims who was to reveal such an exceptional gift was Alexander Ivanovich Shevchenko, or Sashko, as everyone called him, an accountant in the local tractor brigade. He had a secondary education, was married and had two children. This kind, blue-eyed man had a keen sense of humour and was known as a banterer.

"You have the potential to be a remarkable teacher," I told him immediately. This was on the following occasion.

On an unbearably hot day I was sitting on a stump and adding the finishing touches to my pedagogical system by representing its technological aspect in terms of diagrams.

Two local girls appeared, Manya and Dasha, wearing light cotton dresses, their lips and hands red from eating cherries. They offered me a handful by placing them on the stump beside the drawings. They had recently graduated from school but had not found any suitable work. Their tight braids were decorated with white ribbons, and they were carrying sunflower seeds in small front pockets on their dresses. Their refreshing joyful laughter seemed to reduce the heat and I felt great pleasure when they agreed to pull weeds and enlist as technical workers. They wrote out the corresponding applications. Manya's handwriting seemed to crawl upwards towards the right, while that of Dasha moved upwards towards the left-hand corner, and the words of both were illegible. That was the outcome of their schooling—they could not even write an application. But in my dreams my future students would be writing nothing less than poems, and writing letters in neatly flowing strokes would be the easiest matter for them.

It was at this moment that a good-humoured man appeared on the horizon asking, barely holding back a smile:

"I heard there's some kind of work here?"

"There are weeds to be pulled, Uncle Sashko," the girls replied with laughter.

"But why remove them?" Sashko asked. "They are beauties! There's no other place on earth you will find such nice weeds!"

"Or such burdocks," the girls added mockingly.

"Do you know that burdocks are not only nutritious but are also medicinal plants?"

Sashko chose the largest burdock, pulled its leaves aside and pressed on them delicately as if he were holding something precious.

"Look at this beauty and note its texture."

Sashko removed its centre with a penknife, and broke the leaves with a snap. The pale rose centre released the tiny leaves that it had been protecting. Sashko began to peel long threads of skin from the stem until its core had become white.

I was observing Sashko and my heart began to flutter, there it was, a man's true teaching talent! What a captivating charm was conveyed through his quiet movements! I instantly imagined him surrounded by children. How great would be their need for that rich gift of fantasy.

I noticed a flash in Sashko's eyes when I began to describe to him my plans for developing a school of the future that would only be surrounded by grass lawns and occasionally a few flowers. And I sought to reveal the deep mystery of harmonious development in terms of widely known examples. He immediately agreed to contribute to the work without sparing his efforts.

I told him that we should immediately visit the district offices in order to have the documents officially registered and also begin bringing back items from the long list in whose magic power I deeply believed: sofas, tables, pots and pans, cups, spoons, mirrors, blankets, desks, cauldrons, refrigerating units, washing machines, lathes, drills, large and small sharpening stones, hammers, saws, pliers, notebooks, textbooks, and many more other things.

At four o'clock the next morning Shevchenko and I were standing at a fork in the road waiting for a truck that we had ordered from the motor pool. It was cold and we were jumping to warm ourselves. First half an hour, then an hour, then an hour and a half went by and we were still hopping, for the truck on which we would be carrying back the equipment had not yet come. Finally it arrived.

There was only one free seat next to the driver and my knightly dignity, nourished by my dreams of a perfectly equit-

able and just social order in the school, would not permit me to take advantage of my position. We both climbed into the back. The sun's bright rays were still cold, as if their heat was being carried away by the wind.

Three hours later we arrived at the district offices and began to load cases and bundles, classroom boards which we placed along the sides, then dishes on top, and then lighter items that would not cause the dishes to break—aprons, children's pants, dresses, scarves, berets and blouses. Because we were lacking in experience we forgot to leave room for ourselves and had to squeeze ourselves into a corner. As we sat uncomfortably our minds again filled, not with visions of the future, but with the idea that tomorrow, again at four in the morning, this trip would have to be repeated on another truck. And this went on for two weeks. One time I woke up in the truck lying flat on my back, my head jammed against the backboard and my arms embracing a metal barrel containing extra gasoline. Sashko was sleeping beside me, his head knocking against the boards. But we had become so tired in the two weeks of transporting all kinds of items valued at two million roubles that the knocking didn't disturb his sleep a bit.

But soon this work became a source of considerable pleasure: we became so proficient in packing and making a place for ourselves in the back of the truck that one could not imagine greater comfort. We now loaded the equipment into the truck more sensibly: heavier items came first and were placed on the bottom, while lighter ones were weighted down on top, and also tied with ropes. As for ourselves we formed a niche from various soft items that enabled us to stretch out and then, while lying down, to hold onto a rope as in a street car. By placing our heads on each other's shoulder the audibility was excellent and we could talk continuously for three hours.

It was then, looking at the sky with my soul communicating with the stars and the Milky Way, that I told Shevchenko about my dream and about my idea of the meaning of life: to seek truth and serve it no matter what the cost—be it shame, humiliation or even death. And I also shared some of my doubts:

"I fear that our dreams will be drowned in everyday trivial deeds."

"Why should they drown!" Sashko exclaimed indignantly. "We will not let them drown, by deuce!"

It was then that I understood that every person has a need to lead an honourable and beautiful life. Every person, whether a child or an adult, possesses a vast talent to create.

3. AN EXPERIMENT IN THE VILLAGE OF PRELESTNOYE

Many years have since passed, nearly a quarter of a century. To this day Aleksander Ivanovich Shevchenko and I continue to be friends. We are not only friends but are jointly engaged in an experiment that is known to the entire country. I will relate how this occurred.

The system of games that was developed together with the collective of teachers in the boarding school at Prelestnoye was designed to extend over a three-year period and made it possible to successfully develop creative activity in children. The games we engaged in at the school allowed us to create an entire sequence of situations within which children performed relatively complex tasks: they worked, read supplementary literature, built, actively assisted younger students and parents, wrote poems and produced paintings.

This experience was later repeated many times in a variety of schools and the result was always the same: children studied better, showed a greater readiness to engage in work, and the problem of discipline control disappeared. As the students became carried away with creative activities we could observe the changes that resulted from their new ethical values.

Shevchenko, too, participated in this work, having mastered the method of games and approaches to developing children's amateur activities. I led a studio in fine arts, while Aleksander Ivanovich led hobby circles on various forms of creative activity. At that time we had only mastered the most general form of such an approach, while many questions concerning the very nature of the creative activities of children in the field of art remained unclear. In particular we noted that in many respects paintings produced by adults were much less successful than those produced by children. It was this that led us to address ourselves to the phenomenon of talent gifts in children and at the second stage of our work we also formulated more specific questions: what methods could be used to encourage the children's enthusiasm, to what extent did artistic activities influence their moral development and their attitudes towards work, and how could one combine collective amateur activities with a subtle individualization of the educational process?

We reasoned as follows: it is misleading to divide children into those who are gifted and those who are not. There is no

such thing as a coefficient of capacity for gifted behaviour. All children are gifted and have a capacity to be creative. We sought to develop attitudes towards the personalities of children that would inevitably produce a high educational effect. A teacher's principal guideline is the proposition that the gifts of each child will unfold if one succeeds in awakening in him a spiritual need to see and feel the beautiful aspects in life, and in combining work with various forms of human pleasure. The main prerequisites are a sense of freedom and of being protected, and an atmosphere of creativity and of collectiveness that produces advanced forms of communication among children and awakens all their internal powers.

To create such an atmosphere is one of the major approaches to the development of creative activity among children. I would describe it as the method of happy mood, of giving children joy. A very important joy is that of being freed from the fear that one may fail. Children must be persuaded that they are certain to succeed. A painting produced by one of Shevchenko's students was shown at an exhibition in Moscow. It was called "A Herd of Cows". But there was a time when its author, a young girl, cried with bitter tears insisting that she did not know how to draw cows. "Then draw something else," she was told. "But I want to draw cows!" "Then draw cows." "But the ones that I draw look terrible!" "Then draw cows that look terrible." She then began to draw, for she had nothing to lose. Having completed her work she said: "Look, how terrible they are!" But actually the cows looked funny and kind, and everyone liked them. After a score of people had confirmed this opinion the young girl was radiant.

In designing our experimental project we never imagined that it would somehow help us to better understand numerous theoretical propositions of pedagogics and in particular the concept of a "collective".

Participants in the school's studio included first-grade students as well as students from the seventh grade and collective farmers. Nikolai Karpenko, the ambulance driver, produced a painting entitled "At the Smithy's" that the children liked very much. While each landscape produced by Nikolai Zhizhchenko, the collective farm's artist who led a children's drawing group, was a major event for everyone. In the evening there were general discussions concerning art, and this spiritual unity became both a major factor in encouraging collectivism and a condition for the integral development of all creative abilities.

We had deliberately combined students and rural workers into a single group. One of the major conditions of comprehensive personality development was the establishment of an educational environment, in this case an aesthetic one. That was why we viewed it as our task to engage parents, teachers and the community at large as fully as possible in the organization of creative hobby groups. Our Council included collective farmers and the representatives of Party organizations as well as members of the collective farm's management and of the district's community at large.

When one compares the aesthetic perception of life and art of many collective farmers twenty years ago and today, the contrast is impressive. Earlier, many residents of Prelestnoye viewed children's drawings with bewilderment unable to understand them. They did not sense the beauty of the landscapes expressed in the forms that were accessible to children. Today, both the perceptions and evaluations of adults are becoming increasingly competent, and children view their parents and older brothers as like-minded persons who encourage their interest in painting and contribute to their aesthetic development in a wide variety of ways.

When children are fully involved in some activity, and I have seen this on many occasions in Shevchenko's classes, they experience joy in exploring and discovering, as well as in the very process of work. An ability to produce such a state of mind is far more important than dozens of methodological works concerning the development of particular habits. For simple prescriptions, without the inspired happiness of children, will achieve nothing.

While the initial emphasis in our experiment concerned the development of gifts in both children and teachers, this was followed by an emphasis on linking the children's creative activities with their environment: their native village and the daily cares of their mothers and fathers. The quality that we sought to develop in children might be described as man's need for other persons, and this constituted the basis of collectivism. In this regard we were guided by the ideas and creative experience of Sukhomlinsky.

We attached much importance in our work to differentiating age-related and individual characteristics. This was extremely important in organizing the activities of children's hobby groups and we saw this problem on several planes, as it were. When we succeeded in developing a taste for artistic creativity within a collective whose members belonged to differ-

ent age groups and included very small children, older children and adults (for instance, within a family, a club or a studio), to some extent, we solved thereby the problem of introducing children of different ages to the world of art. For example, Galya, fifth-grader, liked to draw. Her first exhibition was to be .eld both at school and at home. Her younger five-year old sister Nina did not remain indifferent. "I want to draw, too!" she insisted.

This was the best variant for developing an initial need for creativity. And we not only encouraged this type of participation of young children but also sought to assign responsibilities for this to older children and kindergarten teachers where such groups existed. After a short while most pre-school-age children began to come to the studio of their own accord to work beside the older students and adults.

4. A SACRED EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLE: EVERY CHILD IS UNIQUE

The recognition of individual differences among children presents a distinct problem. This is especially important in terms of aesthetic education, particularly in initiating children to art. For many years we were preoccupied with a search for ways to protect children from the pressures of the teacher's own personality, taste, manner and perspective. This was a difficult task. Our approach in terms of a major key contained a certain drawback: at the same time that it produced an inner freedom in children's minds, awakened their enthusiasm and lent vivid colour to their world, it also blinded them, as it were, by its very vividness. An intonation in a major key in the teaching process produced a common striving to depict reality in the same key. Because of this a certain similarity in choice of colours, themes, and methods of representation occurred. We observed that the children began to produce many works that were similar and this led us to think: What was the explanation? Standardization, simple copying, mimicry, direct replication? This was especially inadmissible in the case of art. We then introduced certain adjustments into our method. We organized studies in such a way that children worked in small groups that were isolated from each other. We suggested, for example, that they choose a theme depicting sadness, and therefore subdued colours as well, and were very pleasantly surprised when in the course of two

months we received nearly a hundred altogether remarkable works. "Granny and I Weeding Beets", "In the Bee-Garden", "An Abandoned Nest", "A Melancholy Evening" and many others that differed from each other altogether in their style, subject and colours.

It was in this way that the individual personalities of children expressed themselves as the scope for their autonomous decisions grew wider. As we analyzed our methods of aesthetic education we found that some of the failures were due to errors on our own part. For example, because Shevchenko himself was more enthusiastic about painting, he did not encourage some of the children's clearly expressed inclinations towards graphics. He did, in fact, see that a child expressed himself better through lines than through colours but somehow he could not help himself. In particular the paintings of Yuri Sidorov were marked by the clear definition of their lines. This was apparent from his very first efforts, made at the age of three. He possessed a remarkably pictorial imagination, a sense of irony and an inclination towards caricatures. I persuaded Shevchenko that he should help the boy in changing to a pen. Eventually, Yuri Sidorov's works, expressing his own specific genre, were found to be among the best at two exhibitions in Moscow.

The creative process through which a child expresses himself plays an educative role and makes it easier for the child to assimilate moral values. But the main point is for the teacher to find a way to imperceptibly bring the child to subjects that educate him. This is the reason why the themes prevailing in the drawings of the children in Prelestnoye included labour, parents, the family, the collective farm and nature. This clearly reflects a corresponding emphasis in the pedagogic efforts of Aleksander Shevchenko.

It has already been noted that an essential attribute of harmonious development is an integral unity of ethical and aesthetic elements in moral education.

The primary basis of harmony, moreover, that which in our opinion constitutes its foundation, is a child's attitude towards other individuals—a development of advanced forms of social communication and an active participation in life.

For example, each child in Prelestnoye strives to achieve specific results in mastering the technique of drawing and painting. And each measure of success of children, from age two to sixteen, is above all a source of happiness for his parents. Exhibitions are organized at homes as well as in school, the

paintings are discussed and themes concerned with the labour of parents are displayed right at the place of work, in the field, at garages and on farms.

Of course, the content of the harmonic ideal is not in opposition to modern methods and forms of education. But whether greater emphasis should be placed on form or on content is a decisive issue. In recent pedagogical literature it is sometimes stressed that the main element in education is not "what" but "how", i.e. it is assumed that the problem of content has been resolved, that objectives are clear and tasks have been defined. Yet that is not quite so.

I encountered one youth club in which collective forms of communication were developed "harmoniously". The club was made up of interesting people:with songs and carrying guitars they visited the homes of prominent persons and "disseminated culture". One day the club was visiting the Ivanovs, a working family. In effect the older students had devoted the entire day to entertainment. The Ivanov's oldest son, Alyosha, had spent several hours constructing a sophisticated electrical switch. A conversation arose between us and I asked: "What do you think of the club?" He replied: "In my opinion what they are doing is not serious, they are engaged in continuous festivity."

Alyosha's logic, in my view, was far more important than the most entertaining methods.

This does not mean that I am opposed to clubs and advertize unorganized leisure. But when we speak of the harmony of advanced forms of communication, we have in mind certain ideal forms in children's development. I recall an occasion when a young girl was fulfilling some kind of obligation in organizing an evening gathering, whereas her brother, meanwhile, was taping the windows because their mother was sick. I view the brother's action in protecting his sick mother more moral than that of his sister. Her action expressed the insufficient state of development of the collective, whose members knew that the young girl's mother was sick, as well as the thoughtlessness of the young girl herself, even though it might have seemed that she was carrying out her obligations.

The main theme in the work of the young residents of the village of Prelestnoye was their own work on the collective farm and also the work and life of their parents. Art helps children understand more deeply the beauty of nature and the meaning of culture. In studying the history of their own village they learn about the essence of the labour of past gener-

ations, write essays on this subject and present oral reports.

An inherent part of harmonious development is a connection between advanced forms of communication and self-education: there are cases in which a child's work in a collective is excellent, but he is almost incapable of working alone. Such a tendency is relatively dangerous since there are types of activity, particularly work and creative activities, in which it is vital to concentrate one's thoughts and to be alone with oneself. When a child observing the actions of his friends begins to simply imitate them, his degree of self-expression declines. This is why it is important to teach him not only to communicate with others, but to work independently at home as well, when the social stimulation of laughter and of conversations may be absent.

Thus, we have distinguished three component parts of harmonious development: advanced forms of communication; a connection between abilities and needs; and the integral unity of both of these with self-education. But here there is the question not only of harmonious development but also of a harmonious comprehensive development of a personality. One cannot separate the element of harmony from that of comprehensiveness—they form an integral whole. It is not by chance that in the works of some philosophers we find the words "comprehensively and harmoniously developed personality". Comprehensiveness, however, is not a simple sum of qualities, like bricks, frames or door locks piled up in a heap are not yet a completed building. To produce a house from component materials requires a blueprint as well as a specific way of combining different parts with each other. This is also true of comprehensive development. If a work collective is deprived of art, joy, and care for the health of children, if the principle of polytechnism is ignored, then the educational effect of work will be low.

There is a dimension to labour that does not lend itself to measurement. This is the joy of work—the source of man's creative power. Let us describe it as an emotional reserve. It is unreasonable not to put it to good use. All educational methods should be directed at making work itself an inner urge. Should you try to force a child to be idle you will not succeed. He is eager for activity. And the task of education is essentially one of organizing such forms of work that produce development, a joy of learning and of communicating with others.

Art combined with labour is the only activity that compre-

hensively perfects the "eyes—ears—hand—brain" system, and the success of any activity depends on that system's state of development. I do not share, of course, the extreme views of some philosophers, artists and even teachers in other countries who believe that one can resolve many social contradictions with the help of art. But the proposition that art contains inexhaustible pedagogical resources is not a theorem. It is an axiom.

I would now like to describe in greater detail a very gifted teacher, Aleksander Shevchenko, who has become widely known in the Soviet Union. I wish to remind the reader that Shevchenko did not have any pedagogical education and before our school was created he worked as an accountant in a tractor brigade. I believe that one of the secrets of Shevchenko's teaching gift was that his shortcomings in education were compensated, as it were, by folk wisdom and by his special human qualities whose importance I wish to emphasize.

Unlike many teachers, Shevchenko is remarkably restrained and patient in relation to children's pranks. He clearly understands that for a wide variety of reasons a child may infringe on discipline and fail to follow instructions. And that it is not always necessary to intervene immediately, punish or condemn. Sometimes it is more important not to notice a child's misbehaviour or innocent prank and to avoid making "a mountain out of a mole hill".

Does this imply that as a teacher Shevchenko was not demanding? No, it doesn't.

He once showed me his teacher's diary. It contained the following remark concerning one of his students, Volodya Zarubin: "I took the fourth-graders for a drawing lesson by the river. They asked permission to swim. 'Only a dip,' they pleaded. I could not refuse them. They agreed: not more than two minutes and close to the shore. But Volodya immediately swam to the other side of the river. I began to call him but he did not turn back. What was this? A display of his prowess? And those children on whom I had not counted immediately came out of the water. I gathered the children together and gave Volodya a dressing down. His friends also condemned him and called him a show-off. On the way back to school Volodya walked last. He was sulky. I wondered which would take the upper hand in him, his pride or his love for drawing? Would he really not come to the drawing group..."

This was followed by another set of observations: "...On my way to school I resolved that I would tell Volodya that I had been wrong. Rather, I was most likely correct in criticizing him, but I had probably used harsh words. That should be avoided. I felt ashamed when I recalled the malicious joy with which the other children had looked at Volodya when I scolded him. And I had poured oil into the flame of that maliciousness as it were. How bad and unkindly on my part.

"But I was very happily surprised when Volodya himself ran towards me with two drawings in his hands. The drawings were truly interesting and I immediately showed them to the children. And as I praised his work, the last traces of the ill will which his friends had shown towards Volodya down by the river vanished...

"How wonderful are our children! They are a thousand times better than adults... I have such a strong desire to work with them, and especially with those like Volodya..."

As I read Shevchenko's diary I thought that perhaps his principal virtue is his generosity of soul. Both children and adults clearly sense this. In order to understand a teacher's educational method you must know the person as a whole, his life at home and in school, his entire life experience and his convictions. A person's inner world cannot be separated from teaching methods.

It is a little embarrassing to speak of the kindness, honesty and selflessness of Shevchenko. For in him these special qualities are inseparable from his other innumerable merits. It is quite a job to list everything that Shevchenko can do. He can build a house and repair a motorcycle, catch lobsters in his shirt and produce a painting, fry a fish on a stick, milk a she-goat and describe the French impressionists, decorate a room in the most modern style and grow a vineyard—all with remarkable ease and good humour.

But what is most interesting—and this is his principal gift—is that he willingly does all these things for others but not for himself.

One day when it was raining I stopped by his house. The floor was covered with basins and pans. It was literally pouring from the ceiling. "How could this happen to you?" I asked. His wife waved her hand: "There is no man in the house." Shevchenko for his part flashed his blinding smile: "It is even more interesting this way. You feel as if you are closer to nature."

...One day in March I was sitting at the last desk in the sixth grade watching the shiny snow outside. "Who will draw the spring wind?" asked Shevchenko as he entered the classroom. Two pupils came to the classroom board holding chalk in their hands. (Unfortunately it was not coloured chalk.) In one drawing houses soon appeared, the smoke from whose chimneys was carried away by the wind; while the other had the long branches of willow and poplar trees whipping scattered clouds.

"Both drawings are wonderful," Shevchenko said. "But what else could one add? Look outside through the window!" And then it suddenly dawned on everyone—snow.

"But what colour is snow?" A variety of answers followed: "It is shiny!" "It is sparkling! Blue, red, pink..."

"And look at the roofs," the teacher added with admiration as if he were looking at fairy castles.

...Then came another exercise in fantasy. Shevchenko drew a simple hooked line on the board. It was to be completed in such a way as to produce an object. Soon one student transformed it into a car, another into an alligator, a third into a man, and a fourth into a shoe. Everyone laughed and also showed impatience, each person wished to add something or say something... "Now you can see how much a single line can express and how differently each of us sees things," Shevchenko concluded.

Nor is he restrained in praising students, although he does this by merely saying what he thinks.

Today I am absolutely certain that any child in a very short period can literally fall in love with art. And Shevchenko with his children have convinced me of this once again.

Whether a child wishes it or not his drawing will always express his individuality. He will choose precisely those colours and subjects that most fully express his own self.

This is why in his own work Shevchenko considers that the first task is to "unfetter" the child's creative powers. And that is why he begins his lessons not by using a pencil, but by drawing vivid water colour blotches. "The most important thing is to awaken in a child the joy of colours, a feel for paints and joy in the creative process. Later, once he has developed an interest, he will turn to more complex matters such as mastering techniques... He will discover for himself the meaning of pencil, line, drawing..."

This is why he teaches children to study closely their favourite places in the village, to be interested in their fathers'

concerns, to recall their own sensations when first touching green shoots, or feeling the sun's rays, to listen to the silence of the night and to see the living soul of each tree. And to feel joy.

Now I begin to understand why the children do not leave Shevchenko's class after the bell has rung, and why children of all grades literally stop him in the hall, pulling on his hands and asking when the drawing group will meet again.

I now understand why nearly the entire school wishes to join his group, sometimes three or four people sharing a single desk while others find a place on the windowsill and even on the floor. And why even on Sundays small children ask him for paints or ideas about what they should draw.

It would of course be incorrect to emphasize a teacher's personal qualities and contrast them to a knowledge of methods of education. But still it should be recalled once more that, as a rule, methods alone are neutral and their effectiveness depends entirely on the teacher's personality.

It is more likely that a teacher who feels love for all children, no matter what their qualities, will master the use of various means and become an adept in matters of education compared with a person who depends entirely on prescribed methods of teaching, no matter how "well-tried" those methods may be.

Shevchenko draws from pedagogical science only those elements that correspond to his own convictions, and in addition, contributes his own elements of kindness, a sense of humour as well as an exceptional inner sensitivity that few persons possess. He is always surrounded by a crowd of children, and they find his company very interesting.

I have sought to learn from Shevchenko qualities that are not described in any pedagogical science—his inner freedom and his love for life. I have tried to understand his gift for easy contact, which is an exceptional human gift. In my own case, there are always people who do not share my views, but Shevchenko has no enemies and seems to get along with everyone, including both myself and my pedagogical opponents. He somehow knows how to find his way inside a person and painlessly alter something within him. And I have never felt any jealousy at this, for Shevchenko has always acted as one should, rather than to please someone.

He is not at all calculating but at the same time he can be as sly as a thousand old foxes. He would never work by himself if someone beside him is idle: he will compel him to work.

And his methods are the most humane. I recall an occasion when the workshops were being built and he was stirring the mortar. Suddenly he addressed himself to the young boys standing nearby who were thirsting for "real" work. "Look at how these rings are moving, how interesting they are." And the tone of his voice reflected such a genuine absorption and sense of mystery that the boys soon began to suspect that perhaps it was true that nothing could be more interesting. But Shevchenko did not give them the trowel at once. He waited until they worked up enough interest and then eventually agreed, adding: "I will let you work for a short while but be sure that Nikolai has his turn too." Yet to manipulate children was far from his mind, for his dominant principle was fairness.

I have also thought a lot about the fact that Shevchenko knows and practises much that does not fit into any system of educational methods. Perhaps this quality can be described as an unostentatious civic feeling, or perhaps, as genuine culture deriving from the very depths of popular wisdom. But whatever it may be, children sense this quality well, and this is why they cannot lie to him and why he is more than a teacher to them.

His activities are connected with the village and with some kind of special reverence for what he found dear and beautiful in the actions of its residents. For example, a remarkable teacher, Ivan Mitrovich Zavadsky, lived in Prelestnoye. He had taught for fifty years and his former students included grandparents and parents of today's students. They recalled his kindness, and Shevchenko, too, spoke kindly of him: "He loved children, nature and mathematics. He never remained in the teacher's room during recesses. Instead he spent his time trimming trees in the garden." Shortly before the war he was awarded the Order of Lenin. He dreamed of having a new school built in the village. And it is in his memory that Shevchenko and the children decided to erect a memorial "that would remain forever".

The memorial was erected. But there was no solemn opening ceremony. Instead elderly people and relatives came and removed their hats, some of them crying. There was a special feeling of sadness and at the same time of happiness that a good deed had been done. Today, children paint the fence every spring. They place flowers carefully, as if fearing to disturb a respectful memory of something that is lofty and sacred...

It was always with interest that I observed Shevchenko's relations with his own children. His children were remarkable. Their mother was strict and would say: "Lena, you must receive a five in algebra."

But Shevchenko would comment:

"Why on earth do you need all these excellent marks? I never had any."

"And that is bad," Lena would say.

One day Ira, his younger daughter, returned from visiting neighbours and asked:

"If you like, Mom, I will address you in the formal 'you' manner to express my respect."

Her mother replied that there was no need for that.

But then Shevchenko said:

"Listen, Ira, you can address me in the formal manner."

"You say the strangest things, Dad," she replied.

He then laughed with pleasure.

From the outside it appears that there are two principles by which the family lives: strictness and kindness, a sense of humour and reasonable demands.

Moreover, Shevchenko and his wife are constantly arguing on this subject. Olga Osipovna will state that "Children should be made to behave properly, to do good deeds, to engage in useful activities, and in tasks that are both necessary, useful and contributing to their development. And if this should require punishment, then it should be given." Shevchenko disagrees, "One should only arouse their interest, and any form of punishment and excessive demands destroy their urge to be creative."

As I listen to their debate I feel that they are both right. Moreover, I somehow feel that his demanding wife, who carries on her shoulders the entire burden of household cares and the family's upbringing, is especially right. And it is only somewhere deep within me that I am on the man's side.

Olga Osipovna showers me with examples. "Take our Lena, for example. She has a gift for art. But her father's attitude is this: 'When she develops a desire to draw she will do so, there is no need to compel her.' And now the girl has grown up, and has not learned to draw. And here is the piano, but she cannot play it... In the case of Ira I made my own decision: she will draw every day. Now she is producing good drawings..."

"The devil only knows, you may be right. Providing one does not destroy a person's inner motivation..." Shevchenko replied.

My own thoughts are that probably both these principles should be applied in the family and at school: strictness and kindness, seriousness and a sense of humour.

5. ENCOURAGING FANTASY AND CREATIVITY IN ADULT-CHILD COMMUNICATION

The development of the teaching gift requires an atmosphere of recognition and of generous encouragement. At the same time this should not preclude inner struggles to achieve quality, win prestige and arrive at superior modes of performance.

As the person responsible for all educational activities at our boarding school, I encouraged such a competitive spirit among our instructors. For a time the status of leader belonged to Valentin Antonovich Volkov.

Volkov was a musician who could play on any conceivable instrument including invented ones, such as sticks made out of reeds or bamboo, spoons and glass vessels, and strings stretched tightly over water troughs, basins or pails.

And that was how he instantly put together a percussion orchestra. And what a conductor he was! There was not a trace of poor taste in either his movements or the sounds that he produced, and the children sensed the spontaneous freely exercised talent in this small, thin man.

Volkov had developed a particular passion for inventing tales in which all inanimate things came to life. It was this that attracted children to him. In talking to them he revealed his secret inner thoughts, which were sometimes beyond the children's grasp and ability to understand.

I have always experienced a certain amazement when meeting people who had not lost their child-like qualities and who felt an Andersen-like need to express themselves poetically.

Volkov was an advocate of literary creativity on the part of children. Freely exercised creativeness expresses not only in original frame of mind, that is, an ability to disregard the conventional framework of accumulated experience, but also the moral strength that ensures each person's free development.

From the very first, Volkov and I engaged in a kind of secret contest. I taught painting and so did Volkov. I directed a group on art and literary creativity and Volkov, too, led another group. I could not say that everything that Volkov

did was better than what I was doing. But as the person responsible for educational activities I made efforts to encourage creativeness in others. Occasionally I would lay it on too thick in acclaiming a colleague's success. On other occasions I would ascribe my own discoveries and achievements to others, including Volkov. I would stress that it was his discovery, his method. And Volkov would never deny this. And one day when I realized that I had simply given away what I myself had accumulated by hard mental and practical work I felt a sense of regret that none of my colleagues had at least suggested that these were our common achievements. But there was only one reason for this: at some point a feeling of envy began to stir both in myself and in others. I sought to overcome it by persuading myself that it did not matter who discovered something new and that the main thing was that our joint efforts served to encourage the development of genuine morality and of genuine self-management among children.

I liked Volkov, especially because he experienced equal pleasure in encouraging creativity among children, awakening a thirst for knowledge, and encouraging the development of moral qualities.

Volkov used to say:

"There would be no educational result, if work effort loses its connection with the aesthetic and intellectual principles and with developed forms of pleasure and imagination."

"But it turns out that you cannot do without fairy-tales?" one of the teachers asked.

"Absolutely not," Volkov would explode. "Creative fantasy is vital both to the farmer in the field, and the scientist, and to a housewife and a nurse as well as to an ordinary worker. A fully-developed person requires a comprehensively developed mind. Only an inferior society has a need for underhumans, semi-humans, pliant tools. A child who has learned to invent fairy-tales, new words, and new situations is able to apply that creative approach to reality, to life in general—and that is of fundamental importance. It has been proven that fairy-tales are needed by poets, musicians, agronomists and economists, they are vital for the development of integral personalities. I use my narratives and fairy-tales to stimulate the development of consciousness in children and to help their aspirations come forth."

It should be noted that children felt such a purposeful programme on the part of Volkov, who did not seek to hide it anyway.

It is striking how well children sense intuitively those adults who perceive the world around them in the same way as they do, with crystal-like sounds and sun-drenched colours. As Volkov's fantastic improvisations came to life they were accompanied by children's sighs and sounds of surprise and delight. But Volkov did not smile even when relating comical situations: his eyebrows were drawn together in a frown, his thin dark lips were pressed together, his voice ranged from whispers to loud explosions, shifting to the delicate tones of a violin, then to those of a loud kettledrum, again followed by a whisper—but without any deliberate design, simply from the depths of the emotions that he himself experienced.

"The ash tree has a soul that is pure and delicate—like that of a tender youth with blue eyes. Listen," and he touched a small branch of ash. "But if you hurt an ash tree then it will cry," and as he sharply moved his hand over a thin piece of ash it emitted such a melancholy sound that tears appeared in the eyes of the small children, and Volkov himself, too, became sad.

"The soul of the poplar tree, on the other hand, is somewhat more mature and its eyes are green. It can stand up for itself and is proud and shapely.

"The soul of an oak is so powerful and strong that all other trees feel drawn towards it. It lives a very long time and sees many things during its life. This is why its heart beats so strongly," and Volkov hammered the tree forcefully and the tree moaned threateningly as if warning of a storm.

"I will tell you a fairy-tale about an oak tree," Volkov continued. "Do you see the oak tree over there next to the larch among the charred pine trees. Sit closer and I will tell you about it.

"A frowning black oak tree stood alone among carefree pine trees spoiled by their life of luxury and smiled gravely. He knew why the pine trees could not stand him. They were dying before his very eyes, their decaying tops turning yellow, while he continued to live. It had been a hundred or perhaps a thousand years that he did not dare to close his eyes, even at night, for he knew that the pine trees were conspiring to destroy him. This was their first thought as they awakened each morning. They were green from envy, summer and winter.

"The oak tree sought to avoid quarrelling with them. Night and day he continued striking his roots deep down into the earth, looking for safety. Until one day he began to draw moisture from the earth's very heart. The pine trees did not

know this and that was the old oak tree's only source of happiness.

"It was because the earth's own heart pulsed through the oak tree that he was stronger than storms and more powerful than lightnings.

"Several times in despair he himself wished to die. He bared his powerful chest to lightnings, seeking to catch them with his thousands of leafy hands. But seeing his infinitely melancholy eyes the lightnings would avoid striking him and burn instead the weak pine trees as if they were moths.

"The pine trees would seek support from the storm, and when it approached raging with blind force they would quiver with glee, but it only destroyed them.

"More than once the oak tree pleaded for mercy: 'Why do you call the storm? There is enough room for all of us. I will give you the dearest that I have within me, only let me close my eyes if only for a second.' But the pine trees were merciless. They used their needles to pierce his leaves and as they were falling down the pines creaked indignantly, green with hatred.

"The oak's branches cried, complaining that they no longer had any leaves, that they froze in the winter and were hungry.

"But the pine trees spitefully hurled their harsh grey needles at the oak tree. And he would have ended his life had he not met the larch tree one day. She was tender and kind. When night fell she would gently touch the oak tree with her long and tender eyelashes and say: 'I will always be kind to you. You must not give in or I will die.'

"Since then he has continued to live, perhaps a hundred years or perhaps a thousand..."

The children grew silent as they gazed at the mighty oak that suddenly became alive in their imagination. Nikolnikov was whispering something to himself with his full red lips. Kolya Pochechkin had already twice repeated: "Tell us another story." Only Slava Derevyanko observed haughtily:

"That is not a real fairy-tale. It should be from a book, anyone can make up stories like that."

"Not everyone," Nikolnikov replied and then addressed himself to Volkov. "How is it that you manage to combine so many different things in your head."

"Try it yourself. I am certain that anyone who really wishes to do this will succeed," Volkov replied.

"I like pitiful fairy-tales," said Lena Soshkina.

"You will never be able to make up a story about this,"

said Masha Kuropatkina pointing to a snail and a dry lily-of-the-valley.

"If you listen I will tell you a story about them as well," Volkov replied, and his small black eyes became concentrated.

The children waited breathlessly.

"...One morning," Volkov began, "the Snail saw that her proud Lily-of-the-valley was crying. Up to now she had been certain that he was made of happiness, for what else could account for its exquisite freshness. He was so tender and yet so strong. Would he really even notice the poor ugly Snail?

"'What is the matter, why are you crying?' whispered the Snail.

"'I must die soon,' replied the Lily-of-the-valley. 'And when my loved one learned about this she left me.'

"'Listen to me,' said the Snail, 'I love you more than anything on earth. Let me die in your place.'

"The Lily-of-the-valley rejoiced, and rushed to rejoin his loved one.

"'I am saved. We will be happy,' he shouted in rapture.

"'You are absurd,' she replied.

"'I cannot live without you,' the Lily-of-the-valley implored.

"'Perhaps you will now say that you will end your life,' she laughed. 'I loved a strong Lily, while you are a sorry comedian. Go away!'

"The Lily-of-the-valley then cried so bitterly that all the other lilies began to look in his direction. The Snail could not see any sign of compassion on their faces. They despised him. If only he were to strike her, everyone would once more consider him to be strong, and his loved one might even return.

"The Snail tried to console him. And he even forgot that tomorrow the Snail would die instead of him. Her company brought him pleasure.

"'You are not so unattractive after all,' he told her. 'Do not leave me.'

"And while it was painful for the Snail to hear these words, for the first time she felt happy.

"Time passed. With each passing day the Snail recognized more clearly that the Lily-of-the-valley did not need her and that he was yearning for the one that had left him. He was becoming increasingly dry, and his cold words led her to despair. 'You reek of the marsh,' he commented nervously. She would reply, 'But what can I do, my dear, this is the way I am. If you find me unpleasant, I will leave you.'

"But the Lily-of-the-valley did not say: 'Leave'. It seemed to him that he was still as strong and as beautiful as ever, and that everyone admired him. He always liked to be the centre of attention, while she would hide under the leaves."

Volkov interrupted his narrative and asked that someone bring him a glass of water. Vitya ran to the well. One heard the sound of the pail and the chain and finally the glass of water was in Volkov's hands. Volkov did not hurry, after bringing the glass to his lips he said that the water was nice and cold. He then carefully surveyed the children, noting that while Slava Derevyanko curled his lip Masha Kuropatkina looked away. An invisible wave passed through the group of small children. They all knew that Masha Kuropatkina was in love with Slava Derevyanko, while Slava not only failed to reciprocate but somehow deliberately tormented Masha: sometimes mocking her publicly, or else making her carry out his whims.

"Where did I stop?" asked Volkov.

"She was hiding under the leaves, while the Lily-of-the-valley began to behave in a conceited way," the children reminded him.

And Volkov continued:

"'How unattractive you are,' the Lily-of-the-valley said.

"'Are you quite sure?' asked the Snail through her tears.

"'You dare argue with me!' and the Lily-of-the-valley indignantly turned away, repeating the words of the one he himself loved. 'Go away!'

"In order not to lose her love for the Lily-of-the-valley, the Snail hid her tearful face in the leaves and slowly began to carry away all that she owned: her simple shell and her great Love.

"The proud Lily-of-the-valley did not even look in her direction. He felt certain that she had remained beside him. He held that position for a long time in order to appear strong. But she did not come. He then said: 'Perhaps I am indeed wrong?'

"Hearing no answer, he turned abruptly. A strong wind arose. The Lily-of-the-valley was flung from side to side. He cried and moaned, cursing both the Snail and himself. Perhaps the Snail would have returned, but she was so tightly confined within her shelter that she did not hear his words.

"One day Rain Drops, with whom the Snail had once made friends, began to knock on her shell shouting: 'Hey, Snail, your Lily-of-the-valley has croaked! Come out of your hovel!'

"But she did not reply and did not return to the familiar world. She was so afraid of loneliness..."

The children understood that the tale was over, but remained silent. It was so quiet that one could even hear how the withered flowers of the yellowed lily-of-the-valley began to rustle. And everyone thought that they heard a soft stirring within the snail's shell.

Masha Kuropatkina looked at the arrogant Slava Derevyanko, and walked away slowly, holding back her tears. But she was stopped by Volkov's ringing voice announcing that he had not yet completed the story.

"We so often make mistakes, we love the wrong persons and fail to notice those who can bring us true happiness. We bring each other much sorrow in this way."

"But what does it mean to love?" Nikolnikov asked softly.

"Well then, in that case I will have to tell you still another tale," replied Volkov.

And the children gathered even closer: each one wished to finally learn what it was that adults discuss so often...

Sometimes I would find myself near Volkov on such occasions. I then sensed that he was taking the children away from me and from my happy school of the future, that he was diluting my major key with a minor one. Although I was secretly indignant I remained silent, for while listening to Volkov, I also began to feel wistful and some tension grew within me. But why, I asked myself, does Volkov make children share such complicated and sometimes melancholy thoughts at an age when their life should be unclouded? I would tell him:

"Your fairy-tales are tainted with a kind of literary cheapness."

"Are you sure?" Volkov asked ironically, narrowing his eyes. These words long remained in my memory, and when I later recalled them I became ill at ease and ashamed, for I felt as if I had been the conceited Lily-of-the-valley from Volkov's fairy-tale. Strange as it may seem, I liked Volkov. But it was myself that I liked in him, for everything that he professed was also close to my own heart. But Volkov was deeper than I was and more pure, and this did not give me any peace. Envy corroded my soul, for he did take away from me that which was dearest to me, namely, the love of children. There were of course some grounds for my feeling of indignation at Volkov. He awakened doubts in children, whereas I wanted to see action and a highly active disposition, to have children follow me without asking questions, to have them

build something, grow something, and master new types of work, in short, create all the time.

"Too much thinking and, similarly, an excessive aloofness are our downfall," I would shout at Volkov looking into his narrowed eyes.

"Activity without thought is even more harmful," Volkov objected.

"We are creating normal conditions for normal development. We cannot fall behind."

I also reminded Volkov that the boarding school's account had already grown to nearly two hundred thousand roubles, that we could acquire many things with that sum and that this would contribute effectively to comprehensive personality development. I reminded him as well that our five farms (producing chickens, rabbits, hogs, calves, geese and even muskrat) called for positive attitudes towards work and that one must continuously encourage the children's work potential.

"Lord, what lofty words!" Volkov would shout. "First teach children to love at least one dog, one cat, duck or hen. Instead, your farms are teaching them to count how much veal or ham will be produced rather than to love animals."

"We will teach them. We will teach them to both love and work," I would shout back, and at such moments we were nearly on the verge of a real falling-out. Unfortunately, it was only many years later that I understood how much good people such as Volkov could do to the school.

There are moments when a person can be described as "having grown wings": at such moments one's heart and soul ascend to new heights, as it were. Perhaps these states are a measure of human happiness. And one of their specific features is that he who experiences them is in the power of his emotions and does not seek to analyze what is taking place. Unconsciously he seeks to prolong such precious moments and is fully absorbed in experiencing them. It is only later that he may consciously realize the full beauty of such minutes or hours of creative upsurge.

Man always strives to re-create such states and usually does this through his activities. This re-creation, which presupposes a creative search, inventiveness, and an application of a variety of means (that must, however, always be moral), this combined striving and activity must form the quintessence of a creative person's life, and especially, in my view, of a teacher.

Creative processes are usually described in terms of such concepts as inspiration, intuition and illumination. This creates the impression that aside from working skills and techniques, the art of teaching contains something that is intangible. At one time I considered that our communication with children contained something which was not only impossible to repeat, but the very attempt at describing it as an educational means would be sacrilege. Today, however, I know that even the most unique moments of illumination depend on the teacher's own life-time evolution. And situations in which he applies individual teaching means merely serve to reveal the moral and intellectual richness that a skilled teacher possesses. Volkov was unquestionably such a skilled teacher. Today, I am certain that in referring to the style of a teacher's work one must refer to the person as a whole, to what has made him what he is, what are his convictions and his moral and cultural values. In such a sense a teacher's "means" and "style" are incommensurable. A means is only a minuscule element in comparison with a person's complex world, his experience, culture, knowledge, convictions, will, all factors that define his power. In this respect one can also not neglect the importance of recurrence.

Recurrence, I believe, is an objective condition for enriching the subjective factor in education, i.e. the teacher's own individual world. It is a condition for developing a teacher's creative qualities. A recurrence of specific cycles in creative activity is a significant attribute of advanced teaching skills.

Part Four

THE ACQUISITION OF TEACHING SKILLS

1. TEACHING SKILLS ARE AN ALLOY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

The current school reform in the USSR has made the question of acquiring teaching skills especially relevant. This is recognized not only by the teachers themselves and educational administrators, but also by the community at large.

Intense interest in questions relating to the acquisition of teaching skills is explained not only by the need to identify optimal conditions for the comprehensive development of children but also by the daily problems that are encountered in the teaching practice. The evaluation of written tests and preparations for lessons in accordance with new curricula require four to five hours each day. Extracurricular activities, temporary duties and organizational matters require ten to twelve hours each week.

A teacher faces the constantly changing world of his pupils and the necessity to decide and act instantaneously. Each day this calls for nearly a million responses to a million stimuli.

In terms of teaching methods these difficulties are usually associated with developing an ability to establish productive forms of contact and interaction with children in any form of activity—teaching, organizing, work, art or sports.

This raises the question as to whether teaching skills as a phenomenon is not lying beyond the system of means and methods that are recommended by pedagogical science; whether it is not that powerful element whose origins must be sought in a teacher's own personality.

It is possible that maturity in teaching skills is achieved exclusively in accordance with principles governing creativity, in which a leading role is played by intuition, inspiration and talent.

Why is it, for example, that teachers using the very same

means and methods as others sometimes produce results that are diametrically opposed? Why is it that teachers experience difficulties not so much in teaching as in upbringing? And why is it that in specific types of activity teachers without either special training or theoretical preparation possess genuine mastery? One cannot ignore these and still other questions in defining the essence and content of teaching skills.

Mastery relies on diverse theoretical knowledge (including psychology, sociology and philosophy) and operates as a specific type of mediating link between theory and practice, that is, between a system of knowledge summarized in terms of scientific concepts, and activities which lead to a transformation of existing reality.

One of the major aspects of a mastery in teaching lies in a reliance on accumulated knowledge and experience in resolving contradictions that may emerge between the existing sum of theoretical concepts and actual needs.

The experience of pedagogical masters has shown that as mastery increases so does the need to acquire additional knowledge, and so does an "apparent lack of clarity" resulting from the fact that a teacher's quest cannot already be satisfied by the existing level of pedagogical knowledge and demands for a new breakthrough and for a closer merger of theory and practice.

The teaching experience of masters, when it synthesizes the objective capabilities (cognitive, artistic, physical and others) of a given generation, cannot vanish without a trace and cannot fail to influence theory. Practical experience alone possesses specific attributes of knowledge that constitute the inalienable microtheory of each teacher, as it were, consisting of its own microprinciples and techniques. These microprinciples and microtheories are the outcome of both the teacher's professional training, theoretical studies and of his personal experience.

It is true, of course, that teaching experience is not the only source that feeds the stream of theory. New knowledge may also be gained by purely logical means—through an analysis of the history of culture which reflects the most characteristic tendencies in education. In addition, new knowledge may be obtained by the method of applying some of the theoretical propositions of contiguous sciences to pedagogics. But in doing this one cannot ignore the capacities of teachers and of their charges.

It does not follow from what has been said that teaching

practice precedes pedagogical theory and fully determines the nature of the latter's development. In that connection it is important to distinguish between two different concepts, that of "mastery" and that of "practice".

While possessing the general attributes of practice, mastery operates as a carrier of new tendencies, new knowledge, and embodies those essential connections between pedagogical phenomena that have not yet been given a theoretical formulation.

Teaching practice cannot develop without continually giving birth to new forms that lend it new features and alter its overall appearance.

As a result, a mastery of teaching skills in its specific applications serves to pave the way for what is universal, for the educational practice that corresponds most to the general tendency of society's development. The experience of master teachers nourishes the general educational practice and is then reflected in pedagogical theory. Thus, the integral practical experience of Makarenko and Sukhomlinsky who anticipated subsequent tendencies in the development of Soviet pedagogics, has played a dual role: it has contributed to perfecting the theory of education and also enriched practical work with new ideas.

Of course, the teaching experience that is described in the present study is less significant and cannot be compared with the above-mentioned. Nevertheless, we believe that this experience may be of interest to readers, for it has been brought to life by the set of social needs and interdependences within which the Soviet school is developing.

Each specific case of practical experience possesses its own logic of development based on individual analysis and individual activity. But at the same time, the experience of each teacher is associated very closely with society's spiritual potential and its value orientations.

Often, original forms of teaching practice enter into contradiction with established conceptions, views and ideas. It is always difficult for innovatory elements to demonstrate their advantages quickly and persuasively. One reason for delays in the spreading of a practice concerns its own inherent shortcomings: the still undeveloped character of particular links, or a tendency to be confined to its own individual domain. It is one of the tasks of pedagogical science to utilize the advantages of creative experience, to help avoid errors, and to suggest new ideas and directions to be followed by teachers at large in their quests and experiments.

When educational workers from the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic asked me, as a scholar, to help them organize an experiment in integral education in a newly built school (No. 79) in the city of Riga, I found the prospect quite interesting, although at first I hesitated. I was somewhat intimidated by the Republic's specific characteristics and an insufficient knowledge of local conditions. At the same time there was much that attracted me. This was a new industrial district. And it was the wish of district leaders to transform the new school into a fresh source of educational culture and to initiate the project as rapidly as possible.

I was also attracted by the fact that the school's Director, Alina Borisovna Vladimirskaya, who had already worked earlier in accordance with my programme, was enthusiastic over the problem on which I was working at the time, in 1975, of achieving a comprehensive development of students. Eventually I agreed. Vladimirskaya came to Moscow and within a relatively short time we had drafted an experimental programme which was then discussed at one of the sessions of the corresponding section of the Research Institute for General Pedagogics. This draft met with the support of both other research scientists of the Institute and educational administrators in Latvia, and we soon initiated the project.

We had chosen a wide-ranging theme—a comprehensive and harmonious development of students in the context of integral unity of education and upbringing: learning, work, art, sports activities, amateur groups and self-education.

In order to convey some idea of the subsequent course of events and of the principal approaches in this work I will first consider its organizational aspects.

We shared a common basic view, namely, that success would depend, above all, on a well-organized, long-term planning of the school's overall activities for a period of at least five years. This was needed in order to match the development of material resources for studies, work, activities in art, sports, and creative activities in science and technology with available means and possibilities. It was also needed in order to clearly see a growth in the improvement of teaching skills, to encompass all forms of self-education of both teachers and students, to ensure that each approach be scientifically grounded and

to understand and anticipate all the basic stages in the development of the collective and of children's personalities.

Our project combined both research and practical objectives and our main goals included the following:

the development of an integral structure for the process of education and upbringing in the school;

a practical realization of the basic ideas relating to a comprehensive harmonious personality development of Soviet school students.

We well understood the complexity of our undertaking—a large volume of work in pursuing all approaches, an integrated approach to solving problems, a need to teach all participants in the experiment—teachers and students, parents and members of the community, and practical solutions of priority problems in developing the school's material base.

We expected that the logic of the implementation of the overall educational work would prompt solutions relating to specific approaches and specific problems. In short, we wished to implement our ideas in the course of the five-year plan in terms of the sequence that characterizes the activities of any educational institution: first the necessary material conditions are created and then an integral approach to tasks, individuals and to one's own self is elaborated in the course of that very process. This is why the experimental tasks scheduled for a period of five years were laid out in the following manner.

1975-1976. The implementation of a system of moral education. The creation of conditions that contribute to a comprehensive and harmonious personality development of school students (a system of specially equipped classrooms of each particular subject, a study and organization of the teaching staff and the student body, an elaboration of basic lines of activity).

1976-1977. Improvements in professional teaching skills and in the teacher's theoretical andological training.

1977-1978. A combining of mental and physical labour, play and work, work and art, labour education and vocational guidance; and a combining of advanced forms of communication with a variety of abilities (individualized approaches to teaching, a rational organization of student's school, work and free time, a system of measures designed to improve student's health and physical fitness).

1978-1979. The development of the sum total of creative abilities of students and teachers and an individualization of the educational process.

1979-1980. A combining of advanced forms of social communication (collective activities) with self-education, and an overall streamlining of achieved experience.

Once these tasks were formulated it was necessary to distribute the corresponding work along particular lines among all teachers and administrators and, already on a new basis, to bring everything that had been planned into a system. By that time the relative weight of theoretical and practical proportions had become more clear: the Director and teachers suggested what needed to be done, and what they could actually do indicating the priority sequence.

The long-term planning provided for the following: one type of education would become a condition for developing another type, and certain forms, means and methods of activity would be necessary prerequisites for developing other forms, means and methods. The most difficult thing was taking into account the "junctures" at which one process should combine with, complement and amplify others. It was our view that such interrelations provided a solution to the problem of a complex approach to education.

To clarify this thought I will cite excerpts from the five-year plan. Let us consider, for instance, the measures that were planned for 1978 (I will remind the readers that these measures were planned in 1975).

The measures envisaged for 1978 included:

general meetings of staff members on such problems as: (a) the school's activities within the microdistrict in creating conditions for preparing school students for life and labour activities; (b) the findings of sociological studies within the microdistrict on questions of vocational guidance;

meetings of the teachers' council on the following themes: (a) the individualization of the teaching process as a basis for harmonious personality development; (b) the rational organization of the school and leisure time of students; (c) discipline and labour culture; (d) the work of the teaching collective in physical education and in improving students' health;

labour union meetings: (a) approaches to a rationalization of the free time of teachers; (b) scientific forms of organization of the labour activities of teachers and matters relating to their health; (c) reports of teachers on their advance in conducting the experiment;

general professional studies in theory: (a) the conception of an integral process of personality development; (b) the

role of moral norms and ideals in the upbringing of students; (c) the teachers' philosophical culture;

seminars for young teachers: (a) harmony between mental and physical labour of children and between their health and emotional development; (b) developing the creative abilities of students and shaping their moral experience; (c) the problem of protecting the emotions of students during lessons and of encouraging their inner freedom; (d) overcoming possible excessive burdens and scheduling the students' work activities and rest; (e) the integral unity of work and of attitudes of goodwill towards others;

individual themes for the self-education of teachers (I will mention only some): (a) encouraging the development of positive attitudes towards work among younger schoolchildren; (b) the role of value-orientations of upper grade students in choosing a vocation; (c) encouraging the development of positive attitudes towards work and of respect for one's parents; (d) the aesthetic orientation of student work activities; (e) play and work; (f) work and advanced forms of communication as elements of a teacher's skills; (g) making relations and not measures the main interest of pedagogics;

basic approaches to the development of children's independent activities (the work of the Young Communist League, of the Organization of Young Pioneers, and of children's self-management): (a) the moral image of a Soviet school student; (b) work and children's independent activities; (c) independent activities and self-education; (d) the development of a moral attitude towards work; (e) the joint work of schools and production organizations in helping develop a need for mental and physical labour; (f) joint work with adults in the school, the family, production organizations, collective farms, and summer work-and-leisure camps; (g) military and patriotic education and the improvement of children's health.

At that time I was often asked: "But what is actually new in your Riga experiment?" I would reply: "We are not striving for novelty as an end in itself, what is important is to find ways to solve problems that continue to be vital even though they may be familiar."

Our tasks included the following:

to achieve an optimal application in the school's practical activities of the greater part of what pedagogical science had achieved and of what had been recorded in pedagogical practice, in particular in the practice of Makarenko and Sukhomlinsky;

to establish closely integrated interrelations between all spheres of education—ideo-political, moral, labour, mental, physical and aesthetic. If one considers closely the principal approaches in the plan for 1978 it will become apparent that each sector in the work amplifies some other sector, as it were, and forms a prerequisite for its development. In particular, the work theme is elaborated by the collective at a general meeting that also considers the relevant aspects of vocational guidance and of the district's requirements for production. Next, the same theme is considered by the teachers' council from the point of view of achieving an individualization of teaching activities and of avoiding excessive burdens on students. The meeting of the labour union links that problem with strengthening the teacher's health and achieving a rationalization of his work. In professional studies in theory and at seminars for new teachers and class supervisors, activities in preparation for labour are considered from the point of view of the integral process of education, a harmony between mental and physical labour, and care for the children's health and emotional development. At a concluding conference teachers present their own reports on individual themes that relate to various aspects of labour education in terms of the full diversity of means and methods employed in educational practice.

On the assumption that the teaching talent would reveal itself in appropriate conditions (such as assistance in developing each person's individuality and a creation of a climate of creativity within the collective) we sought to encourage a concern on the part of each person with a further development of their skills.

We also sought to provide for a wide-ranging democratization of overall school life, resting on a genuine involvement of both adults and children in social activities. That was why an emphasis on self-management was found everywhere—in lessons devoted to work training, art and mathematics, in sports, and in relations with production enterprises. That was why, too, there were many hobby groups, circles and societies, and why there were evening activities, lectures, conferences and discussions to attract young workers, parents, and representatives of enterprises.

Our reasoning and our concrete actions were as follows.

If we wish to overcome disproportions between labour education, mental, aesthetic and physical education then it is necessary to ascertain the actual time schedules of students and teachers for each day, week and month, and adjust ap-

proaches to teaching somewhat. Let us rely in part, for example, on the approach developed by Viktor Shatalov from Donetsk, who seeks to reduce home assignments to a minimum and teach the most essential aspects of a subject in large blocks.

Are there problems with the children's health? Do they spend little time outdoors, not more than a half hour? We will reschedule lessons: outdoor games (one hour), sports and care of the school garden and grounds—together this will make up an hour and a half each day. As for physical education, the practice of organizing sections only for those children who excel at sports must be changed. Let us look for additional help. One nearby factory can provide twenty coaches on a voluntary basis, another can provide ten. We will set up a schedule for these sections.

We agree that a major emphasis should be placed on labour activities. Then let us see to it that children in all grades (from the first to the tenth) have work training lessons for at least two hours each day. One half hour each day for equipping specialized classrooms, then work at workshops, self-service activities at home as well as in school, participation in the construction of playgrounds and finally, expeditions to work in the fields—this will produce an average of two hours each day. In order to combine labour activities with art there will be sections in applied arts under teachers responsible for labour training, while art history lessons for senior students will introduce them to industrial aesthetics. In addition, the combining of labour with advanced forms of communication and with children's independent activities will require setting up teams, appointing assistants and foremen. Here, the rotation principle must be applied.

Concerning artistic development, let us try to achieve this by encouraging hobby art groups and enlisting the voluntary help of experts in organizing art history lessons (two hours) for all ten grades, so as to cover both theory and creativity. Where will we find teachers? S. Khaenko from the USSR Union of Artists has agreed to carry out an experiment in painting and sculpture. I. Protektor has agreed to a similar arrangement in music and B. Kurmayev, a journalist, in literary activities.

A need will arise for musical instruments, a special auditorium, a specially equipped study room. We will manage. Protektor suggests that we acquire musical instruments made especially for children. These only cost from two to seven roubles, a sum that each parent will afford. Study rooms will be equipped by

the patron enterprise, the school has their promise. In addition, teachers of literature will organize a school theatre, while teachers of mathematics will organize mathematical games.

I ask the teachers: "Do you really find this interesting?"

"Very much so," they reply.

"You constantly refer to the importance of games, but how should they be organized?" ask those responsible for extra-curricular activities.

"Let us produce a series of games. Here are the methods, here are the rules. Let's call it 'unrevealed mysteries and a thousand secrets'. Furthermore, let us also consider how elements of play may be introduced into teaching.

I know that the biology teacher is interested in games as a means of encouraging children's initiative, that a teacher of the lower grades views them as a step towards learning how to work independently, while a history teacher uses them to dramatize his lessons. How can these interests be combined? Maybe by establishing a section or by assigning individual themes? Let us then draft both individual and section plans on these issues.

Regarding the encouragement of teachers' individual capacities, initiative and motivation for further developing their skills, 13 persons have expressed their wish to pass examinations to be enrolled for post-graduate studies in their profession, 15 persons have registered at the University on Marxism-Leninism, and 20 will attend courses designed to upgrade the professional skills. The following activities are intended to help teachers individually: open lessons, discussions, conferences, reports, exchanges of experience and a file of teaching techniques. All of this, too, should be planned. It is a good thing that the assignment we have received from Latvia's Ministry of Education coincides with our own plans.

The most valuable factor in this work with teachers was their own enthusiasm and the energy derived from the importance of the task. Enthusiasm overcomes weariness. It awakens a kind attitude towards children as well as a high measure of collectivism, the basis of which lies in the principle that the free development of each individual is a condition for the free development of all.

I will return later to the way in which each of our tasks were actually solved. But first I would like to consider a dominant theme in this work, namely, the changes that took place in the modes of communication with both children and teachers.

In referring to modes of social communication we are, in

effect, talking about a unity of individual and collective elements and a transformation of human harmony through a harmonization of the environment. At the initial stage of our pedagogical work these joint efforts were aimed at creating a climate of mutual trust between adults and children, overcoming elements of teacher authoritarianism, and affirming an attitude of respect towards the child's personality.

We discussed the problem of how teachers may overcome elements of authoritarianism in their work on numerous occasions. For the fact was that we sometimes caught ourselves being unkind and noticed that such a deficiency of kindness had become a habitual element in the attitudes of adults. On one occasion we read about the following episode in a newspaper. A small boy entered a store and began gazing at all the display cases. He experienced pleasure simply from looking at beautiful objects. But immediately a group of adults sought to chase him away on the pretext that since he had no money he had no reason for being there. At first glance one might think that nothing of particular importance had occurred. For it is true that children should go home after school and do their homework, that they have no reason to loiter in stores. And yet what terrible logic this is: a defenseless person is humiliated and, moreover, in public. And there are countless numbers of such stereotype situations within the school itself. "Why are you standing there?" "You have no business being here." "Look at your appearance." These are trivial events and yet they all are instances of public humiliation, and it is especially regrettable that most teachers do not even notice this.

I would also like to stress that my role as a trained scientist was not to impose my own views concerning appropriate methods but to develop each teacher's pedagogical thinking and to single out that element within the practice of each which should dominate interactions between adults and children.

The style and tone of pedagogical relations in the collective depend entirely on the school's director. The presence of a correct pedagogical style requires that there be love for all children, without exception, and that this be amplified by interesting forms of organizing their lives. It is vitally important that in relations with children there be wit, vivid imagination and play. There is one guiding norm which bears no compromise, namely, respect for each child's human integrity and still unrealized harmony. It is an awareness of this potential integrity of children and an orientation of love for each child (even if one is irritated by everything about him—from his blank stare

to his habit of continually playing with some trinket) that would help the teacher to choose between the approach of pedagogical authoritarianism and that of patience and tactfulness.

And in fact the children at the school in Riga did prove to be difficult. Accordingly as organizing activities proceeded we made adjustments in our forms of social communication and discussed with the teachers possible ways of streamlining relations with children. In doing this, individual teachers discovered new capacities and probed new lanes. A successful individual experience with a child provided a model to others and became a common acquisition of the teachers' community. Our new perception of what constituted the essence of teaching won new adherents.

One difficult case was that of Sergei Levin. In particular his teacher noted the following: "He continues to present a number of pedagogical riddles..." She then mentioned that he drives the teachers to despair, distracts the class by his jokes, is unkind to his mother, fails to attend school for weeks at a time, is rude to everyone and that the children are unable to influence him collectively. What possible relevance could humanistic norms and love have in this case? And yet...

"We should not give up the boy," stated Vladimirskaya, the Director. "It would be dangerous."

"Will it be possible to mend his ways?" I asked.

"I have not the slightest doubt. He places great value on the school."

This expressed a reliance not on the personal merits of individual teachers but on the entire system of relations that was emerging within the school.

One of our major tasks was to develop teachers' creative powers as a vital condition for further improving their teaching skills.

I will never tire of repeating that one of the greatest evils in the work of teachers is formalism, which tends to extinguish the fires in children's hearts.

It is extremely important to caution young teachers against authoritarianism and formalism. The following example illustrates how this may be achieved.

A young teacher, Tatyana Sergeyevna Maryams, came to see the Director. This was her first year of teaching literature. In great perplexity she complained that the students had stopped listening to her, that she had been forced to resort to

shouting. She wished to leave the school.

Vladimirskaya sought to calm her.

"Perhaps I should meet this class. Please invite me to your lesson when you feel you can."

On the day Vladimirskaya visited the class the lesson was about Lomonosov and it turned out that the teacher's method in presenting the material was inadequate. Once more the young school teacher voiced her perplexity.

"The problem is," Vladimirskaya replied, "that you still have not found yourself, while a lesson on Lomonosov is quite a challenge, and I, too, would probably not succeed. It should be presented in some other way than through an analysis of particular poems. We will discuss that later. But for now, you should move on to Pushkin as rapidly as possible. Do you like Pushkin? Which of his poems do you know by heart?"

"Nearly all of *Eugene Onegin*," the teacher admitted timidly.

As soon as these words were spoken the entire discussion shifted into anoter key, as if the thread were found that would help to join together the method, relations to children and even command of one's subject.

Vladimirskaya felt a sudden surge of enthusiasm. "You cannot allow yourself to be just an average teacher. You will be a superb teacher. You should immediately move on to Pushkin. And structure the lesson as follows: tell the children that Pushkin is your favourite poet, that today you would like to read from Pushkin."

"But such a lesson structure would be wrong methodologically," she said with surprise.

"Please forget all about the method at this lesson. What matters is that the children should sense your love for Pushkin and for his poetry. And you must feel the joy in their responses. The right method will then take care of itself."

"Is there anything else that I should pay attention to?"

"Nothing else. Although perhaps you might wear something other than this suede miniskirt and a bit less make-up."

After the lesson Vladimirskaya met some pupils from the class.

"The lesson was devoted to Pushkin, I believe. How did you like it?"

"Very much," replied the children with enthusiasm.

"You like Pushkin?"

"We like Tatyana Sergeyevna."

For a moment I was able to imagine that surge of young enthusiasm and I saw the teacher's success as if it were my own.

I even felt that the Director did not sufficiently appreciate the birth of the element of creativity. For the essence of classroom interactions consists entirely of such moments. It does not matter that a canonized approach to this does not yet exist. What does matter is that the children's love for the poet, for that which our country takes pride in, had been awakened and that they were able to experience something that was beautiful. What had taken place was the greatest of all mysteries—the birth of a teacher.

Teaching may be compared to love: when a feeling suddenly appears it must be cherished. The young shoot of pedagogical creativity must be given the greatest possible protection.

When a person is at the crest of his or her first creative achievement one should not discourage him by pointing to minor errors, for this might dampen his creative spirit. In such cases it is better to abide by the principle that one may afford to lose the battle in order to win the war. One should not compromise on fundamental issues but be tolerant on minor points—here lies the flexibility of genuinely authoritative pedagogical leadership.

I have cited this example in order to stress that any probing by a teacher needs support also from the teachers' collective in which he or she works. It is vital that such pedagogical facts be subjected to in-depth analysis, bringing out the particular positive tendencies that emerge in concrete cases. This is why the first year of our work was marked by such a large number of seminars, debates, discussions and consultations as a common opinion developed and as common norms, approaches, guidelines and views were formed.

This was a time of collective search. Naturally, because of my own deep involvement I also tended to somewhat idealize what was taking place.

But in fact there was much that truly impressed me. As I worked with Riga's teachers, parents, production workers and students I was surprised by their boundless energy and by the general enthusiasm of the school's teaching staff. I recall four-hour evaluative conference on the initial outcome of the experiment. There were fifteen reports, concise, convincing, vivid, all emphasizing the central point—that what matters is the individual child, a highly moral climate within the collective and combining work with various types of creativeness. This was corroborated by concrete arguments, facts and examples

undiluted by empty appeals.

I would also like to mention another task that we had in mind, namely, to enhance the general level of culture among teachers, and to draw teachers and students closer together by extending their knowledge of the cultural and spiritual values of the socialist society. It is my view that the educational process should not be confined within the school walls. This may be seen in the following example.

The Young Spectators' Theatre in Riga presented a play by Vladimir Tendryakov entitled *Graduation Night*. It concerned schools, teachers and students. This excellent performance led to discussions in the teachers' room, in classrooms, in homes and in the street. The conversations were deeply agitated and polemic. The Director, Vladimirskaya, expressed the view that she especially valued the fact that the performance had disturbed the local feeling of self-satisfaction, that its humanistic orientation had drawn us closer to students. And above all that the theatre had succeeded in conveying those problems which had acquired a social significance and which we viewed as decisive. "Should I ever see," she added, "that upper grade students are afraid to speak the truth I will immediately leave the school."

Together with the Director and the students we saw the performance twice. In addition, Vladimirskaya reread the novel on which it was based several times. On her part, this represented an intense mental and spiritual effort with a view to using each relevant passage in discussions with teachers and being able to speak more knowledgeably about the particular moral values that were brought out so well by the excellent actors.

An extract from one of the reports I presented to the school's teachers during the initial period of our experimental work:

"To become comprehensively developed, children should be educated by highly qualified persons. The principal condition for raising the quality of the educational process is a question of teacher's skills."

From the personal plan of P. I. Aleksenok (biology teacher):

"1975, to equip the biology study room with a complex of technical means and the necessary instruments for introducing elements of programmed learning. 1976, to develop a system of game activities for biology students, 1977, to work without home assignments, and try to attain a "five" and "four" perfor-

mance of all students. 1978, raising the culture of mental work and a further emphasis on children's independent activities during lessons."

An extract from a conversation with a representative of the Latvian Republic's Ministry of Education:

"It is clear that Comrade Aleksenok takes a great interest in his creative work. There is much in it that is controversial and much that is appealing."

I have deliberately chosen to cite these three extracts. From an averall perspective, the Riga experiment was entirely oriented towards developing advanced teaching skills and creating conditions that would stimulate each teacher's own gifts. This can be presented as a connection: "a teacher's integral personality—an integral educational process—an integral personality of a student." This connection ascribes mastery in teaching to an interrelation of individually creative elements with scientific approaches to teaching.

Let us immediately clarify two points. The dilemma— personality or method—does not exist in Soviet pedagogics. Both are needed, or more precisely the fusion of both the wealth of a personality and sophisticated methods. Nevertheless, there does exist an inner logical connection between the teacher's personality and teaching methods. While a personality is expressed in method, it is not reduced to method. The tonality of Makarenko's method corresponded to his own strong and temperamental personality. That of Sukhomlinsky's method was altogether different: he found approaches that best expressed his own human "self". While method lends richness to a personality the latter's influence is far wider. One should not impose a specific method on individual teachers. In saying that each teacher should be a personality we also stress his absolute right in choosing methods.

I have always argued for methods based on games. Games cause children to devote their full energies to a lesson—their minds, hearts, and physical efforts. Game as a method does not require any urging of the children and is in harmony with their age. Games remove barriers between students and teachers.

At the same time the game method is as dangerous as it is attractive, for games stimulate a spirit of rivalry and a striving to achieve success whatever the cost. That blind striving can crush moral norms.

Protazii Ignatyevich Aleksenok's biology study room contains the most modern equipment, a unique collection of technical means. There are hundreds of slides and films with an index card applied. And each lesson is a genuine theatrical performance; each step has been carefully considered and coordinated. The children describe these lessons as "great!". But this is not simply because so many films are shown, but because, for instance, the history of an ordinary green leaf is presented to them in the context of successive advances in scientific thought (including the ideas of Joseph Priestley, Lomonosov, and Timiryazev), and also because games are introduced throughout the lesson. At the start of one such game, the class is divided into several competing groups of assistants. The lights are turned off and Timiryazev's "The Life of Plants" appears on the screen. The commentary is provided by the children themselves: that is, three boys stand facing the screen and give comments on each frame. Marks are immediately put down on the classboard both for their comments and for the further clarifications that they may make. On one occasion I counted 160 comments and answers during a single lesson. A sceptical reader will say that this is impossible. Actually, I would not believe it either had I not been present. During a 45-minute lesson one can question from 7, perhaps 10, to at most 20 students, but not 160. And I would then conclude that the lesson was superficial. But the whole point is that it was not. After all, genuine depth does not necessarily imply lengthy exposition. It may be expressed in the advance of a child's thought, in a brilliant clarification, in stimulating a searching mind and an analytical way of thinking.

Next the students whirled a drum resembling the ones that are used in lotteries. But instead of lottery tickets it contained dozens, perhaps hundreds, of leaves of various grasses and trees. The challenge was to identify them and describe the corresponding leaves' attributes, including those of maple trees, plantain, clover, oak trees, ash, cherry and walnut trees. Fifth-grade children found this wildly fascinating. A remarkable aspect was that all knowledge was assimilated in class. And there were almost no "threes"—only two over a period of half a year. "And I believe that next time there will not be any", Aleksenok added. At first he had seemed to me somewhat of a dry character but in fact, what a warm and generous person he was.

Students whose works do not rise higher than "three" are in a state of constant fear and tension. How important it is to free

their minds from that oppressive state, to let them sense at least once the joy of creativity and of exercising their own power of reasoning. And here, in Aleksenok's game, the child can prove himself with short answers to important questions, and later, with luck, this may be followed by an entire running commentary.

I wish to emphasize once more that learning should never be entirely reduced to a game. But to completely exclude elements of play from lessons is also harmful. To overcome some of the drawbacks of the existing system of class teaching, improved forms of communication that are expressions of genuine collectivity should be introduced. For what is it that we see in lessons today? "Don't prompt", "Sit still"—in short, do not show any initiative and keep quiet. And we see an average rate of advance that suits neither the best students nor the weakest.

In contrast the level of activity in Aleksenok's classes is truly high. I witnessed how Andrei Zhigalov literally jumped up in his seat, stretching out his arm in asking to be heard. But there is also a certain danger attached to this, for one's strong desire to answer should not overshadow behaviour norms. Our task is not only to give scope to Andrei's activity but also to teach him to think of others, his friends, and to feel joy not only at his own achievements but at those of his classmates as well. This remains a difficult task for teachers.

An extract from the personal teaching plan of Rena Yakovlevna Savkova:

"1976, to teach all children to fulfil some duties independently, without the teacher: classroom monitoring, extra-curriculum activities, and training a group of a teacher's assistants for conducting individual lessons and parts of lessons. 1977, develop approaches to encourage independence on the part of children during lessons. 1978, to establish a practical significance of the principle of providing a sense of inner freedom and protection from humiliation in terms of its bearing on the individual's moral education."

One day I deliberately came to school early to observe children from Rena Yakovlevna Savkova's second-grade class. A small girl and a boy approached the classroom, opened the door with a key and turned on the lights. I entered the classroom and asked:

"What are you doing?"

"We are preparing the lesson. Rena Yakovlevna will be teaching another class today: their teacher is sick."

I knew there was a flu epidemic. I found a seat in the last row. Children arrived one after another, and took their seats as if nothing had happened. Some of them did ask me who I was. I did not want to put them on their guard and just shrugged my shoulders. Someone rescued me: "It's Kostya's Dad." (Savkova explained to me later that parents frequently attended lessons and the children had become accustomed to this). The role of Kostya's Dad suited me very well and I began my watch.

A girl carrying a book in her hand came to the teacher's desk, bearing herself like a teacher, sure of herself and with a stern expression on her face. What followed was a normal lesson with questioning, the explanation of new material and a review of the main points. Moreover, there was no shouting, no walking about in the classroom, no pulling of the girls' pigtails, no throwing of paper airplanes, and no shooting of rubber bands. I even tried to distract the children but the "teacher" warned me against this.

One of the boys had to leave the room. He raised his hand.

"I don't believe there is anything wrong with your bladder," said the budding teacher, and I expected this diagnosis to call forth a burst of laughter. But no one paid any attention. "Well if you must, then go."

The small boy left and returned quietly a few minutes later.

It occurred to me that perhaps the children were nagged into such blind submission that they had completely lost their natural tendency towards childish pranks. Or may be a group of stronger students were intimidating the rest. This was something I had seen in the past. And you can imagine that my doubts were not dispelled after attending an exceptionally brilliant lesson in arithmetic given by Savkova. During this lesson everyone in the class was in continuous motion: children ran up to the chalkboard, first singly, then in groups, and then the entire class; they clapped their hands, keeping rhythm (an exercise in attentiveness); they participated in games; and in the middle of everything Savkova suddenly explained: "This is a new lesson. I am so pleased that everyone has understood it. Except for two boys. Listen, you two, what is the name of this component?"

Nor did my secret doubt vanish even when I saw Savkova dancing and singing with the children, riding on a sled together with toddlers (she was 48 years old), composing poems and drawing pictures (she later described all this to all the teachers at a staff meeting). I observed the children on an occasion when they were going to the dining room unsupervised. Now, I thought, they will display at least the usual proclivity for pranks

that is so characteristic of nine-year-olds. But even here they proceeded quietly and in good order. They ate their meals quietly as if wishing to stress that they were Savkova's second-grade students. Yet even this did not persuade me of the genuine character of these expressions of self-responsibility.

I thought that Savkova sensed my distrust (all teachers have strong intuitive feelings) and that she was chuckling to herself. She felt slightly concerned when I chose several slow learners and asked her to invite their parents. I am convinced that it is in terms of their relation to its weakest members that one can judge the moral quality of a children's collective. The concept of a slow learner serves as a crossroads in which one encounters all pedagogical problems.

I spoke with the parents for two hours, both in the presence of Savkova and without her. The parents told me of the happiness their children experience in their interactions with the teacher. These were the words of the grandmother of a boy called Boris: "Our Boris is quite a problem, full of mischief. Earlier he was in another school where he received nothing but low marks. We did not know what to do. But in this school it's as if Boris has been born anew, as it were. He even told his grandfather that from now on he would do his lessons himself and would no longer need his help. Rena Yakovlevna explained to us that we should give the boy some freedom, stop pecking and punishing him and instead create a climate of trust, of being protected from humiliation. And she said no coaching from outside to help prepare his lessons. She said she would stop working with him if there were. And she promised that he would become a good student."

I came into the class at the end of the day's lessons. Savkova was speaking with a boy who had asked her: "On whose side should I be when my mother spanks my younger sister? On the side of my sister or of my mother?"

"On whose side would you be if I should slap your friend? On my side?"

The boy remained silent; the problem of moral choice was difficult and unfamiliar. How could this be reconciled with the maxim that one should love and obey one's mother if at the same time one should oppose her? Such a combination was hard for the boy to grasp. And the teacher explained: one must not strike another human being, a person must not betray his loved ones. But the most important thing in the world is justice and respect for others. And one must stand up for that justice even at the risk of being beaten.

"Am I not right?" asked Savkova turning to me for support.

I answered that she was entirely correct, and while this did not completely remove the boy's doubts, I thought that he left the room with a sense of relief. We had taken a weight off his young soul.

For Savkova, "to stand up for justice" is more than high-sounding words intended for children. It is her inner credo. This is why her report to the conference contained a sharp criticism of the Director as well as of myself: "One should not give children questionnaires that have not been well thought out. One should not engage in hurried studies."

And one further observation. Savkova is more than simply a chairman of the teaching methods association and more than an official methodologist. She is the acknowledged informal leader of teachers of the lower grades and her role is that of the collective's own conscience, as it were.

The final point that conclusively persuaded me of the genuine pedagogical culture of this teacher concerns her personal comprehensive knowledge of each student. In this respect she finds help in approaches described by Sukhomlinsky and other Soviet pedagogues.

At the conference on applied problems Savkova described how children wrote their own fairy-tales during a Russian language lesson: "One girl pretended that she was a small bird. She conveyed how much everyone loved her, how beautiful were her feathers, how her mother polished those wonderful feathers, and how the small bird was grateful for her mother's great love. And this reminded me how very proud this girl's real mother was of her child and what an immense moral power parental love represents."

Savkova showed me some of the student's stories.

A fairy-tale entitled "Snowflake" was written by a dreamy, delicate and refined girl named Snezhana Turanova.

"Winter had come. Together with the other snowflakes I descended to earth. All the children were filled with joy, they laughed, ran about and shouted 'Snow, snow, snow!' Suddenly one of the boys gathered me up together with my girlfriends, rolled us into a snowball and threw us. We nearly died of fright, for we were thinking of the other snowflakes. Later a million more snowflakes came to us and they were all sad. We asked them: 'Why has sadness crept into your hearts?' Then the sun began to shine and the snow turned into rain drops. Only water remained. And all the children became very sad."

Teaching practice can suddenly prompt approaches to moral

problems that have not yet been adequately developed in theoretical pedagogics. I would like to talk about the element of fear among children. On this question, psychologists are correct when they say that fear greatly influences the way children feel. Understanding the nature of children's fears means understanding their conflicting motivations. The following is a story written by Rita Zhivenok: "Once upon a time there lived a small mouse called Chuv and he had many friends. They were all very frightened of the Fear that lived in the stump. One day Chuv went out into the street. He was very afraid of the Fear and of darkness. Suddenly small lights appeared. These were the fireflies. When they approached he asked them: 'Does Fear really exist?' The fireflies thought for a moment and answered clearly: 'No, it does not!' 'What of the one that lives in the stump?' Again they said: 'No!' And suddenly it was light. And Chuv came home. He then told all his friends that there was no Fear of any kind living in the stump and there never would be. And all his friends were no longer afraid of the Fear that lives in the stump."

When the great Russian writer Lev Tolstoy wrote his article entitled "Should Peasant Children Learn to Write from Us or We from Peasant Children?" he strongly emphasized the children's remarkable talent for writing, which reflected the ordinary people's moral beauty. No other activity adds richness to children's lives as much as their own efforts in writing. And no exercises in the Russian language will produce the culture of the written word that can be achieved by encouraging the genuine creative fantasy of children and their imaginations.

An excerpt from a report by the school's Director, Vladimirskaya:

"In the course of experimental activities we succeeded in combining different forms, methods, and means of political education as a basis for our work in the sphere of moral ideals and in developing a Marxist-Leninist world outlook on the part of students."

An excerpt from a contribution by N. L. Kuklya to a conference on practical research:

"My personal pedagogical interests are to bring the teaching of history closer to the children's own lives, to teach them to understand the fate of the older generation and to prepare them for tangible reality by learning from the experience of their parents. These interests are in accordance with the idea of a comprehensive development of students. This is why I find my work so fascinating."

The approaches found by the school's teachers, led by Novita

Lvovna Kuklya, a teacher of history, in effecting the political education of the students deserve a deep and comprehensive analysis. Indeed, I have never seen anything like it.

Like many others, I knew that the political development of upper-grade students proceeds on two levels, as it were. First there are the lessons, in which everything must be learned from texts and recommended literature; and then there are the discussions among children concerning political issues debates between upper-grade students on cultural revolutions, the historical destinies of peoples, wars, and their own involvement in history.

It is in the light of such an intense interest among upper-grade students in history and politics that Kuklya decided to combine both these levels in order that students might sense their own involvement in history more closely. Particular emphasis was placed on the lives of their parents, the heroic deeds of their grandfathers and grandmothers, and on recreating the past with the help of the children themselves. Kuklya sought to develop a high sense of patriotism and of internationalism in each individual student.

Her experimental theme was "Our Own Involvement in History". Each of her students carried out a "sociological study" of the lives of their parents and of close acquaintances and in this way clarified for himself the social transformations that took place in Soviet society. The following is a fragment from one such study by a tenth-grade student, Albina:

"On my father's side, both my grandfather and greatgrand-father were farm hands. After the revolution my grandfather (who was at that time already a communist) fought in the Civil War. He then returned to his village and began to work the land. He fought against the White Finnish Army and was seriously wounded, so that he did not participate in the Second World War. He lost his life in Latvia, where he was a member of resistance group. My father became a worker and has been working in the factory for more than 20 years."

It should be added that this girl was not simply a good student but was thoughtful and intelligent. This is why the teacher enlisted her help in political education.

Later, in analyzing her students' "sociological studies", Kuklya explained to the Teachers' Council:

"I had not expected that this kind of work would prove to be so very important for the political and moral education of students. Their own studies served as living evidence, as it were, that in the USSR there are no privileges for individual social classes and groups, and that the class feeling takes the form of an

active defence of just and moral ideals."

Albina was entrusted with the section on "the international youth movement". The following is a description of one of her lessons with upper-grade students. First she asked a number of questions. What progressive development in the international youth movement could you list? And what negative developments? What are their social and economic roots? What political problems did the Tenth Youth Festival in Berlin define? What do you know about the hippie movement? What do you know about them from books? From your own meetings with them? (Kuklya had explained that "hippie girls" congregated at a certain place along Riga's embankment.) What do you know about the English beatniks, Italy's cappiloni, the right-wing movement in Holland and the hungweibing?

It is one thing when such questions are asked by a teacher, and an altogether different matter when they are asked by a fellow student, reproaching them for their ignorance, as it were: "How can you be so ignorant and primitive. Do you think that to be a hippie simply means to wear long hair and patched jeans? Then read these articles if you like, and if you have additional questions come to the history room."

At our next meeting with the students Albina expressed her own deep civic belief in the importance of high moral ideals.

"The majority of hippies are expressing a protest against the hypocrisy in the capitalist world, the resulting pettiness in family life and their opposition to militarism and violence. And that of course is positive development and this we may find attractive. But hippies also reject everything, even genuine human values, offering nothing in their place. And if hippies reject all the fundamental things then they cannot attract educated, intelligent and thinking people. This is why I especially oppose hippies who look for solutions in narcotics and in terrorist tactics."

A valuable outcome is that such an approach leads students to form their own attitudes, personal views, and an awareness of one's public duty, in which a unity between words and deeds becomes a norm of daily life.

It is unshakeable belief in the rightness of moral ideals that is the essence of ideological and political education in Soviet schools.

An extract from Vladimirskaya's report:

"As an experiment we introduced throughout all ten grades lessons in fine arts, music, and art history. These formal lessons were supplemented by further activities in various amateur and hobby groups.

Excerpts from a television programme involving parents:

"We are now learning from our children to see and understand the beauty of things. This is gratifying."

"...Genuine works of art can transform an individual, make him more courageous and noble, wiser and more kind. The closer we come to its unfailing light the brighter will be the reflections it throws on us. There is only one condition—that one's heart be alive to art and yearning to discover the laws of creativity."

This was the way in which Svetlana Ivanovna Khaenko, the teacher of fine arts, spoke with children—wisely and delicately, with the help of vivid images. Her students learn to appreciate Latvia's artistic heritage, make visits to well-known specialists in ceramics to see them working at their kilns, and visit exhibitions. But what matters most is the fact that at her lessons she closely associates art with both moral and work education. Her work with children stimulates their fantasy, logical thinking and creative imagination.

I must admit that I was somewhat sceptical concerning the appropriateness of holding lessons in art theory in the first grade. And so I decided to attend one of these lessons.

The game that children were playing was called "Exhibition". Dozens of children's works were exhibited. The children were asked to name the type of painting and to put works of one type in one place: "self portrait", "landscape", "still life"; this resulted in a multiplicity of specialized exhibitions. Khaenko expressed her delight:

"How beautiful our classroom has suddenly become."

And indeed the classroom had been transformed—with shades of pastel blue, delicate brown and light green. One notes that the colours are somewhat subdued, reflecting the teacher's own taste or perhaps an element that is specific of the urban children. The first-graders enjoy all this because it is truly beautiful, because it is a game, and because each child receives the kind of generous grades that are needed to encourage creativeness.

"And what shall we call the young artist who painted this seascape?" Khaenko asks.

"A painter of marine scenes," the children reply, and Sasha, the young painter of marine scenes blushes, he is greatly excited by the fact that his work is shown at the "exposition" and recorded in its "catalogue" (two more new words for the first-graders).

"And what should we do so that everyone knows about the exhibition?"

"We must draw a poster, and also a cover for the catalogue," the children reply.

And there are soon as many posters as there are types of paintings being exhibited.

The children's paintings abound in unexpected combinations. In drawing a poster for the exhibition of seascapes Edik depicted a fish coming from the depths of the sea balancing a paintbrush on the tip of his nose. While Baiba, a small girl, produced a cover for the catalogue depicting a palette with an orange brush held by a woman's hand with multicoloured fingers (violet, blue, pink). I was struck by that painting's harmony and asked the teacher what she could tell me about Baiba. Once again her evaluation was short and concise:

"She has an unusual sense of beauty, and she is very kind."

And indeed these two concepts complement each other—beauty and kindness. They cannot exist separately within a child and to teach children to feel beauty means to teach them to be kind.

As I observed the children I felt that they were fortunate because they were already able to feel the joy of making contact with beauty. And I felt a sense of regret that most probably many other schoolchildren would not discover that joy at such an early age, as neither I nor my son had.

In the meantime the teacher was telling her young students how Claude Monet, the French painter came to London and showed Englishmen that fog was not at all grey, but was made crimson by red buildings, gaslights and smoke. And that it was after he had painted his "Westminster Bridge" that Englishmen came to call Monet the creator of London fogs, for it was then that they first saw their capital city through the eyes of a gifted painter.

She then related how in his short work entitled "Watercolour" the writer Alexander Green described how two persons, harassed by their daily cares, once found themselves by chance at an exhibition. They saw a small watercolour painting and stopped captivated and entranced before it. It represented a small house covered with ivy, with sparkling white laundry drying in the wind and small windows that reflected the sky. And suddenly they realized that this was their home, that they were the owners of this beauty that escaped their notice until now and that had been noticed by a complete stranger holding a box of watercolours in his hand. He had noticed this beauty and made everyone see it.

Eventually, such gifted students as Baiba and Sasha were sure

to acquire the perfect ear and the "absolute eye" which reflect man's remarkable need to discern what is beautiful in life and share this with others.

Later in the lesson plan, each student was given an assignment to find buildings in Old Riga embodying specific styles—classic, gothic, baroque. Everyone was eager to find the typical corner, iron gate, forged handle, or heavy oak door and would then describe his search with great interest in an essay entitled "My City". One of Khaenko's students wrote: "I visited Old Riga many times but I had never noticed the beauty of individual buildings. I had only noticed narrow streets and old houses. It was on the day that each of us was searching for his own corner, for his own block, his own stained-glass design that I first sensed its architecture."

A principle to which Khaenko rigorously adhères is that while the work should be collective, perceptions should be individual. Let Baiba be struck by pure pastel shades and soft subdued halftones. Let Sasha be captivated by the stern harmony of geometrically proportioned ascetic lines. In such situations collectivism expresses itself in a mutual enriching of each other. Let the children learn to understand each other through a passion for something that is of interest for all of them. It is this which may produce that spiritual unity without which one cannot achieve advanced forms of social communication, a harmony of joint participation and shared experiences.

Khaenko finds it more difficult to teach upper-grade students. Most of them are maximalists and like to criticize almost everything, but especially painters. At first she tried to argue, to prove certain propositions, but then she changed her approach.

"Let us begin by visiting a museum. But not all together. Two or three at a time. And let each person choose one or two paintings and study them closely. To study a painting is like reading a serious book. And then we will discuss this."

And the students' choice of paintings and analysis, their attachment to particular colours, to their own range of colours revealed not only their individual tastes but also their ability to understand the artist's message.

Mary likes nature and animals. And she was attracted by Kustodiev's "Autumn in the Countryside". She also discerned the painting's overall mood—the painter's love for peasants and their children who are close to nature. She liked the bright colours used for painting hens and geese, and the cat and the horse. The girl liked the hues that she had not noticed earlier: warm yellows, a fiery orange and various shades of greens. And also

the purity of the colours in the upper right hand corner—the storm was coming.

Biruta, on the other hand, chose a work by the artist Konchalovsky, his portrait of Meierhold, a Soviet producer. And she "accepted" the artist's use of shades of blue, yellow, and rose not only in the patterns of the rug, but also for the pillow, and even the dog, which blends, as it were, with the rug's basic combination of colours. Biruta sensed Meierhold's absorption in his inner world. And she believed that delicate combination of light colours is a way of emphasizing the picture's psychological message. Unlike a colour photograph this was a high form of art in which colours reproduced the inner richness of the man.

Biruta and Mary are tenth-grade students. But I think again of Baiba and Sasha, the first-graders, and how much more finely and deeply will they comprehend both art and the beauty of surrounding life if, as envisaged in the experiment, they are taught to understand art beginning from their first lessons at school.

I would like to stress again that the experiment did not seek to offer students fundamental knowledge in the field of art. Its task was more modest: to help children appreciate art and to create a system of pedagogical relations in which not only the content of education but also art would contribute to the spiritual aspects of personality formation.

The experiment indicated that many schools already possess the real possibilities and conditions that are needed to solve these problems. The overall level of cultural development in the country prepares Soviet students both for activities in the field of art and for an assimilation of the theory of aesthetic principles.

An excerpt from a discussion by V. L. Paushe, the labour education teacher, with teachers of other schools:

"I sought to adapt the approach to labour education as closely as possible to the experiment's basic requirements. I repeatedly changed the equipment in the labour workroom, repainted and redesigned the work benches, work places and control units at which the children would carry out various roles—those of master workmen, controllers and teaching assistants. I always gave much thought to colours, in conformity with modern principles of labour organization and industrial enterprises, so that children would find their environment attractive."

I am looking at approximately 200 survey questionnaires collected from children. In answering which subject they liked best most of them replied: "labour".

I hold a long conversation with Paushe, the labour education teacher. He is a gifted person who dreams of combining labour and art.

"It is true that especially when the collective is just being formed, labour must be voluntary in order that this may enhance a child's sense of joy at having accomplished something," he states.

"But what if the children had not come to you themselves?" I insist.

"That would mean that I had not approached them in the right way," he replied, "but this has never happened. All the boys, without exception, like to work with their hands."

"But you must have had conflicts with the children? You work in a complex district and many of the boys are difficult."

Paushe smiles:

"At first some of the instruments began to vanish: hammers, screwdrivers, files and especially taps".

"Does this mean that you had to hold investigations?"

"Not at all," he was indignant, "I told them, 'What I really value in you is your interest in tools: this means that you are not completely hopeless, since you feel attracted to practical things.' And you know this worked: most of the boys returned the instruments. It is true, some of them were not in a great hurry to return their trophies. One small boy came to Vladimirskaya, the Director, almost six months later and gave her a large tap:

' "Perhaps you'll find a use for this one.'

' "You haven't by chance borrowed it from somewhere else?' the Director asked.

' "No, this one comes from my own stock.' "

Like Paushe's approach, this small episode is an entire pedagogical poem: reducing tension through good humour, creating attitudes of mutual trust and a feeling of certainty on the part of children that they are safe from interrogations, embarrassing questions or "heart-to-heart" talks to trace down that fine valve that one can spin around a pencil as well as around one's own finger. It's a pity to part with such a grand thing.

In such situations a willingness to trust the student is probably the most effective means. One is reminded of Makarenko's approach: "We shall not punish you, but we want you to steal two more times." And the child would protest against such a tragicomic way of settling the issue: "Why should I? You cannot make me steal."

It is interesting to note incidentally that in classes on labour, students often change places, as it were. Frequently, a good stu-

dent who is viewed as a model in other respects (he studies well, presents excellent reports on art, writes poetry) proves to be clumsy and incapable at work, while students who are "negative models" display miracles of diligence.

Let us look for positive elements in the negative model of a "difficult child".

My observations over a period of thirty years have shown repeatedly that, ultimately, most difficult children become fine people, excellent workers and caring parents. And in some respects they outperform those of their former classmates who once embodied many or all of the attributes of the ideal model.

What then are the positive properties that develop among many difficult children? They are characterized by enormous energy and, I would say, a zest for living. No matter how much one may sermonize and scold a difficult child, as is often the case, he retains the remarkable power that continually eggs him to new pranks in the Tom Sawyer style. As a rule he is physically strong and enduring, and these two qualities help him in asserting himself in his own environment.

Those who are "difficult" especially value the trust of their friends and this is why one can always depend on them in a difficult situation. Whenever I went on trips with the children, often for several days, it was the "negative models" that were always the leaders: they kept the money, pitched the tents, carried the heaviest backpacks and helped those who were weak. The "positive models" on the other hand, were often less agile and inventive, less dynamic.

On an occasion at the boarding school, when I was involved in organizing labour activities at a furniture factory, the "difficult students" soon became the brigade leaders and carried out the most difficult work.

Such qualities as industriousness, energy, willpower, skillfulness, a friendly disposition towards others and an unselfish attitude are vital components in personality development and a wise teacher should rely on them.

There is no child whose face does not reflect the finest in mankind. Each child carries within himself the very spirit of harmony that expresses itself in a potential to assimilate human culture and social experience. Children are highly receptive. Even a relatively insensitive boy will always respond to an interesting challenge: his eyes will brighten, and he will follow the instructor.

I once asked 20 school directors whom they would choose to carry out some highly responsible task calling for enormous

effort. Many of them answered that they would definitely choose "difficult students". A school whose working rhythm does not include intensive labour efforts loses much. The success of Paushe and his colleagues lies in the fact that they were able to find a sphere of application for the children's energies, in which the "difficult students" were able to assert themselves as individuals.

It was Makarenko who observed that "... labour activities that are not aimed at creating values do not constitute a positive element in education. Accordingly, so-called school labour as well should be based on a conception of those values that labour can create."*

In general, in developing the new Riga school's collective we made wide use of approaches formulated by Makarenko.

And today it is difficult to know which came first—words or deeds, labour education or moral education.

The Riga school's collective began to take shape even before the school had opened. Together with teachers and parents, children helped complete the construction work, assemble a library collection, equip study rooms, admit new students, plant flowers, and assign classrooms.

Unfortunately I was not able to witness that initial stage. But I was able to invite Vadim Vinogradov, a film producer, to record this unique fusion of physical efforts and spiritually rewarding communication between adults and children.

Later, he described what he saw.

"You know, it was an unusual sight. Participants did not think of pausing to rest. It was a well-coordinated harmonious activity, no one paid any attention to us as we filmed it. You should have seen how the school girls washed the windows. Since everyone was eager to participate, there was quite a number of girls busy about each window and they were wiping the panes with as much care as if they were wiping the lenses of a microscope. Many of them were not yet in the habit of working, but each of their movements reflected a sense of profound involvement.

"I don't think the children could have shown greater enthusiasm had they been furnishing their own rooms. At first when I entered the library I could not distinguish between children, teachers and parents, I could not understand who was in charge. The students were sorting books, filling out cards, and fitting in bookshelves. Outside, flowers were being planted in large cement vases, and again one could not tell who were the parents and who

* A. S. Makarenko, *Sochineniya v 7-i tomakh*, Vol. 5, p. 192.

the children, and believe me, no one was shouting at anyone else."

As I listened it occurred to me that we had succeeded in our principal objective: in the first working moments we managed to bring adults and children together in purposeful activity in order to visibly demonstrate the vast powers of harmonious collective aspirations.

... An excerpt from one of my progress reports on the Riga experiment:

"The school teachers have defined for me the following task: to develop a methodological approach for combining work with moral responsibility, the joyfulness of children with self-management, and education at home with education in school. The proposed approach was circulated among teachers, parents and upper-grade students. A greater emphasis was placed on applying in everyday practice Makarenko's and Sukhomlinsky's proposition that upright citizens can be developed only through work and initiative in the personal, family, and social spheres.

An excerpt from a report by P. D. Osaulko, a teacher of the second grade:

"While earlier we referred to work in general, today we study closely the way in which each child performs concrete tasks in the school and at home, we guide this process."

The teachers have learned to help organize various independent groups engaged in collective initiatives. I could cite dozens of schools in which genuine enthusiasm was shown during construction activities. But it is considerably more difficult to achieve similar enthusiasm in smaller everyday activities, to ensure that each child develops an inner basis of a love for work.

A lesson in ethical principles is being conducted in the first-grade class. Its theme is that one must help one's friends, mother and grandmother, and the discussion is proceeding very well. I ask those children who help prepare breakfast at home to raise their hands. Only one girl, Alina Solovyova, responds. "When I wake up I give Andrei his bottle, and prepare breakfast for myself. Then father goes to work. Finally, before leaving for school I prepare breakfast for mother and wake her."

Yet, as Alina described how she helped her mother there was laughter in the class: everyone thought that her behaviour was queer—the reverse of what I expected.

But when the girl was presented as a model to others all the children also decided to help their mothers and grandmothers.

although one girl commented with regret: "Alina's mother is good, she allows her to do all kinds of things, while I will be told to mind my own business and do my homework."

This called for a meeting with parents on the subject of the role of work in developing ethical principles in children. And together Vladimirskaya and I began to make adjustments in the school's work and to draft special plans designed to provide for individualized approaches to ethical and labour education.

And again the important thing here is not work for work's sake. What matters is an orientation of the teachers' collective towards combining the widest variety of individual creative activities with self-education, and work education in school with similar activities at home. A real education results only from those forms of labour that develop spiritually enriched forms of human communication.

One of the reasons why children at the 79th school in Riga like labour activities is that they are doing something for themselves.

Fifth-graders have a work lesson. The children are making simple items for themselves: mounting blocks for banners to be placed in the Young Pioneers' room, handles for hammers, and geometrical forms for the mathematics study room.

I ask Borya Dumish.

"And what are you going to make?"

"I would like to carve a vase from a piece of wood as a gift for my mother on International Women's Day, March 8th. This can be done on a lathe, or with a chisel. I already know how. Also my brother's birthday is coming soon (he is a member of school's music group) and I want to make him a pair of drum sticks."

"Do you manage to do such things at home as well?"

"Not really. It was different when grandfather was alive. Then we built kites together, but it's a long time since he died."

Children should work with their hands at home as well as in school. One may cite many reasons for this, including the general usefulness of physical efforts and the development of work skills and abilities. I will not proceed to list all the reasons but will touch on just one. Work done with one's own hands is exceptionally useful in that it helps children to better acquaint themselves with today's technological world and also with nature. By using their hands children acquire knowledge, skills, practice and this provides abundant material for the most wide-ranging analyses. And manual activities are more than simply a mechanical sensation. For the hand is also the mind. Touching a pol-

ished metal surface produces more than a simple feeling of cool smooth gliding. It also activates reasoning and marks the "acceptance" of an objects's integral character. No amount of mental speculation, no sort of book can be exchanged for what a child can and should learn with his hands. A person's hands develop his brain to the same extent that the mind endows meaning to the movement of his hands.

Our modest experiment in Riga's 79th school became one of many pedagogical experiences carried out in the USSR. It has been described in newspaper articles and journals, as well as in a series prepared for radio and television.

We did not, of course, succeed in solving all the problems that were envisaged and planned. Many aspects call for further clarification, new lanes of research, and coordinated interaction between science and practical activities.

The enthusiasm of teachers is unselfish and self-sacrificing. Like any other expression of talent it depends on social support.

The quintessence of pedagogics should lie in a synthesis of scientific knowledge, experience, pedagogical art and modern culture. Today's schools call for precisely this kind of complex approach to teaching.

3. ETERNAL QUEST

Schools are the realm that belongs to a country's future citizens. Without innovations, large and small, and creative daring teaching activities lose their meaning.

The biographies of many teachers confirm that a modern teacher is a constant researcher on two levels, as it were.

On the one hand, in his various roles as organizer, instructor, social activist, specialist in methods, a teacher finds it necessary to develop more perfect teaching and education technologies, to make adjustments in inter-collective and inter-personal relations and in the student's inner world. On the other hand, he acts at the same time as a type of experimental scientist in relation to himself: he examines his own possibilities, and improves his own abilities as he subordinates his cultural and personal attributes to professional and scientific objectives.

In his work entitled *A Conversation with a Young School Director*, Sukhomlinsky observes that every teacher should be a researcher whose success depends on a wide-ranging general culture and a broad knowledge of the principles of philosophy, pedagogical psychology, sociology and economics. Sukhomlinsky himelf was an example of this, for he possessed an all-round

education, was a thinker, and the essence of his pedagogical culture centred on unfolding all of a child's inner forces.

Today, a pedagogical education alone no longer suffices. There is need for general culture, special knowledge and skills. Teachers must know how to observe children, bring out what is essential in their development and relate this to basic progressive social tendencies. A creative approach to teaching requires an ability to analyze the effectiveness of various means and approaches and to systematize pedagogical discoveries and achievements. This is why in their capacity as researchers, pedagogues must be trained in two respects: in a knowledge of a society's ideology and culture, and in mastering the arsenal of professional knowledge and skills. This occasionally gives rise to sharp contradictions, resulting, above all, from the fear of some teachers to be daring in transferring elements from their own general spiritual culture into everyday pedagogical work.

Why does this take place and what can account for this gap? Possibly the fact that professional, stereotyped thinking is not always combined with high-level human values. And perhaps also the fact that a teacher's lack of faith in himself occasionally disengages him from active search and high forms of creativity.

Certain events from my teaching experience are called to mind. In my lectures for beginning teachers and counselors I deliberately dwelt on those problems that were extremely interesting to me. I spoke about the interrelations between objectives, means and results, the relation between the creative, phenomenological and formal elements in teaching practice, about intuition and heuristics, and the unity of structural and activity-oriented approaches in the analysis of classroom activities. Naturally, in clarifying individual terms I rose higher and higher into spheres that were often extremely abstract in relation to practice.

I referred to Dostoyevsky's assertion that man finds his greatest advantage in being honest, as well as to Kant's rejection of the principle of human happiness for the sake of a scholastic conception of duty and to Spinoza's proposition that only those activities that are based on pleasure and human happiness are moral. I also dwelt on international discussions concerning "new schools" and national traditions in education.

I repeatedly asked my audience: "Perhaps this is too complex? Perhaps I should not digress and should limit myself to recommendations concerning how games, meetings, class lessons, and gatherings should be organized." The reply was: "We have already heard much about meetings and gatherings but it is not often that one hears discussions concerning the relation of general

human knowledge and cultural achievements with everyday teaching practice."

It became clear to me later that this question is always current and relevant. The world of culture should make all professional activities richer and any teacher, whether he teaches school beginners or is a school director, should readily turn to the treasures of culture, to accumulated information and to those values that are alive, in our children, our parents and in the teaching community as a whole.

Practice shows that there are three components in the activities of a searching teacher: general culture, professional knowledge, and personal experience. Of course, if some teachers are interested in problems of collective education they must study questions relating to the structure of a collective, the relation of formal and non-formal spheres, leadership and self-evaluation. Similarly, if others are considering the propagation of knowledge they must learn about the mechanisms that govern information processes.

But in studying all these latest scientific approaches, teachers should never underestimate the importance of their own direct knowledge of life based on experience and reflection. It is this which constitutes their own pedagogical experience, which they must learn to trust.

I had an occasion to discuss this issue with Benjamin Spock.*

"What is the relation of educators' personal experience to the stream of information within which they find themselves?" I asked.

He replied:

"Indeed, I have met with this interesting phenomenon. In recent years America has become flooded with the most diverse educational information. Advice has been given and debates held by psychologists and scholars from various realms, physiologists and pedagogues, public figures and policemen. On the whole this is not bad literature, but its abundance has begun to confuse parents and teachers. They feel that it is all so complicated that they can hardly rely on science, but can rely on ideas of humanism. On the other hand, their idea of goodness unsupported by the conviction of their grandparents, who lived in a strict and Puritan America that was marked by both a belief in strength and pragmatism, has taken a definite list. There appeared, especially among young mothers, an element of

* Dr. Spock's answers are translated from the Russian text.—*Ed.*

uncertainty, a lack of self-confidence, and this is an obstacle to upbringing. This is why I have proposed that they ignore these hundreds and thousands of books and trust in themselves."

"But does it mean that you oppose science?"

"Not at all. I have sought to structure modern scientific ideas in such a way that they may be combined with the wise experience of our grandparents. And I have sought to make the new upbringing a bit nicer than the strict upbringing of our ancestors..."

In this connection one may recall Ushinsky's repeated emphasis on the point that the traditions and wisdom we find in ordinary people is a necessary component of upbringing. And we have a duty to bring the wisdom that we owe to our fathers and mothers and our grandparents into today's teaching practice. What are the main elements of that popular wisdom? Work, honesty, persistence when facing difficulties, and a capacity to share in other people's experiences. Schools and teaching can only benefit if teaching practice takes up these moral values.

Experience has shown that a decisive role in the development of a research orientation in teachers is played by the immediate environment within which they work. Such elements as the teacher collective's microclimate, the ideas that animate it and the traditions that it preserves, as well as the system of relations that it embodies, largely determine each member's research orientation.

In the language of social psychologists, a teacher collective represents a complex system of interacting "smaller groups". In such a context each senior teacher acts as a leader who, aside from meeting administrative norms, exerts an influence on his colleagues and helps them improve the quality of their work. Smaller groups emerge both on the basis of mutual personal affinity and on the basis of common professional interests.

Whatever the research problems of the collective or of individual teachers may be, and whatever methods they employ, the centre of attention must be placed on the needs of children. And if the search for effective methods of teaching is inseparably linked to a concern with their charge's inner development, pedagogics cannot fail to stimulate enthusiasm.

The awakening of creative impulses and the establishment of an atmosphere conducive to research are subject to their own strict laws. Should the problem examined by the teachers not be sufficiently absorbing it will not constitute a strong challenge to the collective. And should even the most interesting pedagogical idea be imposed on the collective from above, with its

implementation resting solely on the goods of the administration, it will be doomed to failure. A condition of success is that the collective's long-term aims coincide with the personal objectives of individual teachers.

The process of engaging teachers in research work possesses many dimensions and must always be individualized. Generally, initial successes in communicating with children produce a desire in teachers to widen their range of knowledge in the field of upbringing and education. And Sukhomlinsky was entirely right in stating that it is precisely teachers' research activities that develop their creative forces and are able to pose a strong challenge to their self-awareness, kindle a desire to search for new knowledge, to study a wide variety of sources, reflect and follow new approaches in observing both children and the development of their own abilities.

Nothing can replace a probing, research-oriented mind. And there is no alternative: to acquire a mastery of teaching skills one must become a researcher.

A further development of each teacher's research abilities and a summarization of the experience of creatively working collectives, including an analysis of the corresponding course of events and of specific difficulties that were encountered, form a major prerequisite for improving the quality of general teaching practice. In such a context great importance is attached to a coordination of the activities of scholars and teachers, and to each teacher's orientation on the world's pedagogical masters as well as on today's theoreticians and practitioners.

Within pedagogical research I believe that the central position should be held by a moral objective and the certainty of a moral outcome. The effect of research will be measured by the extent to which children continue to be the creators of their own harmoniousness and by the extent to which they remain allies of teachers engaged in practical research. This implies a specific meaning in the concept of the "purity of experiments" that refers to the common objective of both adults and children.

It was because they were able to apply in their own practice the systems they had formulated, that Stanislav Shatsky, Anton Makarenko and Vasily Sukhomlinsky were able to effect major contributions to pedagogical practice. Their selfless and successful work with both children and teachers gave them a moral right to instruct and foretell. And they combined their advocacy of new ideas with a struggle in support of new

methods. Methods which were tested in their own practice, which met with approval in other schools and which came to be widely applied throughout the country.

Such a complete sequence—extending from the formulation of the task, to the development of means, to actual implementation—is the most important condition for a teacher's and researcher's own professional development. It is because there is no way to avoid these difficult but rewarding roads that each teacher must become a researcher.

IN LIEU OF A CONCLUSION

Today I often have occasions to address various audiences. And I am often asked, especially by students preparing to be teachers:

"Your professional life has taken you from working as an ordinary teacher in a village of the far north to the status of Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences and Professor at an institute of higher learning in Moscow. You have become a widely-known author and publicist. Looking back, what do you now consider to be the most important element in education? How does one discover the presence of a calling for teaching? What are the components of creativity and of a mastery of teaching skills?"

I always find it difficult to answer such questions, for today my answers may sound too sermonizing. This is something I always fear, and, accordingly, I begin by describing the contradictions, painful experiences and errors on my own professional path. But then I am assailed by new doubts as to whether I will be correctly understood if I describe only various collisions and contradictory events of my vocation. Yet there is no other solution, for it is only in the context of resulting contradictions that pedagogical creativity takes place. It is also difficult, of course, to only speak of one's own experiences and there I find help in references to novels and other works of fiction.

Such works have helped me see and understand situations that are typical in the lives of children, to introduce into my teaching method that perception of childhood that is visible to the artistic mind. I am convinced that teachers will gain much and will be more effective in mastering teaching skills if they try to see their own childhood and their own professional world in the same way as did, for example, Tolstoy or Proust, Faulkner or Twain, Dostoyevsky or Rolland, Makarenko or Korczak.

There is a common element in pedagogics and literature. This lies in the truthfulness of their visions and in their methods for resolving the contradictions of life. Contradictions constitute life's great motive force and are the source of the development of creativity, theory and practice.

Life is full of paradoxes and in this lies its power and beauty. On one occasion when I was complaining about these contradictions and paradoxes of the teaching profession to one

of my close colleagues, he replied:

"But tell me please, why are you complaining? You yourself have chosen this particular path for struggling against life's conflicts and resolving them. You should then bear your cross with dignity. The art of teaching calls for great courage, endurance and strength."

Don Quixote is my hero. I love his generosity and sense of justice, his love for what is kind and pure, his constant readiness to battle for great ideals even when his body is battered and his ribs broken, Children, who are small Don Quixotes, possess enormous energy; providing of course that it is first awakened, that they are taught a sense of civic responsibility, of true humaneness, and that they are brought to the ideal as close as possible.

I had found that newly awakened energy can vitalize a teacher's soul and cause it to work miracles. I can now frankly admit that, initially, upon completing university studies I did not plan to become a teacher. I intended to work a year or two in a school and then turn to philosophy or journalism, or possibly art history. But I found that I could not leave and that is was teaching that captivated me. But precisely what aspect? As a way of expressing my own self? As an opportunity to communicate with children, who are the earth's purest creatures? Or was it a need "to be a teacher", in the best sense of that word, that is, as an activity associated in some way with preaching, prophesying and truth-seeking. Much has been written about this in the history of Russian culture, in which the great and eternal figure was probably that of man as a prophet, man as a truth-seeker and man as a citizen. In Russia the word "teacher" always carried a special meaning implying selfless service to the people. It embodied an image of Harmony, Truth and Beauty. Russian teachers were motivated by a sense of social responsibility, as it were, they went out to the people and dedicated themselves to the humble service of Enlightenment.

I must admit that while since early school year I associated my future work with a high degree of civic responsibility, the teaching profession was not among my aspirations. As a child I did not like teachers very much, and although I studied well, in most cases their demands seemed to me to be unjust. It is a sense of justice, however, that forms the basis of pedagogical motivation. The most important thing is to bring justice into the sphere of communication that is in your command. But then the word command is also inaccurate, for what matters is equality and fraternity.

I have a friend, the Georgian pedagogue Shalva Amonashvili, whose professional biography is similar to my own: he, too, wished to become a journalist but then became a teacher and is now Professor of Pedagogics and Director of Georgia's Educational Research Institute, and a Corresponding Member of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. It is he who developed the system for teaching children from the age of six rather than seven that is now being adopted in the Soviet Union. He has developed his own approach to childhood, borrowing some elements from my own work, in particular the role of the child-age aesthetic vision. He stated to me explicitly that it was under my influence that he wrote his study entitled *Good Morning, Children.* I did in fact once say to him:

"Shalva, why don't you stop writing in 'academic prose' and start using ordinary human language in a way that is light and simple."

"But then what happens to science?" he asked.

"It will be genuine science if your narrative about children and teachers is permeated with the same joy as your conversations with friends at the dinner table or with me during our walks."

Amonashvili likes games, humour and openness in social communication. Like Tolstoy and Rousseau he views children as primeval embodiments of goodness and beauty.

On another occasion he stated:

"In order to become a true teacher, a pedagogue must remember that children exist not to spite teachers but as a reward to them and a gift of nature. Nature entrusted herself to man: 'Here is a child, he is as boundless as I am, take him and rear him, give him a capacity to develop, teach him to live as a human being and to create, make him my crown.' "

"This is too stilted," I objected.

"But is not a child the most perfect creation?" he replied.

Shalva has a kind face and a beautiful smile. He is himself like a big child. And I believe his words. He explained:

"In order that children accept me into their own world I must come to them with my own child-like qualities, as evidence that I am not a stranger. I seek to understand children and they respond in kind. My own pedagogical life does not conflict with their lives."

In my own mind I view Shalva as a perfect teacher. He has combined, as it were, those qualities that are most important for teaching: energy, a refusal to compromise on moral issues or in defence of justice, kindness and truth, an admiration for

everything that is beautiful and above all civic responsibility. He shares the concerns of his people, loves its history and seeks to enhance the spiritual wealth of the teaching community. He is one of the most active participants in the school reform that began in the USSR in 1984. Amonashvili places particular emphasis on the training of teachers.

It should be said that in the USSR all necessary conditions have been created for receiving a teacher education. Teachers are trained in pedagogical institutes and universities, while teachers specializing in such subjects as labour activities, choreography, arts and music are trained in a variety of specialized faculties and departments at community colleges such as industrial and polytechnical institutes, institutes of culture and arts, arts academies and conservatoires.

As its main objective the school reform seeks to ensure a comprehensive and harmonious development of a personality and this is why the research activities of many pedagogues are concerned with training teachers who can provide for such comprehensive forms of development.

In this connection I must also mention another colleague, Milkhail Shchetinin, who under various conditions has carried out practical research whose central objective was the comprehensive training of teachers. Shchetinin attaches much importance to children's physical health, their training in labour activities and their qualities as organizers of school life. A number of interesting problems arise in seeking optimal ways to train teachers. Shchetinin himself has focused on the role of particular connections between schools, pedagogical institutes and the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences in the light of long-standing aspirations of our teaching traditions. As early as the 1920s the Soviet Union's first pedagogical institute—The Academy of Communist Education established by Pavel Blonsky, an outstanding Soviet pedagogue—included a school, a kindergarten, a pedagogical institute and faculties for upgrading teaching skills.

Like many other pedagogues, Shchetinin established a direct tie between school and the Poltava Pedagogical Institute, where an extremely interesting system for training teachers had been developed. It provided for orienting children towards pedagogical professions as early as the fifth grade, that is, at the age of 11-12 years.

In general, our whole country is highly pedagogical, in the broadest sense of that word, and pedagogical principles are applied to the entire process of upbringing and education on a

country-wide scale. School students acquire a specific type of teaching experience through the institutions of Young Pioneers, self-management in schools, amateur groups, sports clubs and various specialized sections. But this has proven to be insufficient in training future professionals and accordingly many teacher-training colleges are establishing under their auspices special courses for school students aspiring to become teachers.

An example of a successful experiment in this direction is provided by the North Caucasus Centre. In solving the problems of professional orientation it enlisted the help of 46 post-secondary institutions (universities, polytechnical and humanitarian institutes, conservatoires and other institutes of the creative arts), of hundreds of schools, technical vocational schools, Pioneer Palaces, clubs and other institutions responsible for out-of-school activities!

In the experiment carried out by the North Caucasus Centre the leading idea was to combine comprehensive development with specialization, on the basis of a general and vocational development of children beginning with their early school years. At present the Centre's staff are developing a system of tests that will allow school students to reveal their propensities.

The essence of that idea may be explained in terms of an example. In particular, there is a special school for those who aspire to become teachers at Checheno-Ingush University named after Lev Tolstoy. Such schools will admit school students from the sixth to eighth grades. Their curricula include psychology and pedagogics as well as various methods and approaches to organizing school life, various creative activities, and work-related activities. As a result the learning process itself engages children into those types of studies, creative activities and labour activities that stimulate their all-round development.

In my capacity as one of the persons responsible for guiding the North Caucasus Centre's activities in vocational orientation I can say that our aim has been to develop a system that would meet the needs of children and parents as well as of society at large. At first we met with some resistance, which may be illustrated by the following types of questions:

"But will not an early prevocational education result in one-sided development? Will it not impede general learning?"

We replied:

"We have in mind a kind of early choosing of a vocation, in which a testing of one's abilities will only contribute to

overall personality development. In addition, we are planning for a range of activities that will allow each school student to test himself in various fields."

In effect this was a social experiment whose participants included children and parents as well as teachers.

I will cite a case of a teacher's discussion with sixth-grade students (13-year old) who were admitted to the young teacher's school attached to the university in the city of Grozny. The teacher explained to the children:

"Our teacher school represents a certain type of experiment in which each of us will participate. In addition to acquiring various types of teaching knowledge and habits we wish to stimulate your interest in testing yourselves. We would like you to learn to see yourselves in a process of development and to help you to be more confident with regard to your own possibilities. In the course of our joint work you will be able to test your own powers with regard to various practical matters. We will describe the delicate mechanisms that influence the development of man's gifts, interests and inclinations. Together we will try to consider how persons of your age can best organize their lives and their learning activities."

"Does this mean that we are guinea pigs?" the children asked.

"No, you are our allies who have a deep understanding of many important things, which you have described in your compositions. We would like to make your lives more interesting and make your choice of a vocation an absorbing task."

"But does everyone have to participate in the experiment?"

"Not at all. Of course, everyone must be present at those lessons that will be concerned with analyzing the results of your general and vocational progress, but self-testing activities are optional."

"What kind of self-testing activities will there be?"

"Series of sessions are envisaged for the sixth grade. The first series will describe vocations in the 'man-nature' field. These include work on land parcels attached to the school, and experiments in biology and agronomy requiring observation, analysis and general conclusions. The second series relates to trades of the 'man-technology' type. Following a period of learning there will be opportunities to test one's abilities in turning, fitting and wood-working operations. The third series includes elements of professions relating to the 'man-man' system. There you will learn to work with people. And the last series of professional studies relates to the 'man-arts' sys-

tem—such as creative writing, painting, design, music, wood carving, and the like."

"Does this mean that each person may test himself in art? But what if he has no talent and cannot?"

"There is no person who is unable to engage in art. If he does not know how to do this today he will learn tomorrow."

"And who will teach him?"

"We will, together with specialists that we will invite. As well as each one of you."

"Each one of us?"

"Of course. If you learn to work on a universal lathe, and learn, for example, to use a detachable block to position a cutting instrument why should you not pass on your knowledge and skill to others? It is this kind of participation in the learning of skills and in organizing activities that will mark the beginning of your teaching profession. You will work as leaders of sections and of groups and as 'teachers' and instructors in various useful and creative activities."

Eventually the children decided to see what would happen, and to the great pleasure of both parents and teachers, as well as the students themselves, the outcome was successful. The North Caucasus experiment has justified itself.

Education through activities constitutes a basic principle of Soviet pedagogics. But activities must be diversified, they must develop children aesthetically, shape their character, exercise their mental faculties and give them physical health.

One of my post-graduate students, Igor Volkov, the well-known pedagogue and author of a work entitled *Approaches to Creativity*, has developed an entire system of closely interrelated activities that contribute to the development of future pedagogues. He even confided in me just before he went to the platform to defend his dissertation:

"I know how to 'make' Tolstoys and Dostoyevskys, Einsteins and Lomonosovs."

"You should postpone this until after the defence of your dissertation," I whispered jokingly.

Leaving the matter of Tolstoys and Dostoyevskys aside (for the time being I advised Volkov to keep his "discovery" to himself), there is no doubt that he is truly able to develop children comprehensively. He teaches future teachers to work patiently and conscientiously; he involves them in drawing, sculpture, drafting and making artistic creations from metal, wood and papier-mache. There is something quite individual in his system that differs from my own and some of my colleagues'.

In fact, on one occasion someone remarked:

"How can you tolerate Volkov? He is a naked rationalist."

"Perhaps we should cover his nakedness?" I joked by way of reply.

"Don't avoid the issue, his approach differs entirely from that of Shevchenko."

"I know that, but it does not matter. Volkov is more rigorous and drier. He follows a clear line and his rationale is reason, while Shevchenko builds his approach on a mixture of colours and emotions. And it is all to the good that they operate in different ways. What matters is not their differences (incidentally, harmony is a unity of differences), but rather the common elements that they share: civic responsibility, humaneness and a love for children."

In early 1986 I again visited my favourite village of Prelestnoye on the occasion of its periodic exhibition of children's paintings. There were hundreds of remarkable works. It included incidentally, a collection of children's drawings from other countries (among others, the United States, Canada, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland). Shevchenko's method, which I have already described in this work, is being disseminated widely in the Soviet Union and continues to arouse considerable interest. But at the moment I wish to draw the reader's attention to another matter.

Aleksandr Ivanovich Shevchenko and I have been reflecting on problems of pedagogical creativity for nearly thirty years. To this day there remains much that is unclear. We encounter many new contradictions. And during that visit an interesting conversation with Shevchenko took place that I would like to describe in concluding this work.

I will immediately come to the point: we referred to the most interesting idea that we discussed as "the cheerful polka-dot cat". Today I have no doubts whatever that this "cheerful cat" constitutes a universal test for determining teaching abilities. But readers should judge for themselves. This is our dialogue.

"Aleksandr Ivanovich, I have always been interested in the element of fun and humour in children. For a sense of humour, happy laughter and wit are manifestations of optimizm that are characteristic of an integral sound individual. It goes without saying, of course, that I favour the type of humour that expresses kindness in opposing hopelessness, sorrow, melancholy and despair, as well as the type of wit that enriches a person, creates developed forms of interaction and

removes stress. Take this picture, for example. In my view it is a picture of a cheerful cat."

"Yes, so cheerful in fact that we find unusual colour combinations. Half of its back is black while the other half is white with polka dots; and the cat itself is kind, with laughing eyes, and it does not attack the mouse. Looking at that cat one cannot avoid smiling."

"I wonder, Aleksandr Ivanovich, whether you are entirely right. Will literally everyone smile looking at that cat?"

"You are right. I recall some adults that have looked at it with a blank face or even with hostility."

"Was it hostility?"

"Perhaps I did not choose the right word. But I am thinking of a time thirty years ago when we were just beginning to work with children and you once said: 'The children are drawing the wrong things—not tractors, planes and steamships but wild boars, birds and horses. And their colours are wrong: the horses are blue, pigs are red and birds are blue and green—there are no such things in life.' Already at that time I noticed that adults fall into two groups, as it were. And now I see that one group consists of people that would like this cheerful cat with polka dots and would respond with a smile, while the other group of relatively few individuals are those who would look at the cat with irritation and view it as something that disturbs the established order of things because such things do not and must not exist."

"But what is behind such a rejection? Why is it that not all adults can appreciate the 'cheerful polka-dot cat'? I have my own observations on this point. Creative people always respond in a lively way to children's drawings that are humorous. Our tradition is to apply the word 'creative' only to such professions as actors, producers, or painters. You and I hold a different view. Bakers, mechanics and land tillers, too, can be and should be creative. We favour creativity in any type of work. But creativity always implies a hearty curiosity, responsiveness to the arts, a sense of humour and a cheerful frame of mind."

"Well, for the time being not everyone seems to have a need for the cheerful cat."

"Exactly. For after all, we also meet individuals who are dull, boring and uncreative. They are irritable, difficult in their relations with others, and try to lecture everyone, although in fact their own performance is often unsatisfactory. This continuous picking holes in everything also impedes their responsiveness. Fortunately such people are not really all that many.

And here I see yet another cheerful picture, and so large in size. It shows a boy who is shaking from fear as he watches a nurse preparing a needle for an injection."

"This is a typical spring theme. When spring arrives the children want to run about in the sun without their coats and they would listen to neither their parents nor their teachers. Later many of them catch cold. This drawing of a boy in the hospital was done by a girl whose mother is a nurse. It seems to the boy that both the nurse and the injection needle are enormous and that the coming injection will be awful, but the nurse is smiling, indicating that there is nothing to fear. The subject is topical and the author's vision of it is entirely her own."

"Aleksandr Ivanovich, what makes children paint such large pictures?"

"Courage, I believe. Most young boys and girls have the feeling that they can do anything. It is important to sustain that state of courage in children. Courage in testing one's own ability is a very important stimulus to a child's creative development."

"A child who believes that he can do many of the things that his peers do would get more from life than the one who shrinks into himself from the feeling of inferiority."

"I have noticed that it is more interesting to be with those who are daring and who confront any undertaking boldly. I like optimists."

"This is probably because you yourself are an optimist."

"To believe in everything that is good and kind also calls for some courage. We should teach children this courage and faith. And we are greatly helped here by children's creativeness, particularly since the sources of optimism are found in children themselves.

"This means that optimism is drawn from the nature of childhood rather than introduced by teachers from the outside."

"Precisely from childhood, or if you wish, from the human nature. Today, for example, the world is chock-full of nuclear weapons and missiles and yet most people in various countries hope for the best, strive for peace, spare no effort to save it, and view the future optimistically."

"This means that both in children and in the human race in general it is optimism that prevails. Perhaps it is optimism that is the rationale of genuine education. I mean that one should skilfully develop such elements of optimism and help them come forth."

"Exactly, make them come forth rather than suppress them

in petty ways."

"Perhaps teachers, too, may be divided into those who see these forces of optimism and those who do not."

"Unfortunately that is so."

"It follows that each teacher himself should possess an ability to perceive the joyful world of children and that elements of humour, too, would not hurt."

"This should be put more strongly. If a teacher does not have a sense of humour he should not be sent into the company of children. Like kindness, humour is a key to understanding children."

"And in your own case, Aleksandr Ivanovich, how does this element of humour express itself? How do you respond to these humorous drawings?"

"I view them as a festive occasion. To us, teachers, communicating with children is always a festive occasion."

"Forgive me, but someone might object. Why a festive occasion? The point is to work rather than hold festivities, and work is a serious matter."

"But is it a bad thing, Yuri Petrovich, to be in a festive mood while working? The most difficult work is performed easily and cheerfully when one is in a good mood."

"I often recall our boarding school, where we worked together. You remember the time when during a single year, actually a single spring, our students planted 400 rose bushes, cleared 10 hectares of garden space, and helped till another 180 hectares of land? And their vast efforts in constructing the workshops? And how cheerfully and smoothly the work proceeded in the context of complex combinations of work and games."

"I believe that genuine collectives develop only where there is humour and where social communication is a joy. Even today, I continue to observe my fellow village residents, our former students. They have preserved that cheerful vein that they developed in school age. And it makes feel good when I think of the many teachers that contributed substantially to their emergence both as socially active people and as fine individuals."

"Aleksandr Ivanovich, for more than thirty years we have been citing a variety of instances to show that all children are gifted. Today as you know there is another point of view as well, according to which it is a mistake to try to place each child behind a piano or an easel. Only those who are gifted should be taught to be creative, while the others have no use for art."

"Fortunately, Yuri Petrovich, we do not share that view. In fact, pedagogics has no choice but to help everyone experience what is beautiful."

"Social psychology and pedagogics have shown that aesthetically developed people cannot bring themselves to make products of bad quality. And think of how important it is that children, who are future parents as well, contribute elements of beauty to family life: to everyday life, social communication with others, relations with children, parents and relatives. One must not neglect the training of sentiments. And what of imagination and inventiveness! There we find areas of influence that not only stimulate artistic development but also establish powerful foundations of moral education."

"Absolutely. And that is the main object of our research."

"Aleksandr Ivanovich, I was observing children today as they were drawing. A small girl installed herself behind an easel and began to attune herself to the subject, as it were. I could see how she began to search, reflect, and have doubts. She began to ask how she should draw her mother and the room, but suddenly I saw that her face was transformed, something had come to life within her, and she began to work quickly and confidently. But what is it that we see at such moments, when creative energy and an aesthetic element appear? Is it important that a teacher be sensitive to these instances when creative feelings and thoughts are born?"

"It is precisely these moments of search and discovery of ways to express oneself that should be our most important concern. And it is only when it displays an individual approach that a child's work becomes interesting."

"But what are the conditions that produce such genuineness in the self-expression of children? I once had a conversation with Lado Gudiashvili, the Georgian artist. He was arguing with regard to a gifted small girl, that one should not interfere with her efforts and that one should let her find herself and develop in her own way, for she is highly gifted. I agree with Gudiashvili, there are cases when a person is so gifted that one should not interfere. Yet you will walk about, talk with children, discuss, advise and search for answers together with them. We have thus defined two approaches to guiding children in their creative activities. One is to introduce a child to the colours that he will use. The other is to teach techniques, to constantly stimulate their keenness and their search for solutions. What are the conditions that should prevail in order that their creative spark not be extinguished?"

"I do not know what the practice is in Georgia, but I am personally convinced that a certain frame of mind should be developed in a child that will lead him to sense everything, then find something specific that will bring all his forces into play."

"And how do you create such a frame of mind?"

"Through stories, questions, conversations. For example, we may draw an autumn landscape. I will then say: "The trees are alive, they are cold, they also have feelings like we do and you should treat them like living things. If you succeed in this you will also produce a good drawing.' In short, the child should immerse himself into the image of a tree and experience its life, as it were. Only then will both colour and form appear."

"It follows that in order to guide children's creative activities one must know their thoughts and feelings, their lives."

We have thus returned to the main element in the pedagogical approach, that which has been elaborated best in the works of major writers: to know children in all their relations and in typical situations. Only then can pedagogics apply the creative approaches that are needed to achieve a mastery of its skills.

The age of pedagogical mastery is approaching and can already be clearly felt today. I often visit the international groups that come to "Artek", the Young Pioneers' camp in the Crimea. There I often have occasion to talk with children and teachers from various countries. I have a great interest in all their experiences: the experience of international children's villages in Scandinavia, where active communication among children of various countries develops rapidly; the experience of children's organizations in France, Hungary and Czechoslovakia; and the work-oriented forms of education in America.

Today, as never before, it is important to integrate the creative achievements of all progressive pedagogues throughout the world. I see this as one of the necessary approaches in the struggle to preserve and multiply the human race's rich legacy and as a condition for the further accumulation of spiritual achievements.

I am convinced that harmoniously developed people can only be reared by other harmoniously developed individuals. And the main element in such a harmony is not the quantity of knowledge, which may actually impede the mind, but a kindness of heart on the part of those who are interested in the fate of children and of their own people, who are able to love children and contribute happiness to the surrounding world.

Yuri Azarov

Teaching: Calling and Skills

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THE BOOK *TEACHING: CALLING AND SKILLS* IS NOT AN ACADEMIC STUDY, BUT RATHER A LIVELY AND VIVID ACCOUNT OF THE FORMATION OF A TEACHING PROFESSION AND THE DIFFICULT AND NOBLE WORK THIS PROFESSION ENTAILS. DRAWING ON ACTUAL EXAMPLES FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF SOVIET SCHOOLS, AS WELL AS ON HIS OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, THE AUTHOR EXAMINES THE FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS THAT CONCERN TEACHERS AND PARENTS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES TODAY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL QUALITIES IN CHILDREN DURING CLASSROOM PRACTICE, GAMES, AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES; THEIR AESTHETIC UPBRINGING AND THEIR INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS.

A RICH COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS MAKES THIS BOOK PARTICULARLY INTERESTING.

THIS WORK IS MEANT FOR A WIDE READERSHIP, ALTHOUGH IT IS NATURALLY INTENDED PRIMARILY FOR TEACHERS, BOTH BEGINNERS AND PROFESSIONALS, AND FOR TEACHER-EDUCATORS.