

CHAPTER X

SIGNPOSTS IN THE CHILD'S LIFE

IF we were able to secure our infants from manufacturing concerns instead of obtaining them in the good old-fashioned way, the race would be tremendously improved. With each infant supplied we would demand a guarantee that such infant would grow to a certain size and mental standard. The manufacturers on the other hand would, no doubt, give a booklet with each infant describing its constituent parts. Directions also would be most carefully supplied in order to avoid returns and to increase the manufacturer's prestige.

On the little machines themselves several important indicators would be found. One would be the speedometer indicating the nervous activity of the little machine; another, a speed regulator; a third would show the fuel consumption upon which the mechanism runs to best advantage and a fourth would indicate the periods of rest it needs. All machines of a cer-

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tain type would cost the same amount of money although their values in the adult market would vary as a Rolls-Royce does from a flivver. The values would all depend upon the care and knowledge with which they were guided until they had fully developed during a time-period of no less than twenty years during which time the soul and will might receive special attention.

Let us attempt to draw up a booklet of instruction for the infant machine. The principal points in it would be about as follows:

"1. This machine if properly taken care of is guaranteed to win a race in later years.

"2. Its motive power is a highly magnetic nerve organization sustained by the combustion of fat.

"3. Fill the fuel tank whenever it is empty but avoid mixing up half-decomposed saliva-saturated food, which may yet be in its stomach with the fresh supply. Only fill when completely empty.

"4. Do not make any effort to start or stop the machine. It will run without your assistance. Its movements need only to be regulated and directed.

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"5. Test its speed each day. See that it is greater each day than it was the day before. This is most important as the machine will only gain momentum if trained systematically. If not properly handled in this respect it will deteriorate and gradually become junk.

"Operation.

"To work the machine with the least possible friction, fill its flexible feed tank with milk, especially prepared by the manufacturer of the apparatus. If unable to obtain it from the manufacturer use milk from a healthy cow. Cows have been man's milk purveyors since time immemorial. Their milk has become part of our own constituents and is, therefore, a perfectly safe substitute for human milk.

"As time goes on and every part of the new little apparatus moves faster, the parts will strengthen and gradually the machine will assume a vertical instead of horizontal position during the greater part of the day. It will now begin to move about in definite directions. Teeth will emerge and in order to give these exercise and sustain the faster moving body, the

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former fuel has to be augmented. Use, in addition to milk, such other foods as the race has been accustomed to for many ages. Remember that a great many things which adults eat, such as ice cream, cake, tea, butter, sugar, pepper, salt, are not fundamental foods and while they may not actually damage the young machine they may retard its movements to some extent. This means that when the machine is mature it will be inferior to some others.

"Do not listen to other people who tell you to do 'so and so' as they do with their own machines. Just watch your own indicators and see that the speed is improved every day.

"Appearance.

"Always note the appearance of the machine from day to day. Its flexible outer casing is the fuel tank from which the machine draws the energy which it requires for its ever-increasing motion.

"If this casing seems swollen it is overloaded and its movements will slacken. It will look dull in appearance and need solvents. In fact, the swelling may already be the result of a

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slackened movement. If, on the other hand, the casing looks poor and shrunk, the inside movements are too fast or, alternatively, the fuel is insufficient. In this case, the machine is in danger of running overheated and finally burning out.

"There is another indicator of absolute certainty which must be carefully watched. Human fuel, like other solid fuel, if burned up, leaves ashes. These ashes on the human machine are thrown off through the thousands of little chimneys located on the head covering (the scalp). These chimneys are the truest speed indicator yet discovered and are perfected to such an extent that they cannot be improved upon. If these chimneys work incessantly and the body is neither lean nor fat, everything is all right within. If the body is fat in spite of constant combustion, all the better. The potential market value of this machine is twice as great as the one which has no fat to spare. Yet, even so, the movements are too slow. It is true they are already faster than they are in any other machine you know of but they are still too slow for this particular one. Race it faster or longer hours.

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The fuel has to come down. Do not reduce the spaghetti or the rye bread which you may give it but simply, while the machine is yet unconscious of what it is doing, race it every day as long as it can stand and move.

"It may be that the casing is swollen as above said,—that is to say, the tank is overfilled and the chimney production is weak as happens very often on these little machines. If so, you run the risk of turning out an inferior machine because where the chimneys do not smoke, the fire inside is small. Perhaps ice cream and cake have had a say in the matter, or coffee, sugar and tea. Change the food to the simplest and also the hardest. A month-old stone-hard lump of bread at every meal, with a few bones to chew on instead of meat, will, no doubt, create temper. Impatience follows and, therefore, increased nervous activity. As a counter-balance, the exercise involved in trying to fill the feeding tank will produce more saliva. Then also when the jaws get tired a few times each day the other appendages to this machine will also demand more exercise. Everything will move faster. The fat will wear off the body rapidly and

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the chimneys will be smoking with increased volume.

“Do not let the machine run without the regular intermission, which is called rest, but bear in mind that too much of rest is positively dangerous. At what time of the day this intermission should take place cannot be definitely stated in advance. Presumably, it should take place during the night but it is bad to regulate the intermission by force or by the time clock. Do not give the machine more than it demands by itself. It will show the signs of tiredness clearly when it is exhausted and wants to stop. With equal certainty it will give distinct signs when it desires to start again. Let it rest when it shows signs of exhaustion and let it start when it cries or shouts. But all the time watch its flexible storage tank and the chimneys on its scalp. . . .”

Unfortunately, humanity, though it is oversupplied with booklets on every subject, has no accurate guide books on the subject of the human machine and rarely reads even such instructions as it has.

Here, mother and educator, are salient facts.

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Consider your little infant purely as a machine. Don't regard it as a doll or teddy bear. Fat and hair. These two things are your main indicators. They are matters of life and death. They describe the marvelous movement which you intend to develop in the infant so that it may lead its fellow men when it becomes an adult. The food you feed the child yields fat. It moves the young mechanism. Since the infant is the result of thousands of years of previous existence, its food must be based on race experience. Proper food, properly administered, will make the mechanism move perfectly. The hair is the motometer which indicates the nervous speed and the strength of your infant's inner activity. Just watch fat and hair. There are no better indicators. Between food and hair moves everything.

Give your child four meals a day if you like, just as the Joneses do. It may be right or it may be wrong. Right or wrong can only be discovered by watching fat and hair. No one child is like another child in the strength of its elemental movements. No one wants the same amount of fuel as another does. This the accumulating

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fat and the resulting hair will prove. Of course, you have your family schedule and the routine of daily life to consider. But where this is not the case, we can recommend no rules of a definite kind by which you may be guided in your infant's feeding except that all the food must have race experience behind it and that the child's fat reserve should not be above normal although the hair production should be. It is these two signs alone which indicate the value of your guardianship in matters of your food.

As to sleep and rest, "nature" will take care of this because the child is nature itself. It knows nothing of our conventions and our rules. It just gives its signs when it is hungry, when it wants to run, to sleep or to wake up. Most rules are based on personal convenience. The theories built up around the child are overwhelmingly in favor of order by the time clock so that father may not be made irritable and that mother may have a little time to do the darning, the nurse to gossip, the governess to read a book. Rules for children are really rules for the benefit of adults. To these rules the small infant invariably objects. It objects because it

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knows its own system better than adults do and the infant's conclusions in matters of physique are logically for its own benefit. Why should it eat when it is not hungry? Why should it stop its movement when it is not tired? Does it not itself feel that with the more exercise it will become stronger? Insistence, therefore, that the child should go to bed at a definite hour when it is yet active is a default against the child instincts and vitality. It is laziness forced upon its muscles and mind. It is unionizing progress to its own and the detriment of the race.

It is even worse to prevent the infant from getting up in the morning, for by so doing we actually endanger its health. Make an experiment on your own self. Have you not generally a little headache when you permit yourself an extra hour or two in bed on a Sunday morning and have you not found that when this extra hour or two is not available you are so much more fresh to begin the day and even more fit if you have to make an effort to get up especially early? Have you not at times gone to bed in perfect condition, glad of a long night's rest and awakened feeling worse in the morning?

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Or gone to bed very late and expecting to have a headache next day, when there was none? Our small children have these headaches more often than we are aware. They feel sluggish and we give them physics for which there would be no need otherwise. They look dull and tired when they are at breakfast. They would rather go back to bed than associate with others. A mother, giving us a little gossip about her children will tell us: "Bill was always very good in this respect—never any trouble even when he was small. Put him to bed at seven and there he slept soundly until we moved in his room in the morning. But Eddie is entirely different. He won't sleep for hours in the evening and then he starts hollering again when day breaks. He is getting better though. . . ." Nonsense, he is not getting better; he is getting worse. He has just started to travel in the family groove. The family's bad habits will be his in time. He will be the type which looks like his father, prematurely bald "by inheritance," as father and grandfather were, for he is imitating the family traits. Eddie is learning that it does not pay to be rebellious and to tear up pillows at night or to yell in

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the morning when the superior powers are still sawing wood. Eddie is just beginning to love his bed because he is forced to and if he gives up his boisterous demands or expressions of joy at the advent of a new day it is because he gradually becomes dull and torpid in the morning.

The reason for all these happenings is that during sleep the body readjusts itself. But conditions must be ready for this readjustment, that is to say, we cannot sleep before we are tired just as we cannot eat before we are hungry. During sleep tired limbs are re-conditioned to be ready again for another day. They are re-conditioned by the blood which never stops circulating and which during sleep carries new energy to places where the energy has been used up. Simultaneously, another and even more important movement goes on. During the day, the skin layers have accumulated a lot of matter which ought to be thrown off. This matter hangs within the scalp in those tiny openings which lead to the surface. These openings are now choked up. In bed, covered with warm blankets, the blood comes from the inner sections to the outer sections of the body, giving us

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that comfortable feeling of warmth. This warmth relaxes the skin muscles. It dilates the openings and a vapor escapes from them carrying with it all the waste. (Note the odor in the morning.) The waste lingers on the skin's surface and on the clothes which we wear at night. The waste flow goes on for hours. Like the tide of the sea which rises to deposit its waste on the seashore and retreats again, so the blood is racing to the surface until the skin is free from yesterday's waste deposits.

At last high tide is reached. The function is completed. The blood retreats automatically to its inner stations to be ready for the machinery which is to move shortly. This chills the outer layers of the body a little and starts the engine. At this moment child or adult awakes. The child cries or shouts. It has had enough of bed. It knows as yet nothing about discipline. Nature itself is lifting its voice in protest—not the conscious will of the infant which expresses the desire but the law of its physique.

The adult, however, blinks at the clock, draws the bed-clothes a little tighter over the cooling body, wishes the brat in heaven and snores on

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again. The matter forced out of the body pores over night lingers in the openings and is partly drawn back again into the pores. On getting up finally the body lacks the freshness it had at an earlier hour. This process of elimination has no definite time for any person.

It is altogether incorrect to say that so and so many hours of sleep are necessary for a child or adult. Why look for rules? Human indicators are as evident as those in a mechanical machine. Remember that the child who produces one ounce of hair per year more than another is perhaps ten thousand years younger. Its inner activity is of a vastly different nature. It must move twice as fast as its sister or brother to produce its increased quantity of hair. And the faster it moves the faster one should encourage it to move. It is not going to hurt itself. Don't insist on making it lazy. It is a fast growing plant and each period of exhaustion should be complete exhaustion, each period of hunger complete, ravenous hunger. Just watch the indicators of its fat and its hair.

Have you a curly-haired child at your table at breakfast? If so note its curls after it has lolled

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in bed past its waking time and compare them with the vitality of the curls after an early rising. Natural curls are (as more fully explained in another chapter) the result of humidity entering the hair shafts, of which humidity the vapors of the body are the most effective. The child's curls are weakest when the child falls out of normal condition, which may often be in the early morning, when the little one was in bed too long with its skin and scalp outlets stopped up. Only hours of activity will again restore these outlets to regular activity. Other experiments and observations made by the author have shown children to require physics rarely if they are allowed to rise and go to bed as their real nature requires and are given food that requires hard and long mastication.

The contingencies of family management seem to be conducive to mismanagement of children. It is indeed hard even for the adult to look after his welfare, independent as he seems to be in comparison with an infant. Our economic and social structure represents a situation wholly unworthy of supposedly progressive modern times. However, those with honest

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intentions will try to learn and profit by the reactions that take place during an early morning awakening. This will not be easy. It will mean unearthly hours. The wife will complain; the nurse will leave; you, yourself, will become irritable, for you are not used to it, but there will at least be one person to benefit and who will be very joyous over the new régime. This is, of course, the baby. It can be done, however, and if the morning hours are too long, get up anyhow. Give yourself a good five minute rub-down to clean your skin and bring your blood again to the surface. Put on fresh clothes and lie in a fresh or well-aired bed until the time for normal getting up. The usual sluggish early morning feeling which is so common to us will then give place to one of real freshness. Life will look different and the burden ahead will be strangely lightened.