



DR. HUNTER'S METHOD OF TEACHING IN TOUCHING GEOMETRICAL INSETS

THE MONTESSORI METHOD

SCIENTIFIC PEDAGOGY AS APPLIED TO CHILD
EDUCATION IN "THE CHILDREN'S HOUSES"
WITH ADDITIONS AND REVISIONS
BY THE AUTHOR

BY
MARIA MONTESSORI

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN BY
ANNE E. GEORGE

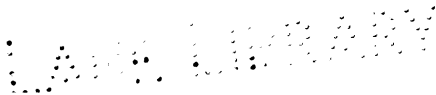
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
PROFESSOR HENRY W. HOLMES
OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY

WITH THIRTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

SECOND EDITION

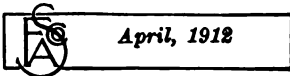
NEW YORK
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY
MCMXII

4c



Copyright, 1912, by
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY

*All rights reserved, including that of translation into foreign
languages, including the Scandinavian*



P111
M78g
1912

I place at the beginning of this volume, now appearing in the United States, her fatherland, the dear name of

ALICE HALLGARTEN

of New York, who by her marriage to Baron Leopold Franchetti became by choice our compatriot.

Ever a firm believer in the principles underlying the Case dei Bambini, she, with her husband, forwarded the publication of this book in Italy, and, throughout the last years of her short life, greatly desired the English translation which should introduce to the land of her birth the work so near her heart.

To her memory I dedicate this book, whose pages, like an ever-living flower, perpetuate the recollection of her beneficence.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful acknowledgment is made to Mrs. Guy Baring, of London, for the loan of her manuscript translation of "Pedagogia Scientifica"; to Mrs. John R. Fisher (Dorothy Canfield) for translating a large part of the new work written by Dr. Montessori for the American Edition; and to The House of Childhood, Inc., New York, for use of the illustrations of the didactic apparatus. Dr. Montessori's patent rights in the apparatus are controlled, for the United States and Canada, by The House of Childhood, Inc.

THE PUBLISHERS.

PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION

IN February, 1911, Professor Henry W. Holmes, of the Division of Education of Harvard University, did me the honour to suggest that an English translation be made of my Italian volume, "*Il Metodo della Pedagogia Scientifica applicato all' educazione infantile nelle Case dei Bambini.*" This suggestion represented one of the greatest events in the history of my educational work. To-day, that to which I then looked forward as an unusual privilege has become an accomplished fact.

The Italian edition of "*Il Metodo della Pedagogia Scientifica*" had no preface, because the book itself I consider nothing more than the preface to a more comprehensive work, the aim and extent of which it only indicates. For the educational method for children of from three to six years set forth here is but the earnest of a work that, developing the same principle and method, shall cover in a like manner the successive stages of education. Moreover, the method which obtains in the *Case dei Bambini* offers, it seems to me, an experimental field for the study of man, and promises, perhaps, the development of a science that shall disclose other secrets of nature.

In the period that has elapsed between the publication of the Italian and American editions, I have had, with my pupils, the opportunity to simplify and render more exact certain practical details of the method, and to gather additional observations concerning discipline. The results attest the vitality of the method and the necessity for an

viii PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION

extended scientific collaboration in the near future, and are embodied in two new chapters written for the American edition. I know that my method has been widely spoken of in America, thanks to Mr. S. S. McClure, who has presented it through the pages of his well-known magazine. Indeed, many Americans have already come to Rome for the purpose of observing personally the practical application of the method in my little schools. If, encouraged by this movement, I may express a hope for the future, it is that my work in Rome shall become the centre of an efficient and helpful collaboration.

To the Harvard professors who have made my work known in America and to *McClure's Magazine*, a mere acknowledgment of what I owe them is a barren response; but it is my hope that the method itself, in its effect upon the children of America, may prove an adequate expression of my gratitude.

MARIA MONTESSORI.

ROME, 1912.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	V
PREFACE	VII
INTRODUCTION	XVII

CHAPTER I

A CRITICAL CONSIDERATION OF THE NEW PEDAGOGY IN ITS RELATION TO MODERN SCIENCE

Influence of Modern Science upon Pedagogy	1
Italy's part in the development of Scientific Pedagogy	4
Difference between scientific technique and the scientific spirit	7
Direction of the preparation should be toward the spirit rather than toward the mechanism	9
The master to study man in the awakening of his intellectual life	12
Attitude of the teacher in the light of another example	13
The school must permit the free natural manifestations of the child if in the school Scientific Pedagogy is to be born	15
Stationary desks and chairs proof that the principle of slavery still informs the school	16
Conquest of liberty, what the school needs	19
What may happen to the spirit	20
Prizes and punishments, the bench of the soul	21
All human victories, all human progress, stand upon the inner force	24

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF METHODS

Necessity of establishing the method peculiar to Scientific Pedagogy	28
Origin of educational system in use in the "Children's Houses"	31
Practical application of the methods of Itard and Séguin in the Orthophrenic School at Rome	32
Origin of the methods for the education of deficients	33
Application of the methods in Germany and France	35
Séguin's first didactic material was spiritual	37
Methods for deficients applied to the education of normal children	42
Social and pedagogic importance of the "Children's Houses"	44

CONTENTS

CHAPTER III

INAUGURAL ADDRESS DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF
ONE OF THE "CHILDREN'S HOUSES"

	PAGE
The Quarter of San Lorenzo before and since the establishment of the "Children's Houses"	48
Evil of subletting the most cruel form of usury	50
The problem of life more profound than that of the intellectual elevation of the poor	52
Isolation of the masses of the poor, unknown to past centuries	53
Work of the Roman Association of Good Building and the moral importance of their reforms	56
The "Children's House" earned by the parents through their care of the building	60
Pedagogical organization of the "Children's House"	62
The "Children's House" the first step toward the socialisation of the house	65
The communised house in its relation to the home and to the spiritual evolution of women	66
Rules and regulations of the "Children's Houses"	70

CHAPTER IV

PEDAGOGICAL METHODS USED IN THE "CHILDREN'S HOUSES"

Child psychology can be established only through the method of external observation	72
Anthropological consideration	73
Anthropological notes	77
Environment and schoolroom furnishings	80

CHAPTER V

DISCIPLINE

Discipline through liberty	86
Independence	95
Abolition of prizes and external forms of punishment	101
Biological concept of liberty in pedagogy	104

CHAPTER VI

HOW THE LESSON SHOULD BE GIVEN

Characteristics of the individual lessons	107
Method of observation the fundamental guide	108
Difference between the scientific and unscientific methods illustrated	109
First task of educators to stimulate life, leaving it then free to develop	115

CONTENTS

xi

CHAPTER VII

EXERCISES OF PRACTICAL LIFE

	PAGE
Suggested schedule for the "Children's Houses"	119
The child must be prepared for the forms of social life and his attention attracted to these forms	121
Cleanliness, order, poise, conversation	122

CHAPTER VIII

REFECTION—THE CHILD'S DIET

Diet must be adapted to the child's physical nature	125
Foods and their preparation	126
Drinks	132
Distribution of meals	133

CHAPTER IX

MUSCULAR EDUCATION—GYMNASTICS

Generally accepted idea of gymnastics is inadequate	137
The special gymnastics necessary for little children	138
Other pieces of gymnastic apparatus	141
Free gymnastics	144
Educational gymnastics	144
Respiratory gymnastics, and labial, dental, and lingual gymnastics	147

CHAPTER X

NATURE IN EDUCATION—AGRICULTURAL LABOUR: CULTURE OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS

The savage of the Aveyron	149
Itard's educative drama repeated in the education of little children	153
Gardening and horticulture basis of a method for education of children	155
The child initiated into observation of the phenomena of life and into foresight by way of auto-education	156
Children are initiated into the virtue of patience and into confident expectation, and are inspired with a feeling for nature	159
The child follows the natural way of development of the human race	160

CHAPTER XI

MANUAL LABOUR—THE POTTER'S ART, AND BUILDING

	PAGE
Difference between manual labour and manual gymnastics	162
The School of Educative Art	163
Archæological, historical, and artistic importance of the vase	164
Manufacture of diminutive bricks and construction of diminutive walls and houses	165

CHAPTER XII

EDUCATION OF THE SENSES

Aim of education to develop the energies	168
Difference in the reaction between deficient and normal children in the presentation of didactic material made up of graded stimuli	169
Education of the senses has as its aim the refinement of the differential perception of stimuli by means of repeated exercises	173
Three Periods of Séguin	177

CHAPTER XIII

EDUCATION OF THE SENSES AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE DIDACTIC
MATERIAL: GENERAL SENSIBILITY: THE TACTILE, THERMIC, BARIC
AND STEREOGNOSTIC SENSES

Education of the tactile, thermic and baric senses	185
Education of the stereognostic sense	188
Education of the senses of taste and smell	190
Education of the sense of vision	191
Exercises with the three series of cards	199
Education of the chromatic sense	200
Exercise for the discrimination of sounds	203
Musical education	206
Tests for acuteness of hearing	209
A lesson in silence	212

CHAPTER XIV

GENERAL NOTES ON THE EDUCATION OF THE SENSES

Aim in education biological and social	215
Education of the senses makes men observers and prepares them directly for practical life	219

CONTENTS

xiii

CHAPTER XV

INTELLECTUAL EDUCATION

	PAGE
Sense exercises a species of auto-education	224
Importance of an exact nomenclature, and how to teach it .	225
Spontaneous progress of the child the greatest triumph of Scientific Pedagogy	228
Games of the blind	231
Application of the visual sense to the observation of environ- ment	232
Method of using didactic material: dimensions, form, design .	233
Free plastic work	241
Geometric analysis of figures	243
Exercises in the chromatic sense	244

CHAPTER XVI

METHOD FOR THE TEACHING OF READING AND WRITING

Spontaneous development of graphic language: Séguin and Itard	246
Necessity of a special education that shall fit man for ob- jective observation and direct logical thought	252
Results of objective observation and logical thought	253
Not necessary to begin teaching writing with vertical strokes .	257
Spontaneous drawing of normal children	258
Use of Froebel mats in teaching children sewing	260
Children should be taught how before they are made to exe- cute a task	261
Two diverse forms of movement made in writing	262
Experiments with normal children	267
Origin of alphabets in present use	269

CHAPTER XVII

DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD AND DIDACTIC MATERIAL USED

Exercise tending to develop the muscular mechanism neces- sary in holding and using the instrument in writing	271
Didactic material for writing	271
Exercise tending to establish the visual-muscular image of the alphabetical signs, and to establish the muscular memory of the movements necessary to writing	275
Exercises for the composition of words	281
Reading, the interpretation of an idea from written signs . .	296
Games for the reading of words	299
Games for the reading of phrases	303
Point education has reached in the "Children's Houses" . . .	307

CHAPTER XVIII

LANGUAGE IN CHILDHOOD

	PAGE
Physiological importance of graphic language	310
Two periods in the development of language	312
Analysis of speech necessary	319
Defects of language due to education	322

CHAPTER XIX

TEACHING OF NUMERATION: INTRODUCTION TO ARITHMETIC

Numbers as represented by graphic signs	328
Exercises for the memory of numbers	330
Addition and subtraction from one to twenty: multiplication and division	332
Lessons on decimals: arithmetical calculations beyond ten	335

CHAPTER XX

SEQUENCE OF EXERCISES

Sequence and grades in the presentation of material and in the exercises	338
First grade	338
Second grade	330
Third grade	342
Fourth grade	343
Fifth grade	345

CHAPTER XXI

GENERAL REVIEW OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline better than in ordinary schools	346
First dawning of discipline comes through work	350
Orderly action is the true rest for muscles intended by nature for action	354
The exercise that develops life consists in the repetition, not in the mere grasp of the idea	358
Aim of repetition that the child shall refine his senses through the exercise of attention, of comparison, of judgment	360
Obedience is naturally sacrifice	363
Obedience develops will-power and the capacity to perform the act it becomes necessary to obey	367

CHAPTER XXII

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPRESSIONS

The teacher has become the director of spontaneous work in the "Children's Houses"	371
The problems of religious education should be solved by positive pedagogy	372
Spiritual influence of the "Children's Houses"	376

ILLUSTRATIONS

Dr. Montessori giving a lesson in touching geometrical insets	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
Dr. Montessori in the garden of the school at Via Giusti	144
Children learning to button and lace. Ribbon and button frames	145
Children playing a game with tablets of coloured silk	186
Girl touching a letter and boy telling objects by weight	187
Pupils arranging colours in chromatic order . . .	187
Didactic apparatus to teach differentiation of objects	190
Blocks by which children are taught thickness, length and size	191
Geometric insets to teach form	194
Geometric insets and cabinet	195
Cards used in teaching form and contour : . . .	196
Frames illustrating lacing; shoe buttoning; buttoning of other garments; hooks and eyes	200
Tablets with silk, for educating the chromatic sense .	201
Didactic apparatus for training the sense of touch, and for teaching writing	282
Children touching letters and making words with card-board script	283
Montessori children eating dinner	348
School at Tarrytown, N. Y.	349

CHAPTER III

INAUGURAL ADDRESS DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF ONE OF THE "CHILDREN'S HOUSES"

It may be that the life lived by the very poor is a thing which some of you here to-day have never actually looked upon in all its degradation. You may have only felt the misery of deep human poverty through the medium of some great book, or some gifted actor may have made your soul vibrate with its horror.

Let us suppose that in some such moment a voice should cry to you, "Go look upon these homes of misery and blackest poverty. For there have sprung up amid the terror and the suffering, oases of happiness, of cleanliness, of peace. The poor are to have an ideal house which shall be their own. In Quarters where poverty and vice ruled, a work of moral redemption is going on. The soul of the people is being set free from the torpor of vice, from the shadows of ignorance. The little children too have a 'House' of their own. The new generation goes forward to meet the new era, the time when misery shall no longer be deplored but destroyed. They go to meet the time when the dark dens of vice and wretchedness shall have become things of the past, and when no trace of them shall be found among the living." What a change of emotions we should experience! and how we should hasten

here, as the wise men guided by a dream and a star hastened to Bethlehem!

I have spoken thus in order that you may understand the great significance, the real beauty, of this humble room, which seems like a bit of the house itself set apart by a mother's hand for the use and happiness of the children of the Quarter. This is the second "Children's House" * which has been established within the ill-favoured Quarter of San Lorenzo.

The Quarter of San Lorenzo is celebrated, for every newspaper in the city is filled with almost daily accounts of its wretched happenings. Yet there are many who are not familiar with the origin of this portion of our city.

It was never intended to build up here a tenement district for the people. And indeed San Lorenzo is not the *People's* Quarter, it is the Quarter of the *poor*. It is the Quarter where lives the underpaid, often unemployed workingman, a common type in a city which has no factory industries. It is the home of him who undergoes the period of surveillance to which he is condemned after his prison sentence is ended. They are all here, mingled, huddled together.

The district of San Lorenzo sprang into being between 1884 and 1888 at the time of the great building fever. No standards either social or hygienic guided these new constructions. The aim in building was simply to cover with walls square foot after square foot of ground. The more space covered, the greater the gain of the interested Banks and Companies. All this with a complete disregard of the disastrous future which they were preparing. It was natural that no one should concern himself with

* Dr. Montessori no longer directs the work in the *Casa dei Bambini* in the Quarter of San Lorenzo.

the stability of the building he was creating, since in no case would the property remain in the possession of him who built it.

When the storm burst, in the shape of the inevitable building panic of 1888 to 1890, these unfortunate houses remained for a long time untenanted. Then, little by little, the need of dwelling-places began to make itself felt, and these great houses began to fill. Now, those speculators who had been so unfortunate as to remain possessors of these buildings could not, and did not wish to add fresh capital to that already lost, so the houses constructed in the first place in utter disregard of all laws of hygiene, and rendered still worse by having been used as temporary habitations, came to be occupied by the poorest class in the city.

The apartments not being prepared for the working class, were too large, consisting of five, six, or seven rooms. These were rented at a price which, while exceedingly low in relation to the size, was yet too high for any one family of very poor people. This led to the evil of subletting. The tenant who has taken a six room apartment at eight dollars a month sublets rooms at one dollar and a half or two dollars a month to those who can pay so much, and a corner of a room, or a corridor, to a poorer tenant, thus making an income of fifteen dollars or more, over and above the cost of his own rent.

This means that the problem of existence is in great part solved for him, and that in every case he adds to his income through usury. The one who holds the lease traffics in the misery of his fellow tenants, lending small sums at a rate which generally corresponds to twenty cents a

week for the loan of two dollars, equivalent to an annual rate of 500 per cent.

Thus we have in the evil of subletting the most cruel form of usury: that which only the poor know how to practise upon the poor.

To this we must add the evils of crowded living, promiscuousness, immorality, crime. Every little while the newspapers uncover for us one of these *intérieurs*: a large family, growing boys and girls, sleep in one room; while one corner of the room is occupied by an outsider, a woman who receives the nightly visits of men. This is seen by the girls and the boys; evil passions are kindled that lead to the crime and bloodshed which unveil for a brief instant before our eyes, in some lurid paragraph, this little detail of the mass of misery.

Whoever enters, for the first time, one of these apartments is astonished and horrified. For this spectacle of genuine misery is not at all like the garish scene he has imagined. We enter here a world of shadows, and that which strikes us first is the darkness which, even though it be midday, makes it impossible to distinguish any of the details of the room.

When the eye has grown accustomed to the gloom, we perceive, within, the outlines of a bed upon which lies huddled a figure — someone ill and suffering. If we have come to bring money from some society for mutual aid, a candle must be lighted before the sum can be counted and the receipt signed. Oh, when we talk of social problems, how often we speak vaguely, drawing upon our fancy for details instead of preparing ourselves to judge intelligently through a personal investigation of facts and conditions.

We discuss earnestly the question of home study for

school children, when for many of them home means a straw pallet thrown down in the corner of some dark hovel. We wish to establish circulating libraries that the poor may read at home. We plan to send among these people books which shall form their domestic literature — books through whose influence they shall come to higher standards of living. We hope through the printed page to educate these poor people in matters of hygiene, of morality, of culture, and in this we show ourselves profoundly ignorant of their most crying needs. For many of them have no light by which to read!

There lies before the social crusader of the present day a problem more profound than that of the intellectual elevation of the poor; the problem, indeed, of *life*.

In speaking of the children born in these places, even the conventional expressions must be changed, for they do not "first see the light of day"; they come into a world of gloom. They grow among the poisonous shadows which envelope over-crowded humanity. These children cannot be other than filthy in body, since the water supply in an apartment originally intended to be occupied by three or four persons, when distributed among twenty or thirty is scarcely enough for drinking purposes!

We Italians have elevated our word "casa" to the almost sacred significance of the English word "home," the enclosed temple of domestic affection, accessible only to dear ones.

Far removed from this conception is the condition of the many who have no "casa," but only ghastly walls within which the most intimate acts of life are exposed upon the pillory. Here, there can be no privacy, no modesty, no gentleness; here, there is often not even light, nor air, nor water! It seems a cruel mockery to introduce

here our idea of the home as essential to the education of the masses, and as furnishing, along with the family, the only solid basis for the social structure. In doing this we would be not practical reformers but visionary poets.

Conditions such as I have described make it more decorous, more hygienic, for these people to take refuge in the street and to let their children live there. But how often these streets are the scene of bloodshed, of quarrel, of sights so vile as to be almost inconceivable. The papers tell us of women pursued and killed by drunken husbands! Of young girls with the fear of worse than death, stoned by low men. Again, we see untellable things — a wretched woman thrown, by the drunken men who have preyed upon her, forth into the gutter. There, when day has come, the children of the neighbourhood crowd about her like scavengers about their dead prey, shouting and laughing at the sight of this wreck of womanhood, kicking her bruised and filthy body as it lies in the mud of the gutter!

Such spectacles of extreme brutality are possible here at the very gate of a cosmopolitan city, the mother of civilisation and queen of the fine arts, because of a new fact which was unknown to past centuries, namely, *the isolation of the masses of the poor*.

In the Middle Ages, leprosy was isolated: the Catholics isolated the Hebrews in the Ghetto; but poverty was never considered a peril and an infamy so great that it must be isolated. The homes of the poor were scattered among those of the rich and the contrast between these was a commonplace in literature up to our own times. Indeed, when I was a child in school, teachers, for the purpose of moral education, frequently resorted to the illustration of the kind princess who sends help to the poor cottage next

door, or of the good children from the great house who carry food to the sick woman in the neighbouring attic.

To-day all this would be as unreal and artificial as a fairy tale. The poor may no longer learn from their more fortunate neighbours lessons in courtesy and good breeding, they no longer have the hope of help from them in cases of extreme need. We have herded them together far from us, without the walls, leaving them to learn of each other, in the abandon of desperation, the cruel lessons of brutality and vice. Anyone in whom the social conscience is awake must see that we have thus created infected regions that threaten with deadly peril the city which, wishing to make all beautiful and shining according to an æsthetic and aristocratic ideal, has thrust without its walls whatever is ugly or diseased.

When I passed for the first time through these streets, it was as if I found myself in a city upon which some great disaster had fallen. It seemed to me that the shadow of some recent struggle still oppressed the unhappy people who, with something very like terror in their pale faces, passed me in these silent streets. The very silence seemed to signify the life of a community interrupted, broken. Not a carriage, not even the cheerful voice of the ever-present street vender, nor the sound of the hand-organ playing in the hope of a few pennies, not even these things, so characteristic of poor quarters, enter here to lighten this sad and heavy silence.

Observing these streets with their deep holes, the doorsteps broken and tumbling, we might almost suppose that this disaster had been in the nature of a great inundation which had carried the very earth away; but looking about us at the houses stripped of all decorations, the walls broken and scarred, we are inclined to think that it was

perhaps an earthquake which has afflicted this quarter. Then, looking still more closely, we see that in all this thickly settled neighbourhood there is not a shop to be found. So poor is the community that it has not been possible to establish even one of those popular bazars where necessary articles are sold at so low a price as to put them within the reach of anyone. The only shops of any sort are the low wine shops which open their evil-smelling doors to the passer-by. As we look upon all this, it is borne upon us that the disaster which has placed its weight of suffering upon these people is not a convulsion of nature, but poverty — poverty with its inseparable companion, vice.

This unhappy and dangerous state of things, to which our attention is called at intervals by newspaper accounts of violent and immoral crime, stirs the hearts and consciences of many who come to undertake among these people some work of generous benevolence. One might almost say that every form of misery inspires a special remedy and that all have been tried here, from the attempt to introduce hygienic principles into each house, to the establishment of crèches, "Children's Houses," and dispensaries.

But what indeed is benevolence? Little more than an expression of sorrow; it is pity translated into action. The benefits of such a form of charity cannot be great, and through the absence of any continued income and the lack of organisation it is restricted to a small number of persons. The great and widespread peril of evil demands, on the other hand, a broad and comprehensive work directed toward the redemption of the entire community. Only such an organisation, as, working for the good of others, shall itself grow and prosper through the general prosperity which it has made possible, can make a place

for itself in this quarter and accomplish a permanent good work.

It is to meet this dire necessity that the great and kindly work of the Roman Association of Good Building has been undertaken. The advanced and highly modern way in which this work is being carried on is due to Edoardo Talamo, Director General of the Association. His plans, so original, so comprehensive, yet so practical, are without counterpart in Italy or elsewhere.

This Association was incorporated three years ago in Rome, its plan being to acquire city tenements, remodel them, put them into a productive condition, and administer them as a good father of a family would.

The first property acquired comprised a large portion of the Quarter of San Lorenzo, where to-day the Association possesses fifty-eight houses, occupying a ground space of about 30,000 square metres, and containing, independent of the ground floor, 1,600 small apartments. Thousands of people will in this way receive the beneficent influence of the protective reforms of the Good Building Association. Following its beneficent programme, the Association set about transforming these old houses, according to the most modern standards, paying as much attention to questions related to hygiene and morals as to those relating to buildings. The constructional changes would make the property of real and lasting value, while the hygienic and moral transformation would, through the improved condition of the inmates, make the rent from these apartments a more definite asset.

The Association of Good Building therefore decided upon a programme which would permit of a gradual attainment of their ideal. It is necessary to proceed slowly because it is not easy to empty a tenement house at a time

when houses are scarce, and the humanitarian principles which govern the entire movement make it impossible to proceed more rapidly in this work of regeneration. So it is, that the Association has up to the present time transformed only three houses in the Quarter of San Lorenzo. The plan followed in this transformation is as follows:

A: To demolish in every building all portions of the structure not originally constructed with the idea of making homes, but, from a purely commercial standpoint, of making the rental roll larger. In other words, the new management tore down those parts of the building which encumbered the central court, thus doing away with dark, ill-ventilated apartments, and giving air and light to the remaining portion of the tenement. Broad airy courts take the place of the inadequate air and light shafts, rendering the remaining apartments more valuable and infinitely more desirable.

B: To increase the number of stairways, and to divide the room space in a more practical way. The large six or seven room suites are reduced to small apartments of one, two, or three rooms, and a kitchen.

The importance of such changes may be recognised from the economic point of view of the proprietor as well as from the standpoint of the moral and material welfare of the tenant. Increasing the number of stairways diminishes that abuse of walls and stairs inevitable where so many persons must pass up and down. The tenants more readily learn to respect the building and acquire habits of cleanliness and order. Not only this, but in reducing the chances of contact among the inhabitants of the house, especially late at night, a great advance has been made in the matter of moral hygiene.

The division of the house into small apartments has done

much toward this moral regeneration. Each family is thus set apart, *homes* are made possible, while the menacing evil of subletting together with all its disastrous consequences of overcrowding and immorality is checked in the most radical way.

On one side this arrangement lessens the burden of the individual lease holders, and on the other increases the income of the proprietor, who now receives those earnings which were the unlawful gain of the system of subletting. When the proprietor who originally rented an apartment of six rooms for a monthly rental of eight dollars, makes such an apartment over into three small, sunny, and airy suites consisting of one room and a kitchen, it is evident that he increases his income.

The moral importance of this reform as it stands to-day is tremendous, for it has done away with those evil influences and low opportunities which arise from crowding and from promiscuous contact, and has brought to life among these people, for the first time, the gentle sentiment of feeling themselves free within their own homes, in the intimacy of the family.

But the project of the Association goes beyond even this. The house which it offers to its tenants is not only sunny and airy, but in perfect order and repair, almost shining, and as if perfumed with purity and freshness. These good things, however, carry with them a responsibility which the tenant must assume if he wishes to enjoy them. He must pay an actual tax of *care* and *good will*. The tenant who receives a clean house must keep it so, must respect the walls from the big general entrance to the interior of his own little apartment. He who keeps his house in good condition receives the recognition and consideration due such a tenant. Thus all the tenants unite in an ennobling

warfare for practical hygiene, an end made possible by the simple task of *conserving* the already perfect conditions.

Here indeed is something new! So far only our great national buildings have had a continued *maintenance fund*. Here, in these houses offered to the people, the maintenance is confided to a hundred or so workingmen, that is, to all the occupants of the building. This care is almost perfect. The people keep the house in perfect condition, without a single spot. The building in which we find ourselves to-day has been for two years under the sole protection of the tenants, and the work of maintenance has been left entirely to them. Yet few of our houses can compare in cleanliness and freshness with this home of the poor.

The experiment has been tried and the result is remarkable. The people acquire together with the love of home-making, that of cleanliness. They come, moreover, to wish to beautify their homes. The Association helps this by placing growing plants and trees in the courts and about the halls.

Out of this honest rivalry in matters so productive of good, grows a species of pride new to this quarter; this is the pride which the entire body of tenants takes in having the best-cared-for building and in having risen to a higher and more civilised plane of living. They not only live in a house, but they *know how to live*, they *know how to respect* the house in which they live.

This first impulse has led to other reforms. From the clean home will come personal cleanliness. Dirty furniture cannot be tolerated in a clean house, and those persons living in a permanently clean house will come to desire personal cleanliness.

One of the most important hygienic reforms of the As-

sociation is that of *the baths*. Each remodeled tenement has a place set apart for bathrooms, furnished with tubs or shower, and having hot and cold water. All the tenants in regular turn may use these baths, as, for example, in various tenements the occupants go according to turn, to wash their clothes in the fountain in the court. This is a great convenience which invites the people to be clean. These hot and cold baths *within the house* are a great improvement upon the general public baths. In this way we make possible to these people, at one and the same time, health and refinement, opening not only to the sun, but to progress, those dark habitations once the *vile caves* of misery.

But in striving to realise its ideal of a semi-gratuitous maintenance of its buildings, the Association met with a difficulty in regard to those children under school age, who must often be left alone during the entire day while their parents went out to work. These little ones, not being able to understand the educative motives which taught their parents to respect the house, became ignorant little vandals, defacing the walls and stairs. And here we have another reform the expense of which may be considered as indirectly assumed by the tenants as was the care of the building. This reform may be considered as the most brilliant transformation of a tax which progress and civilisation have as yet devised. The "Children's House" is earned by the parents through the care of the building. Its expenses are met by the sum that the Association would have otherwise been forced to spend upon repairs. A wonderful climax, this, of moral benefits received! Within the "Children's House," which belongs exclusively to those children under school age, working mothers may safely leave their little ones, and may proceed with a feeling of great

relief and freedom to their own work. But this benefit, like that of the care of the house, is not conferred without a tax of care and of good will. *The Regulations posted on the walls announce it thus:

“The mothers are obliged to send their children to the ‘Children’s House’ clean, and to co-operate with the Directress in the educational work.”

Two obligations: namely, the physical and moral care of their own children. If the child shows through its conversation that the educational work of the school is being undermined by the attitude taken in his home, he will be sent back to his parents, to teach them thus how to take advantage of their good opportunities. Those who give themselves over to low-living, to fighting, and to brutality, shall feel upon them the weight of those little lives, so needing care. They shall feel that they themselves have once more cast into the darkness of neglect those little creatures who are the dearest part of the family. In other words, the parents must learn to *deserve* the benefit of having within the house the great advantage of a school for their little ones.

“Good will,” a willingness to meet the demands of the Association is enough, for the directress is ready and willing to teach them how. The regulations say that the mother must go at least once a week, to confer with the directress, giving an account of her child, and accepting any helpful advice which the directress may be able to give. The advice thus given will undoubtedly prove most illuminating in regard to the child’s health and education, since to each of the “Children’s Houses” is assigned a physician as well as a directress.

The directress is always at the disposition of the

* See page 70.

mothers, and her life, as a cultured and educated person, is a constant example to the inhabitants of the house, for she is obliged to live in the tenement and to be therefore a co-habitant with the families of all her little pupils. This is a fact of immense importance. Among these almost savage people, into these houses where at night no one dared go about unarmed, there has come not only to teach, *but to live the very life they live*, a gentlewoman of culture, an educator by profession, who dedicates her time and her life to helping those about her! A true missionary, a moral queen among the people, she may, if she be possessed of sufficient tact and heart, reap an unheard-of harvest of good from her social work.

This house is verily *new*; it would seem a dream impossible of realisation, but it has been tried. It is true that there have been before this attempts made by generous persons to go and live among the poor to civilise them. But such work is not practical, unless the house of the poor is hygienic, making it possible for people of better standards to live there. Nor can such work succeed in its purpose unless some common advantage or interest unites all of the tenants in an effort toward better things.

This tenement is new also because of the pedagogical organisation of the "Children's House." This is not simply a place where the children are kept, not just an *asylum*, but a true school for their education, and its methods are inspired by the rational principles of scientific pedagogy.

The physical development of the children is followed, each child being studied from the anthropological standpoint. Linguistic exercises, a systematic sense-training, and exercises which directly fit the child for the duties of practical life, form the basis of the work done. The teach-

ing is decidedly objective, and presents an unusual richness of didactic material.

It is not possible to speak of all this in detail. I must, however, mention that there already exists in connection with the school a bathroom, where the children may be given hot or cold baths and where they may learn to take a partial bath, hands, face, neck, ears. Wherever possible the Association has provided a piece of ground in which the children may learn to cultivate the vegetables in common use.

It is important that I speak here of the pedagogical progress attained by the "Children's House" as an institution. Those who are conversant with the chief problems of the school know that to-day much attention is given to a great principle, one that is ideal and almost beyond realisation,—the union of the family and the school in the matter of educational aims. But the family is always something far away from the school, and is almost always regarded as rebelling against its ideals. It is a species of phantom upon which the school can never lay its hands. The home is closed not only to pedagogical progress, but often to social progress. We see here for the first time the possibility of realising the long-talked-of pedagogical ideal. We have put *the school within the house*; and this is not all. We have placed it within the house as the *property of the collectivity*, leaving under the eyes of the parents the whole life of the teacher in the accomplishment of her high mission.

This idea of the collective ownership of the school is new and very beautiful and profoundly educational.

The parents know that the "Children's House" is their property, and is maintained by a portion of the rent they pay. The mothers may go at any hour of the day to watch,

to admire, or to meditate upon the life there. It is in every way a continual stimulus to reflection, and a fount of evident blessing and help to their own children. We may say that the mothers *adore* the "Children's House," and the directress. How many delicate and thoughtful attentions these good mothers show the teacher of their little ones! They often leave sweets or flowers upon the sill of the schoolroom window, as a silent token, reverently, almost religiously, given.

And when after three years of such a novitiate, the mothers send their children to the common schools, they will be excellently prepared to co-operate in the work of education, and will have acquired a sentiment, rarely found even among the best classes; namely, the idea that they must *merit* through their own conduct and with their own virtue, the possession of an educated son.

Another advance made by the "Children's Houses" as an institution is related to scientific pedagogy. This branch of pedagogy, heretofore, being based upon the anthropological study of the pupil whom it is to educate, has touched only a few of the positive questions which tend to transform education. For a man is not only a biological but a social product, and the social environment of individuals in the process of education, is the home. Scientific pedagogy will seek in vain to better the new generation if it does not succeed in influencing also the environment within which this new generation grows! I believe, therefore, that in opening the house to the light of new truths, and to the progress of civilisation we have solved the problem of being able to modify directly, the *environment* of the new generation, and have thus made it possible to apply, in a practical way, the fundamental principles of scientific pedagogy.

The "Children's House" marks still another triumph; it is the first step toward the *socialisation of the house*. The inmates find under their own roof the convenience of being able to leave their little ones in a place, not only safe, but where they have every advantage.

And let it be remembered that *all* the mothers in the tenement may enjoy this privilege, going away to their work with easy minds. Until the present time only one class in society might have this advantage. Rich women were able to go about their various occupations and amusements, leaving their children in the hands of a nurse or a governess. To-day the women of the people who live in these remodeled houses, may say, like the great lady, "I have left my son with the governess and the nurse." More than this, they may add, like the princess of the blood, "And the house physician watches over them and directs their sane and sturdy growth." These women, like the most advanced class of English and American mothers, possess a "Biographical Chart," which, filled for the mother by the directress and the doctor, gives her the most practical knowledge of her child's growth and condition.

We are all familiar with the ordinary advantages of the communistic transformation of the general environment. For example, the collective use of railway carriages, of street lights, of the telephone, all these are great advantages. The enormous production of useful articles, brought about by industrial progress, makes possible to all, clean clothes, carpets, curtains, table-delicacies, better tableware, etc. The making of such benefits generally tends to level social caste. All this we have seen in its reality. But the communising of *persons* is new. That the collectivity shall benefit from the services of the servant, the nurse, the teacher — this is a modern ideal.

We have in the "Children's Houses" a demonstration of this ideal which is unique in Italy or elsewhere. Its significance is most profound, for it corresponds to a need of the times. We can no longer say that the convenience of leaving their children takes away from the mother a natural social duty of first importance; namely, that of caring for and educating her tender offspring. No, for to-day the social and economic evolution calls the working-woman to take her place among wage-earners, and takes away from her by force those duties which would be most dear to her! The mother must, in any event, leave her child, and often with the pain of knowing him to be abandoned. The advantages furnished by such institutions are not limited to the labouring classes, but extend also to the general middle-class, many of whom work with the brain. Teachers, professors, often obliged to give private lessons after school hours, frequently leave their children to the care of some rough and ignorant maid-of-all-work. Indeed, the first announcement of the "Children's House" was followed by a deluge of letters from persons of the better class demanding that these helpful reforms be extended to their dwellings.

We are, then, communising a "maternal function," a feminine duty, within the house. We may see here in this practical act the solving of many of woman's problems which have seemed to many impossible of solution. What then will become of the home, one asks, if the woman goes away from it? The home will be transformed and will assume the functions of the woman.

I believe that in the future of society other forms of communistic life will come.

Take, for example, the infirmary; woman is the natural nurse for the dear ones of her household. But who does

not know how often in these days she is obliged to tear herself unwillingly from the bedside of her sick to go to her work? Competition is great, and her absence from her post threatens the tenure of the position from which she draws the means of support. To be able to leave the sick one in a "house-infirmary," to which she may have access any free moments she may have, and where she is at liberty to watch during the night, would be an evident advantage to such a woman.

And how great would be the progress made in the matter of family hygiene, in all that relates to isolation and disinfection! Who does not know the difficulties of a poor family when one child is ill of some contagious disease, and should be isolated from the others? Often such a family may have no kindred or friends in the city to whom the other children may be sent.

Much more distant, but not impossible, is the communal kitchen, where the dinner ordered in the morning is sent at the proper time, by means of a dumb-waiter, to the family dining-room. Indeed, this has been successfully tried in America. Such a reform would be of the greatest advantage to those families of the middle-class who must confide their health and the pleasures of the table to the hands of an ignorant servant who ruins the food. At present, the only alternative in such cases is to go outside the home to some café where a cheap table d'hôte may be had.

Indeed, the transformation of the house must compensate for the loss in the family of the presence of the woman who has become a social wage-earner.

In this way the house will become a centre, drawing unto itself all those good things which have hitherto been lacking: schools, public baths, hospitals, etc.

Thus the tendency will be to change the tenement houses, which have been places of vice and peril, into centres of education, of refinement, of comfort. This will be helped if, besides the schools for the children, there may grow up also *clubs* and reading-rooms for the inhabitants, especially for the men, who will find there a way to pass the evening pleasantly and decently. The tenement-club, as possible and as useful in all social classes as is the "Children's House," will do much toward closing the gambling-houses and saloons to the great moral advantage of the people. And I believe that the Association of Good Building will before long establish such clubs in its reformed tenements here in the Quarter of San Lorenzo; clubs where the tenants may find newspapers and books, and where they may hear simple and helpful lectures.

We are, then, very far from the dreaded dissolution of the home and of the family, through the fact that woman has been forced by changed social and economic conditions to give her time and strength to remunerative work. The home itself assumes the gentle feminine attributes of the domestic housewife. The day may come when the tenant, having given to the proprietor of the house a certain sum, shall receive in exchange whatever is necessary to the *comfort* of life; in other words, the administration shall become the *steward* of the family.

The house, thus considered, tends to assume in its evolution a significance more exalted than even the English word "home" expresses. It does not consist of walls alone, though these walls be the pure and shining guardians of that intimacy which is the sacred symbol of the family. The home shall become more than this. It lives! It has a soul. It may be said to embrace its inmates with the

tender, consoling arms of woman. It is the giver of moral life, of blessings; it cares for, it educates and feeds the little ones. Within it, the tired workman shall find rest and newness of life. He shall find there the intimate life of the family, and its happiness.

The new woman, like the butterfly come forth from the chrysalis, shall be liberated from all those attributes which once made her desirable to man only as the source of the material blessings of existence. She shall be, like man, an individual, a free human being, a social worker; and, like man, she shall seek blessing and repose within the house, the house which has been reformed and communised.

She shall wish to be loved for herself and not as a giver of comfort and repose. She shall wish a love free from every form of servile labour. The goal of human love is not the egotistical end of assuring its own satisfaction — it is the sublime goal of multiplying the forces of the free spirit, making it almost Divine, and, within such beauty and light, perpetuating the species.

This ideal love is made incarnate by Frederick Nietzsche, in the woman of Zarathustra, who conscientiously wished her son to be better than she. “Why do you desire me?” she asks the man. “Perhaps because of the perils of a solitary life?”

“In that case go far from me. I wish the man who has conquered himself, who has made his soul great. I wish the man who has conserved a clean and robust body. I wish the man who desires to unite with me, body and soul, to create a son! A son better, more perfect, stronger, than any created heretofore!”

To better the species consciously, cultivating his own health, his own virtue, this should be the goal of man's married life. It is a sublime concept of which, as yet,

few think. And the socialised home of the future, living, provident, kindly; educator and comforter; is the true and worthy home of those human mates who wish to better the species, and to send the race forward triumphant into the eternity of life!

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE "CHILDREN'S HOUSES"

The Roman Association of Good Building hereby establishes within its tenement house number , a "Children's House," in which may be gathered together all children under common school age, belonging to the families of the tenants.

The chief aim of the "Children's House" is to offer, free of charge, to the children of those parents who are obliged to absent themselves for their work, the personal care which the parents are not able to give.

In the "Children's House" attention is given to the education, the health, the physical and moral development of the children. This work is carried on in a way suited to the age of the children.

There shall be connected with the "Children's House" a Directress, a Physician, and a Caretaker.

The programme and hours of the "Children's House" shall be fixed by the Directress.

There may be admitted to the "Children's House" all the children in the tenement between the ages of three and seven.

The parents who wish to avail themselves of the advantages of the "Children's House" pay nothing. They must, however, assume these binding obligations:

- (a) To send their children to the "Children's House" at the appointed time, clean in body and clothing, and provided with a suitable apron.

- (b) To show the greatest respect and deference toward the Directress and toward all persons connected with the "Children's House," and to co-operate with the Directress herself in the education of the children. Once a week, at least, the mothers may talk with the Directress, giving her information concerning the home life of the child, and receiving helpful advice from her.

There shall be expelled from the "Children's House":

- (a) Those children who present themselves unwashed, or in soiled clothing.
- (b) Those who show themselves to be incorrigible.
- (c) Those whose parents fail in respect to the persons connected with the "Children's House," or who destroy through bad conduct the educational work of the institution.