

THE KINDERGARTEN SOARS

BY GRACE ADAMS & EDWARD HUTTER

THE education of the young used to be a very simple process in America. When a child reached the age of seven he was led to the nearest schoolhouse, and there a laborious schoolma'am, with the aid of primers and birches, rammed and clouted the rudiments of the enlightenment into him. When a mother found seven continuous years with her offspring too burdensome, she shortened the ordeal by shifting her load, a few years before they expired, on to the kindergarten teacher, but the desk in the regular school remained his foreordained destination at seven, or maybe six. The kindergarten, of course, taught him nothing save how to amuse himself inoffensively, but his mother found it an adequate substitute for expensive nurses, and so kindergartens thrived.

Of late they have begun to thrive as never before, for it has been discovered by advanced pedagogues that their facilities may be multiplied and enlarged to accommodate not only infants and run-about, but also children of a larger growth. Some of them have begun to go very far. They take a pupil at the age of two and keep him until he has come to his later teens. From his parents they take over every responsibility for him, save of course the inescapable one of paying the bills. And all the while they protect him from the horrors of what is ordinarily understood by getting an education. His soul is allowed to expand. He is not tortured with unpleasant facts. The revolutionary discoveries of the New Psychology are at the bottom of this new development of the kindergarten. The movement is known as Progressive Education.

Naturally enough, it has its national organization and its official organ. The former, called the Progressive Education Association, has headquarters in Washington, and has flourished since 1919. The latter, called the *Progressive Education Quarterly*, was set up in 1924. In it one finds articles telling all about how Progressive Education works. The primer and the rattan have both disappeared, and with them the old-fashioned schoolma'am. The children in the new schools are rescued from their congenital darkness by all the ingenious devices of the New Psychology. Education, as they experience it, is a process of mental hygiene. Their unconscious desires are deftly sublimated, and if they show any sign of developing undesirable complexes the matter is looked to instantly and scientifically. But the atmosphere of the Freudian clinic is carefully avoided. The pupils, according to Mr. George Yeomans, who renounced the manufacture of plumbing accessories to found the Ojai Valley School in California, are viewed as "maple leaves in April, all shivering with pistillate flowers to catch pollen, thirsty for words that fertilize," and their teacher is a young lady "capable of making her subject the occasion to illuminate for them the origin of life and the processes of reproduction, . . . and, in some sense, promote an allegiance to that mysterious upward thrust which we call 'good will,' and which is the only worth-while thing ever produced except beauty—and it is, of course, a part of that."

There seems to be some difference of opinion among the members of the Progressive Education Association as to ex-

actly who fathered the movement. Mr. Yeomans comes out uncompromisingly for Jesus Christ and—as one might guess—Walt Whitman; but Mr. George T. Mirick, lecturer in education at Harvard and spreader of the new gospel among the academic high-brows, is of the opinion that it was William James and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Still other authorities, such as Miss Caroline Pratt and Miss Margaret Naumberg, who run schools in New York City, feel that the honor should be divided between unknown personages described as the Creative Artist and the Psychologist. Mr. Burton P. Fowler, who serves as chairman of the executive board of the association, is unable to believe that any single man, or any one group of men, could be responsible for so far-reaching a reform. Progressive Education, he says, is "the culmination of three hundred years of facts and philosophies, of wars and revolutions, of the whole scientific movement."

Chicago and New York are the strongholds of the movement; Chicago because it was in that city that, more than thirty years ago, Col. Francis W. Parker and Prof. John Dewey first bemoaned "the tragedy of orthodox education" and sought to alleviate it; New York on account of its unflinching interest in things "artistically creative." From these two centers the schools have spread out all over the country—even to Hawaii, where the Hanahauoli School is staunch in its allegiance to Dr. Dewey. But he is not the only pioneer to be so honored, for the fame of his colleague is perpetuated in the Francis W. Parker School of San Diego, California, as well as by the one in Chicago. Most of the schools in the East, however, have left these early models far behind. The Progressive programme has been adapted to every class and society. Thus the Manumit School at Pawling, N. Y., is "conducted for the children of Radical Labor partisans"; while the Tower Hill School of Wilmington, Del., "was projected by

members of the duPont family," and the Scarborough School, with an enrollment of almost three hundred, was established and is still supported by Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Vanderlip, "primarily for their own children." The intellectual members of Dr. Felix Adler's Ethical Culture Society and the Harvard faculty each have flourishing schools for their young. The Libertarian Colony of Shelton, N. J., supports the Modern School; while John D. Rockefeller contributes to the Lincoln School of Columbia University. The women's colleges are adequately represented by the Institute for Little Children at Vassar. This school is especially high-toned, for only children of college graduates are admitted.

The mothers of the benighted South, still in possession of a few surviving Negro mummies, evidently cling to the old-fashioned belief that babies are best cared for in their own homes; for a careful search reveals only one Progressive school in that entire section, and this one has to look to wealthy Northern matrons for support. But though it stands isolated in Fairhope, Ala., the School of Organic Education has made one memorable contribution to the new science. It was there, in 1907, that Mrs. Marietta Johnson first realized the necessity of "freeing the spirit of the child" by abolishing all school grades, thus throwing two-year-olds and eighteen-year-olds into one vast democratic group.

II

In 1928 Mr. Stanwood Cobb, author of "The Real Turk" and founder and president of the national association, arrived at the doleful conclusion that the wisest and most brilliant man could not define Progressive Education as it exists today. However, after a conference with other educators who had "caught the vision of the child being by nature an artist and a creator," he was able to formulate its creed:

The difference of a few earth-turns around the sun, between the adult and the child, does not mean that the soul of the child is necessarily younger than that of the adult. Clearly, as to soul, the comparison must be one in degrees of perfection, not in earth years. The fact that the soul manifests itself at birth in a helpless body and an unformed mind indicates simply that the young child is limited as to its physical and mental vehicles and as to information about the planet in which it has newly come to take residence. That it has only imperfect means of communication with the outer world does not prove a paucity of spiritual life within. The child's ideas, whenever they are clearly expressed, vie in quality with the ideas of adulthood; for in the world of ideas the child is as much at home as the adult, and as unlimited. Nothing in the adult world can surpass in exquisiteness of sympathy, of justice, of nobility, the ideas of the child. We should always meet with reverence, therefore, the thoughts which a child expresses. In this Platonic world of ideas, we must meet the child sincerely, respectfully, as coevals or peers. If there is the slightest trace of superiority, of condescension on the part of the adult, the child's soul closes up like the petals of a delicate flower when too roughly or too inconsiderately handled.

Thus, if a child is given "abundant opportunity to express itself as a separate individual," it "can act and think and live according to genius patterns." But to attain the full realization of its powers it must be allowed to mingle freely with equally Platonic minds in the untrammelled atmosphere of a Modern School, "for the group mind—planning, creating, and achieving—can accomplish marvels of which the individual is incapable." The supreme marvel accomplished is True Democracy.

The most conservative of the Progressive methods is known to initiate as the Laboratory Plan, and the most famous plan so far perfected is the one which Miss Helen Parkhurst, now director of the Children's University School in New York City, devised in 1919 in Dalton, Mass. The aim of the Dalton Plan, according to its originator, is "to socialize the school and make of it a coöperative community." Consequently, there is no place on its staff for such anti-social individuals as teachers. As in a night-club, the officiating ladies are known romantically as hostesses. Hostesses, of course, have no authority; they cannot assign lessons or

hold recitations. Their duties are simply to preside over conferences with children who voluntarily "contract" for a "job," and to provide these little workers with "job books" and "job cards."

In theory, the Dalton Plan is Progressive because the children can work on their jobs when and where and in any manner they choose. In practise, however, it turns out to be really somewhat reactionary, for the jobs are generally concerned with nothing more artistically creative than simple studies in arithmetic or geography. And the very presence of the "job book" and "job card" tends to inhibit real freedom. So at present the Project Method is more widely used.

A project is described by President Cobb as "an activity chosen and initiated by the child as an expression of its own intellectual needs and desires." Chairman Fowler says that it can be anything "from driving nails to reading 'The Story of Philosophy' and devising original theorems in geometry." So far in the annals of Progressive Education there is no account of how an original-geometry-theorem project is conducted, but the literature abounds in details of equally marvelous activities.

Though these projects spring spontaneously from the children, without any suggestion from the hostess, there is a striking similarity among the projects developed in the different schools year after year. Thus in New York six- and seven-year-old children almost invariably originate Play Cities, while in Chicago children of the same age inevitably feel the urge to weave. At the City and Country School the construction of a Play City consumes a full school term, but in other years the children feel the urge to many other creative activities. Here is a complete record of Group IV of that school:

1. *Play experiences*
 - Block building
 - Play with big materials
 - Indoors
 - Outdoors
 - Animals

- Clay
- Drawing, cutting and pasting
- Bench work
- Music
- Stories
- Washing and ironing
- 2. *Practical experiences*
 - Wraps
 - Putting away materials
 - Setting lunch table
 - Washing cups
 - Orientation
 - Care of flowers
- 3. *Special training*
 - Physical exercise
 - Sense training
 - Number
- 4. *Organization of Material*
 - Contents of play and discussion
 - Trips

III

In view of the eminence which Miss Pratt, the director of the City and Country School, has attained as a creative thinker, this record of Group IV cannot be lightly dismissed, but to see project work at its highest perfection, one must turn to the Moraine Park School of Dayton, Ohio. Mr. Edwin Zavitz, former principal at Moraine Park, thus discloses the secret of that school's efficiency:

The citizens of Moraine have a commission form of government. One of the duties of the commission of three students is to grant project franchises without which it is illegal for anyone to engage in project work. An application is made out stating the nature of the project and signed by the persons proposing to operate it. If the commission decides that it will be of mutual advantage to the community and to the operators to have them engage in the enterprise, a certificate of enfranchisement is granted. If at any time a student fails to operate his project satisfactorily the commission may revoke his franchise. . . . One member of the faculty, the project supervisor, devotes the majority of his time to project work. . . . A monthly report is made by each project and each pupil is given a monthly rating. . . . Besides the project supervisor each project has one other member of the faculty assigned to it as advisor.

Below is a partial list of the projects carried on at Moraine Park, compiled and classified by Mr. Zavitz:

Merchandising

- Athletic company
- Automobile company

- Candy company
- Card and novelty company
- Current events agency
- Drug company
- Gasoline supply company
- Holly wreath company
- Stationery company (boys)
- Stationery company (girls)
- Wholesale candy company

Production

- Art and gift shop
- Camera shop
- Home-made candy company
- Lunch company
- Malted milk company
- Ping-pong parlors
- Radio sets
- Sundae company
- Toy company

Maintenance

- Care of player-piano
- Electrical company
- Flag raiser
- School truck mechanic

Service

- Accompanist
- Bill collecting company
- Dance music agency
- Garage company
- Laundry agency
- Librarians
- Odd jobs company
- Shine company
- Weather bureau

Development

- Detective agency
- Insurance company
- Law firm
- Publicity bureau
- Red Cross representative
- Stock exchange
- Tutor in French

The mere listing of such varied projects, while it may give some notion of the versatility of the children in a Progressive school, does not bring to light the true creativeness of their minds. Mrs. Lucia B. Morse describes in detail how the pupils of the Junior Elementary School which she conducts at Downers Grove, Ill., spent their time during a single Spring. This is one of the most elaborate projects on record, for the whole school was concerned in it, yet it began in a surprisingly simple manner, by the children becoming "particularly joyous over their close acquaintance with sheep and lambs."

One morning found them assembled in the school chapel singing, apparently spon-

taneously, "How Sweet is the Shepherd's Sweet Lot," and reciting the Twenty-third Psalm. Then came various secular poems until the school became entirely sheep conscious and one lad volunteered the one about the Lost Sheep. At this point the exercises went completely Progressive, with each little pagan hoofing original shepherd steps and chanting improvised pastoral melodies to the accompaniment of appropriate harps, sackbuts and psalteries. "The singing was a very natural and beautiful outgrowth of the general trend of thought; each song was a gem in itself."

Physically exhausted from so much activity but still joyous, the children settled down to "discussions and animated conversation . . . regarding the different qualities of goats and sheep." When these matters were adjusted and the walls covered with the "loveliest of sheep pictures," the yen toward weaving became irresistible. One group dashed madly for its hats and coats in order "to visit a rug weaver's cottage." Another stayed at school to work off its creative enthusiasm in the invention of original looms. Still others washed, carded or dyed wool for the rest to weave into rugs.

But the completion of the rugs did not end the project. By the time they were finished warm weather had set in. Forthwith the entire school moved out-of-doors. And with the thought of sheep still uppermost in their little minds, the pupils bedecked themselves in turbans, the rugs became tents, and they pretended they were Bedouins. They cooked and sang and danced according to their infantile lights. Even then the possibility of the sheep project was not exhausted. "This interest in other peoples, stimulated by various experiences and points of contact, began to take the shape of an international programme. France, Germany, Japan, Holland, Italy were all dramatized. With Good Will Day came the inspiration of an international bazaar and the end of the school year."

IV

Prof. Ellsworth Collings, dean of the School of Education at the University of Oklahoma and known as the Torch Light of Progressive Education, explains the teacher's function in relation to a project in his account of Roly Poly. Roly Poly is an adaptation of bowling. An uncreative person would call it a game, but for Dean Collings it is a Play Project or the Roly Poly Activity, and he considers it of such importance that he has written hundreds of thousands of words concerning it. His narratives usually begin with James remarking, "Pshaw, I'm so tired," and John suggesting, "Let's play Roly Poly"; and end with Carl exclaiming, "I'll put the Roly Polys away, Miss Burke." At least, they end thus in so far as the children's uninhibited speech and action is concerned; but at that point Dean Collings loosens up and explains just what a complicated activity he has been describing. "Many neural mechanisms are in action simultaneously," he says, "and consequently many changes in neural connections occur." It is the teacher's (or hostess's) business to keep tab on these neural activities, and, in order that she will not miss any of them, Dean Collings has voluminously analyzed Roly Poly into the following "traits of child activity:"

1. Initiation of Goal
2. Evaluation of Goal
3. Choice of Goal
4. Initiation of Means
5. Evaluation of Means
6. Choice of Means
7. Execution of Means
8. Initiation of Improvement
9. Evaluation of Improvement
10. Choice of Improvement
11. Consummation of Improvement

Even this does not tell the whole story, for every one of these "traits of child activity" must be further subdivided into the two "elementary units" of "drive and response." A young teacher, of course, may not recognize a response or a drive the first time she meets one, so Dean Collings has accommodately invented two or

three tests for each of the eleven drives and eleven responses. Armed with these tests the Progressive teacher must make an "activity chart" for her whole group and for all the individual members of the group. She does this by applying all of the tests for all of the possible drives and all of the tests for all of the possible responses to everything that every child does or says while he is engaged in the Roly Poly Activity, and then recording the drives and responses numerically. When they are neatly tabulated, she proceeds to divide the drive of each trait by the response to each trait. The result is a Drive Index for each trait. By further dividing an individual child's response by the Mean Response of the group, she arrives at the Response Index for that particular child, the goal toward which her analysis has been leading. So James and Carl and John, with their souls freed from the "petty tyranny of marks and examinations," no longer get excellent or good or poor in reading or writing or arithmetic. Instead they receive 50 or 100 or 150 as a Response Index for the Execution of Means or the Consummation of Improvement in the Play Project of the Roly Poly Activity.

The vast superiority of the Project Method over the Dalton Plan is evident from the former's complete disregard of the three R's. President Cobb explains that this method of training a child so that it will be "quite negligent as to memory of ordinary facts" results in one of the most important practical benefits of the new movement. From his study of psychology he is convinced that "too great a mass of definite facts, crowding upon the mind, really hinders it from reflection, meditation and judgment." As a further proof that literacy and genius have nothing in common he says: "Many a man of prominence and leadership in his community, State or country gets his speeches and public writings edited and almost wholly composed for him by a secretary at \$3,000 a year."

There are a few Progressive pedagogues,

however, who seem to have an uneasy suspicion that some of their pupils may not have the \$3,000 necessary to hire a secretary and must therefore learn to read and write. The problem of how to provide these children with such elementary knowledge without interfering with their Creative Activities has puzzled the uneasy pedagogues a great deal; but several solutions have been hit upon. The Lincoln School of Teachers College manages nicely through a process known as Interrelation. The interrelating teacher watches her pupils actively creating, and with as little pressure as possible injects a few "practical experiences" into their project. If the seven-year-olds, at work on their Play City, decide to play street-car, she asks them casually how much money the conductor should collect from his passengers. Thus, without even knowing it, they have had a "practical experience in arithmetic." Or if she feels in the humor she can ask them to tell her what they are doing. She records their replies verbatim and then they discover, no doubt to their own amazement, that they have had another practical experience—this time in Oral Composition.

Interrelation, of course, makes tremendous intellectual demands upon the teachers. If they are unequal to the task or haven't the time to spare, the school adopts one of the various "individual systems." It was at the San Francisco Normal School that the individual system originated, and Mr. Carleton Washburn, an alumnus of that institution, developed it to unsuspected heights in his school at Wynnetka, Ill. The Wynnetka System is so perfect that it requires no teacher; its "self-instruction manual" and "series of especially diagnostic tests" are adequate substitutes. The time that the child can spare from his creative activities he devotes to studying his manual and testing himself.

It is most fortunate that this matter of elementary instruction can be so easily disposed of, for, according to President Cobb, the new teacher must be "as free as is the child to express herself creatively. In fact,

she is called upon to be creative at every turn." But this, after all, is not difficult, for "the opportunity to practise creativeness which a teacher finds in a Progressive school tends to increase, through practise, the creative habit."

Miss Pratt of Group IV fame, is especially anxious that there be no confusion between "the old conception of the art of teaching and this new conception of pedagogy as a creative art." Not only is she unconcerned about the old method of teaching; she is not even interested in the old meaning of art. When she refers to art she means very specifically "this new method of thinking about thinking" and she claims that "science, or, to speak more explicitly, psychology is beginning to support it as against the logical method of thought." In this psychologically sanctioned, illogical method of thinking about thinking, the new teacher becomes "an artist in pedagogical composition." Thus, according to Miss Pratt, it is impossible for the artist-teacher "to start off with a complete idea of what he is going to do with his material"; it is not only his privilege but his duty to help destroy the forms through which he works, so that "the thing which is produced is as far beyond what he intended as he is himself beyond an artisan."

No one can accuse the teachers at Miss Pratt's City and Country School of not living up to the ideals of their principal; their technique has advanced so far above the old art of teaching that their catalogue proudly boasts that it "leaves us with children in all groups who do not know their [multiplication] tables."

V

At the Walden School, also in New York, the faculty must be as artistically creative as the teachers at the City and Country, but they must also meet the requirement of being "true scientists." Miss Margaret Naumberg, who founded this, the most advanced of all Progressive institutions,

says: "I started the school with the purpose of applying the principles of analytic psychology to the education of normal children. I welcomed psychoanalysis as an educational technique as soon as I came in contact with it." Since this contact, the first duty of her staff has been to "make psycho-analytical studies of individual children and of interacting groups. The emotional life of the child, his family background and school adjustments, are all part of the picture." These studies have forced the staff to the conclusion that there is no such thing as a normal child. "Even children as young as two years show signs of distorted functioning of personality in school that tell tales of difficulties of family life." Any young woman who applies for a position at this school must show herself equal to the task of adjusting these poor, wrecked two-year-old souls by "freeing them from the excessive bonds of parental attachment."

How long it takes for the teachers of the Walden School to undo the ravages inflicted on its pupils through the disastrous experience of living a full two years with their parents is not revealed, but the school is prepared to tend their sick souls for sixteen years. During this period they are cured. "To us," says Miss Naumberg, speaking through her medium, the *Psychologist*, "groups, like individuals, have an inner psychic life and a special outer form of their own . . . I refer to groups living as organisms capable of expanding into their own physical and spiritual forms."

By the time these psychic groups reach the age of fifteen "a profound yearning drives them in search of some unassailable truth, some ultimate value to hold them secure amid the swirling chaos of life," and so, for example, they evolve "the idea of a pageant—a drama of evolution called 'From Dust to Dust.' It opens with the impregnation of matter with life, in the strange half-light of Cosmic space. Out of the shadows two grains of dust swirl into combination, grow and expand." These

children "make their own plays but they don't write them out. They decide on a theme, discuss its possibilities. Certain episodes take form. They try working on these experimentally. Sometimes the climax of a play crystalizes before the minor episodes. Every one tries the different characters until the group chooses the best actor for each rôle. But the dialogue never remains the same, either in rehearsal or production." But this fluidity of cast, action and speech is unimportant, for it is not the play itself that concerns Miss Naumberg, but her belief "that efforts to become more aware of our own gestures, movements, tone of voice and general bodily habits through special training in pantomime and allied arts for the playing of rôles, might lead to a more profound self-knowledge and would therefore form a sound basis for an education of the future."

Out in California at his Ojai Valley School, Mr. Yeomans sees an even higher place reserved for the carpentry shop. "You cannot longer neglect the sources of sanity and strength," he warns, "and these are not in the brains, but in brains *plus* hands. And out of brains and hands combined comes that spiritual thing which alone irrigates the life of men—the thing which, after thirty years of carpenter's son and carpenter, produced a Man capable of stooping to earth before the Magdalen, and asking that most penetrating question of the brain-workers standing there with their stones; and, in His profound oriental way, telling those immortal stories of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son."

Thus through Progressive Education a child may become not only a free soul, a creative artist and a psychologically adjusted personality, but a Messiah as well. It is a little distressing to discover that if he wishes to acquire, in addition, what the prosaic world considers an education, he must renounce all of the benefits of creative pedagogy when he becomes fourteen years of age. No one regrets this more

than the Progressive pedagogues themselves, but last year, when they were assembled in council, they were forced to admit it to be a fact. It seems that, in spite of all the work they have done for human freedom, there still exists in America an institution "with a medieval passion for encyclopedic information"—the college. This medieval institution, through a thing known as the college entrance examination, exerts a powerful influence over all the secondary schools of the country—an influence which the Progressive educators are incapable of combating. Its examinations have nothing to do with projects or creative activities or psychological adjustments; they test the pupil's possession of the very things which creative educators have decided are inhibitory to meditation, reflection and judgment, to wit, definite facts. So if the "intellectual needs" of a progressively educated child should prompt him to a College Project, he must, when he reaches high-school age, take off his international costumes, lock up his Roly Polys, close his Projection Company, and learn the very same cruel facts that the "victims of the Juggernaut of education" were learning when they were eight years his junior.

As yet the Progressive educators have found no way out of this deplorable situation. There are excellent grounds for suspecting that they never will find one, but this is no place to express such an opinion. For although the president of the Progressive Education Association has declared officially that the modern magazine is "a marvelous purveyor of knowledge of the most recent authenticity," the chairman of executive committee questions this authenticity when it comes to one particular subject. Speaking of the matter that lies closest to his heart he says:

Activities! The magic word of the new school, the scornful taboo of the cynic, the butt of literary ridicule. The activity school, perfectly misunderstood, has furnished much ammunition for many a magazine writer who makes his living more by his wits than by his wisdom.

A BOSTON BOYHOOD

BY ISAAC GOLDBERG

I WAS born—to paraphrase a famous line in the “Rolla” of Musset—neither too soon nor too late, into a world neither too young nor too old. The oral tradition of the family has it that I came riding in on the crest of a typical snow-storm,—one of those New England blizzards that send the wind bowing across the telegraph wires in ascending and descending chromatic thirds, write tragedies on the waters, and leave the world—as seen through the white-rimmed window panes of childhood—a glittering postcard, beautifully innocent under a forgiving sun.

Forty years ago, in the West End of Boston, few children were born in hospitals. Within a stone’s throw of my birth-place, as it were, stood one of the most famous hospitals in the world—the Massachusetts General. Later, when we would grow up into mischief, its Out Patient Department would nurse our wounds; velocipedes would break at their fork in the midst of a mad course over the earliest asphalted streets, and send us torn and bleeding to the ministrations of the young physicians; bicycles, striking a rock in a car-track, would throw us somersaulting through the air, and the pedals would catch us under the knees, leaving imprints of dirt and blood to be scraped away by over-diligent attendants; we would jump from the second-story of unfinished buildings into sand heaps, landing on heads instead of feet. We were, in a word, to keep the hospital busy. But none of us could boast a maternity ward as godparent. We were plebeians. We were born in our mothers’ beds, with the most perfunctory of obstetrical assistance. Lacking a lodge

doctor, our parents would give themselves over to the experimental mercies of a city physician; sometimes, in our impatience, we got there before that worthy appeared upon the scene, in which case his duties consisted chiefly in registering our arrival.

Lowell street was not the sunless thoroughfare that it is today. The elevated structure had not yet risen to blot out the light of the sky. Street-cars hummed along the shining rails where we flattened pins and pennies under their wheels; the Fourth of July we celebrated by placing blank cartridges on the rails at rhythmic intervals, that their explosions might beat a pleasant tattoo. Between the North Station—recently rebuilt—and the railroad yards of the Boston & Maine, ran a dummy engine at a snail’s pace; we had no respect for the freight cars that it shunted. Even in those days we worshipped speed.

Just beyond the yards flowed the Charles river placidly between our Boston and Cambridge. Today, a graceful curve of esplanade embraces the picturesque Basin; on Summer evenings, the slum—let it hear you call it by that name!—parades romantically before the beautified backyards of Back Bay, and what Beacon street feared has come to pass. There still remain rancors from the pre-Espladian era, and matrons out to air their proud-nosed dogs—though once they vowed that they would never tread these haunts—are heard to whisper their regret that they should have to share God’s beauty with their inferiors. To these inferiors the matrons and their dogs provide part of the scenery.

In my childhood, the Charlesbank was a row of dumps, and we were the scaven-