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COMPOSITIONS FROM A BERLIN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

It is sometimes asserted that in The Montessori System there is no room for the child's spontaneous creative activity . The following are a few specimens of original work copied - at random - from the ~~best~~ exercise books of the children in one class of a Montessori School in Berlin. Many of the stories went on continuously into "Vol. I." ; "Vol II" etc ; and all of them were illustrated by free drawings.

The average age of the children was about 6-7 yrs.

THE TIME - TABLE

Once there was a time-table . It was printed all wrong .
One day a man did not know the way , so he looked it up in
the time-table . But another man , who knew the right route,
said , "That time-table is all wrong "

So they said to the dog , "Tear up that time-table!"

"I don't want to," said the dog .

So they called in some ^Cats ; and the cats and the dog
together tore up the time-table .

After that they bought a new time table .

.....

THE DAFFODILS

As Susie was playing in the garden she saw a daffodil ~~手~~
and cried out , "Mummy! Mummy ! Hurrah ! the first daffodil !"

The Mother came quickly down the path and said ,
"How wonderful!" : and the child kept on crying "Hurrah !
Hurrah! - the first daffodil is here!"

(Underneath, the ^{author h} ~~child~~ had drawn, and coloured, a picture
showing , house , garden , mother , child and the daffodil)

HANSCHEN'S EXPERIENCE

One day I was going along the shore when I saw a little
boat in which was a beautiful lady . When I asked if I could

come ~~into~~ ^{the} boat with her she replied , "Yes , but you must do what you are told ."

(At this point came the first illustration)
significant
But (note the ~~change~~ to the third person !) Hanschen~~y~~ stood up in the boat , though she told him not to . But he wouldn't listen .

So she said again , "You will fall into the water ".
But again he took no notice whatever ; and she said , "But you promised to obey me and do what I told you ."

(Second illustration - Hanschen^{by} standing in the boat with lady remonstrating)

Suddenly - splash ! - he fell into the water . She tried to hold him , and he shrieked terribly , but it was too late . There he was in the water .

That comes of doing silly things .

:::::::::::::::::::::::::::::

THE DROP OF WATER

There was once a drop of water . It lay along with many others in a large dark cloud . The suddenly a ~~door~~ ^e was ~~opened~~ ^x and all these thousands of drops of water fell down on to the earth . So there were many puddles , and in one of them was our drop of water .

He soon grew bored of being in the puddle and crept into the earth by the ~~root~~ of a flower . It was a red ~~tulip~~ tulip , and he was quite contented there .

He entertained himself by chatting to the Tulip and

to Madame Rose . After this manner :-

" Where did you come from[?] and how did you grow ?
You couldn't have come here by yourself !"

"Quite true," replied Madame Tulip , " I was once a very little seed , and I was put in the ground by the gardener , with food to eat , so that I should not be hungry . After a while I got tired of being inside the ^{av} dark seed , so I burst the case and crept up through the soil "

" After a few days I grew a small bud^d , which in time ^{opened} ~~opened~~ out and became a flower . Then I was sold and replanted here . "

When the tulip had finished her speech, Madame Rose said :-
"It was just the same with me as it was with Frau Tulip," Then Madame Rose added, "I ^{should} ~~should~~ be awfully bored shut up in a dark cloud chamber "

Upon which the Water-drop remarked , " I can't stand being ~~shut up~~ here with you people any longer ; I am too shut in here ; and suddenly - wupps![!]! - and he was outside . "

::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::

MOHRER'S EXPERIENCE

Mother My child , I must go out and do some shopping .

Child Very good, Mother ,

Mother Very well , then , I'm going now .

Child Good . "Auf Wiedersehen" . -er- what are you going to buy ?

Mother Half a pound of butter , and a chep .

Child Very good . "Auf Wiedersehen, Mutti ".

And so the mother went awgy
Over there is the shopkeeper in his shop.
When the Mother came home again the child was de-
lighted .

Mother Come now , let's have supper .

Child Yes, rather .

And so they sat down to supper .

Child Yum , yum , it tastes good .

Mother It ought to .

Child Really , I don't know what it is .

Mother (laughing) Ha, ha, ha!

Child It's nothing to laugh at because I don't know
what it is .

Mother I 'm laughing my dear because you are so slow in
finding out what is is .

(It was Wurst) (sausage)

.....

THE SURPRISE

It was getting near Christmas , and Hilda was full of curiosity.

The front door bell rang, "ting-a -ling-a- ling ." .
 Hilda ^{and} opened it ; in stepped her father . Her father said to Hilda, "Come, now, let's go upstairs ; and when they got there Erna , the maid , came in and said that lunch was ready. "Go and tell Mummy that lunch is ready," said the Father . "All right " , said Hilda, and went out of the room . "Mummy", she called out , "lunch is ready." . "Just coming" , replied the Mother ; and, putting her ~~her~~ sewing things away , she came down .

"Wash your hands , my dear , " , said the Mother to Hilda ; and Hilda went into the kitchen and washed her hands - but without ~~soap~~ soap . At which Erna said , "But you must wash your hands with soap "

"Oh, all right , then , " said Hilda ; and washed her hands again .

And now everyone went in to lunch and sat down at his place ; and lunch began .

" I have a wonderful surprise for you " said the Father to Hilda .

"Oh do tell me Daddy ~~dearest~~ dearest " , replied Hilda.

"Oh, but then it would not be a surprise any more "

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Child Very good. "Auf Wiederschen, Mutti."

And so the mother went away.

Over there is the shopkeeper in his shop.

When the Mother came home again the child was delighted.

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Child Yes, rather.

And so they sat down to supper.

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(It was Murst - sausage.)

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"Oh, tell me, Daddy, dearest," replied Hilda.

"Oh, but then it would not be a surprise any more."

"Go and put on your brown coat," said the Father after lunch, "and come along with me in the car."

The father went down and got out of the car. "Jump in," said the father, and Hilda got in. She called out through the window to her Mummy, "Good-bye." And the Mother replied "Good-bye!" and I hope you have a nice time."

"Thank you, Mummy, but I've no idea what we are going to do."

So then they drove off.

At last they came to a large building. The Father got out and said, "Come along, Hilda" and Hilda ~~got~~ got out too. They then passed into the large building; and entered through a little door, which the Father pushed open. They came to a large hall with many seats.....

(And here, unfortunately, my notes break off. Either I hadn't time to copy any more down, or I have mislaid the rest. But the reader cannot fail to notice the artistic way in which the author keeps him in suspense, so that he too, may share the surprise. For those that like to hear the end of a story I can inform them that the "large hall with many seats" turns out in the end to be a theatre, and the performance "Children's Pantomime.")

THE LITTLE BIRD

"What do you do , little bird , in the mronings ? asked the little child .

The little bird replied : "first I clean my feathers and then I go off to get something for my little ones to eat "

Maria Pia Consoli 6½)

The Parrot THE PARROT (A TRIO)

Once there was a parrot who had many beautiful feathethers .
One day a little boy came and pulledout just the very most
beautiful feathers . Poor parrot . (Pover pappage;;o)

.....

THE CICADA

IN the Summer the Cicada sings a great deal . Then comes the
winter , and it dies of hunger . Poor Cicada

THE SNAIL

There was once a snail who was walking in a meadow , and inthe
meadow was also a little child .The child said to the snail "Why do
you walk so slowly ? " The snail answered "Because I carry my
house on my back . Poor snail ! How he perspired !

(These three compositions done by the same little
girl - Fausta Romano- aged 6½ years - and are like variations on
a single theme "Poor creature !)

THE POLE STAR

On the night of the birth of the Saviours the Pole Star went
and called the shepherfs and lefd them in front of the stable where
the bambino Jesu was . The shepherds thanked the star because it
had led them to adore the Saviours

(More pios than scientific !)

H HOME MADE PROBLEMS

Dr Montessori was born in the year 1870 . Now we are in the year 1941. How old is the Dottoressa ? The first Montessoris schools were opened in the year 1906. How many years ago was it ?

(The follows the working)

Orestes Buona Aged 8

PROBLEM

—76

A cow-boy had 724 cartridges in his belt . He fired off 521. How many has he left ? If he spent 203 lire how much did each cartridge cost ?

(2)

(1st) See first School

(2nd) To take classes

(3rd) ~~one~~ Child chooses work
 free to stop
 what he is.

(4th) Primary Consent of Child
 at High Conclusion

Same more that what

1) Consent of Child
free to stop

2) Child choose work.
(must know how)

(3) Free to stop

~~(4) Not true reference~~

(5) Intention has to justify
Shakespeare

(6) There is no profit when no pleasure
in brief Sa -