Pestalozzi International

To nurture and develop

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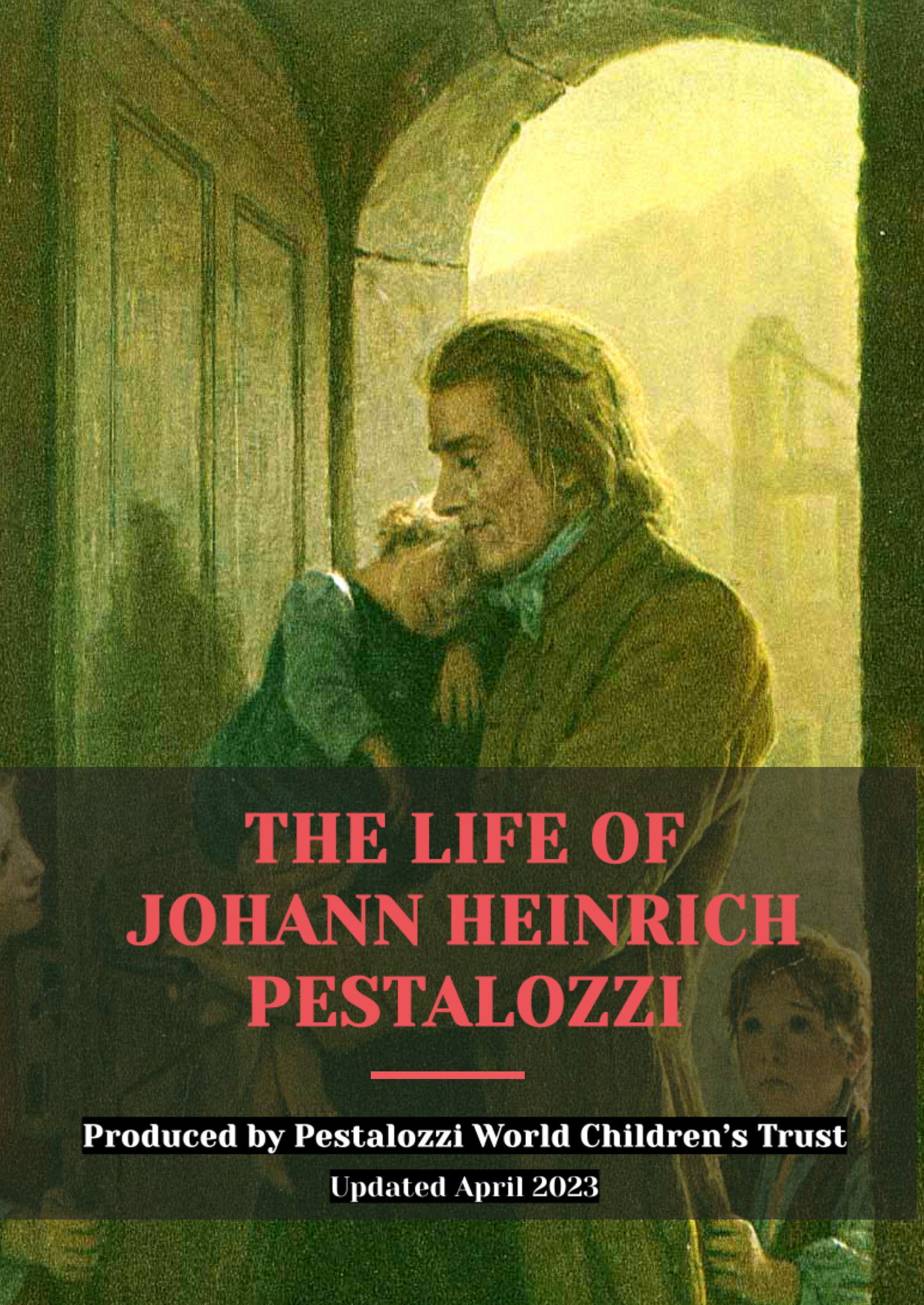

THE LIFE OF JOHANN HEINRICH PESTALOZZI

Produced by Pestalozzi World Children's Trust

Updated April 2023

THE LIFE OF JOHANN HEINRICH PESTALOZZI

Produced by Pestalozzi Overseas Children's Trust.

Based on documents by Adolf Haller and Arthur Brühlmeier, rewritten in German by Heinrich Rubi and translated into English by Anne-Marie Widmer. Designed and edited by Joanna Nair with examples of Pestalozzi's 'Fables' from 'Pestalozzi, His Life and Work' by Roger de Guimps.

Photographs In This Book

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Front Cover: Pestalozzi with children at Stans and Portrait of Pestalozzi on a 1927 Postage Stamp

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Back Cover: Epitaph on the monument for Pestalozzi in Birr

All photographs mentioned have been provided by **Arthur Brühlmeier**, and their details are available from his web site at http://www.bruehlmeier.info

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1980: A young couple is strolling along the streets of a Swiss town. Now and then they stop in front of a shop window. The jewellery shops particularly fascinate them.

"Do you like that ring over there, darling?"

"The one with the diamonds?"

"Yes, that one."

"It's a beautiful ring, but isn't it too expensive?"

"No, it's not too expensive for our wedding."

Next to them is a young beggar, almost a child, unkempt, in torn jeans. Her cheeks are hollow and her eyes are vacant.

"A junkie!" they think and step back a bit.

"Can you spare me a franc?" the young beggar asks.

The young man places himself protectively in front of his girlfriend and, losing his temper, snaps at the beggar, "Get lost! I'm not Mr. Pestalozzi."

1780: A man is on his way to Basel, on foot, wearing a worn-out coat. The man has money problems. He is carrying the manuscript of a book that he has written in the pocket of his coat. He wants to show it to a friend in Basel. In front of the city gate there sits a crippled beggar, stretching out his hand.

"Sir, some coins, please!"

The man rummages through the pockets of his coat, searching for coins. He does not find any. Embarrassed, he looks down at the ground. He then sees the silver buckles on his shoes. He bends down, takes the buckles off and places them in the beggar's hand. Then he looks for a few strong blades of grass in the field nearby and, as well as he can, ties his shoes with them.

The man's name is Heinrich Pestalozzi.

Pestalozzi's Childhood and Early Years in Zurich

Heinrich Pestalozzi was born in Zurich on the 12th of January 1746. His father made his living as a medical practitioner; when someone got hurt, he was called to clean the wounds and to bandage them. He also helped the local government, as a secretary, when the town clerk had too much to do. Heinrich's mother was a fine, delicate lady. Heinrich had two siblings: Baptiste, who was one year older, and Barbara, who was four years younger. The family also had a maid, Barbara Schmid. Everybody called her Babeli.

When Heinrich was only five years old, his father died. On his deathbed, he said to Babeli, "Please, don't desert my wife!" She promised not to and kept her promise until her death. She worked for the Pestalozzi family for forty-one years without pay. This loyalty impressed Heinrich deeply.

The family now had no income and only very limited financial assets. Soon they moved into a cheaper flat. The two women had to economise wherever they could. Babeli often ran to the market three or four times a day; when the stallholders packed up the unsold vegetables, she could buy cabbage and carrots more cheaply. Heinrich was only allowed to wear his good clothes to school and he was not permitted to play with other children in the street. Babeli would say, "You'll only ruin your shoes."

Heinrich felt his mother's love and Babeli's tender care deeply. Nevertheless, he was missing something. He was a delicate but very lively boy. He could not sit still for a minute. He wanted to pick up everything and play with it. He was so over-enthusiastic that often he broke whatever he grabbed.

Mother scolded him, "Can't you sit still and keep your hands still?" Babeli did not even allow him to dry the dishes or light a fire in the oven. She was afraid he would break something. He did not have any toys. When he could no longer find anything to do, he would take a string and twist it until it completely fell apart, or he would tear apart a leaf or a flower. At home he was always being told, "Stop that!" Little Heinrich got very little physical exercise. He did not know any boys his age nor did he know any of their games.

He was like a sheep that was never allowed to leave its pen. That is how he became a dreamer. In his imagination he pictured all the things he would have liked to play with and wanted to experience.

Heinrich was relieved when he started school. At last he could do something. Of course, at school he also had to sit still for hours. But at least he could use books and writing materials. During breaks and on the way to and from school he could play with his schoolmates. Like a river bursting the dam, he broke loose and went wild.

No other child brought home so many bruises and scratches. Heinrich did not care. His playmates liked him because he was good-natured and always ready to help others. However, they often made fun of him because he was so clumsy. One of them nicknamed him 'Heiri Wunderli of Torliken' (roughly translatable as 'Harry Oddity of Foolstown'); this nickname stayed with Pestalozzi for the rest of his life.

To begin with, Heinrich's performance at school was not very good. He often daydreamed and did not pay attention to what was going on. Sometimes he gave such inappropriate answers

that the whole class burst out laughing. But when something touched his heart, he became enthusiastic and then even his teachers would be amazed by his achievements.

This clumsy, delicate boy was braver than all the others; he was not even ten when an earthquake, which destroyed the city of Lisbon in distant Portugal, made the whole of Switzerland shake. The large church's two towers swayed and a lot of chimneys fell off the roofs. Teachers and pupils fled helter-skelter from the school. Only one dared to get the books and schoolbags from the classrooms: Harry Oddity of Foolstown.

Once he hopped along the town wall where it dropped vertically to the town's moat. Another time he galloped dangerously on a horse over a narrow footbridge.

At the age of nine Heinrich moved to a secondary school where he could also learn Latin. At that time this language of the ancient Romans had to be learnt by all the students who later wanted to go into an academic career. He took great pains over his studies. At the age of fifteen he was the best in his class. He wanted to become a clergyman like his grandfather.

Heinrich had a strong sense of justice. Once a teacher did not mark as wrong two mistakes on a classmate's paper. Heinrich knew that this student's parents had sent a present to the teacher. He thought the teacher's conduct unfair and was very indignant. Another time the music teacher was drunk and tried to force Heinrich to learn the musical notes by using a cane on him. Heinrich pushed the teacher away and also pushed the boy who shared his desk out of the way and ran to the headmaster to complain. From then on he did not have to attend the singing lessons.

At school Heinrich did not learn to work with his hands. At that time there were no subjects such as handicraft and there was no physical education. The children learnt to read, to write, to do arithmetic and to study old languages and religion. They only learnt from books, training their minds, so their hands remained unskilled.

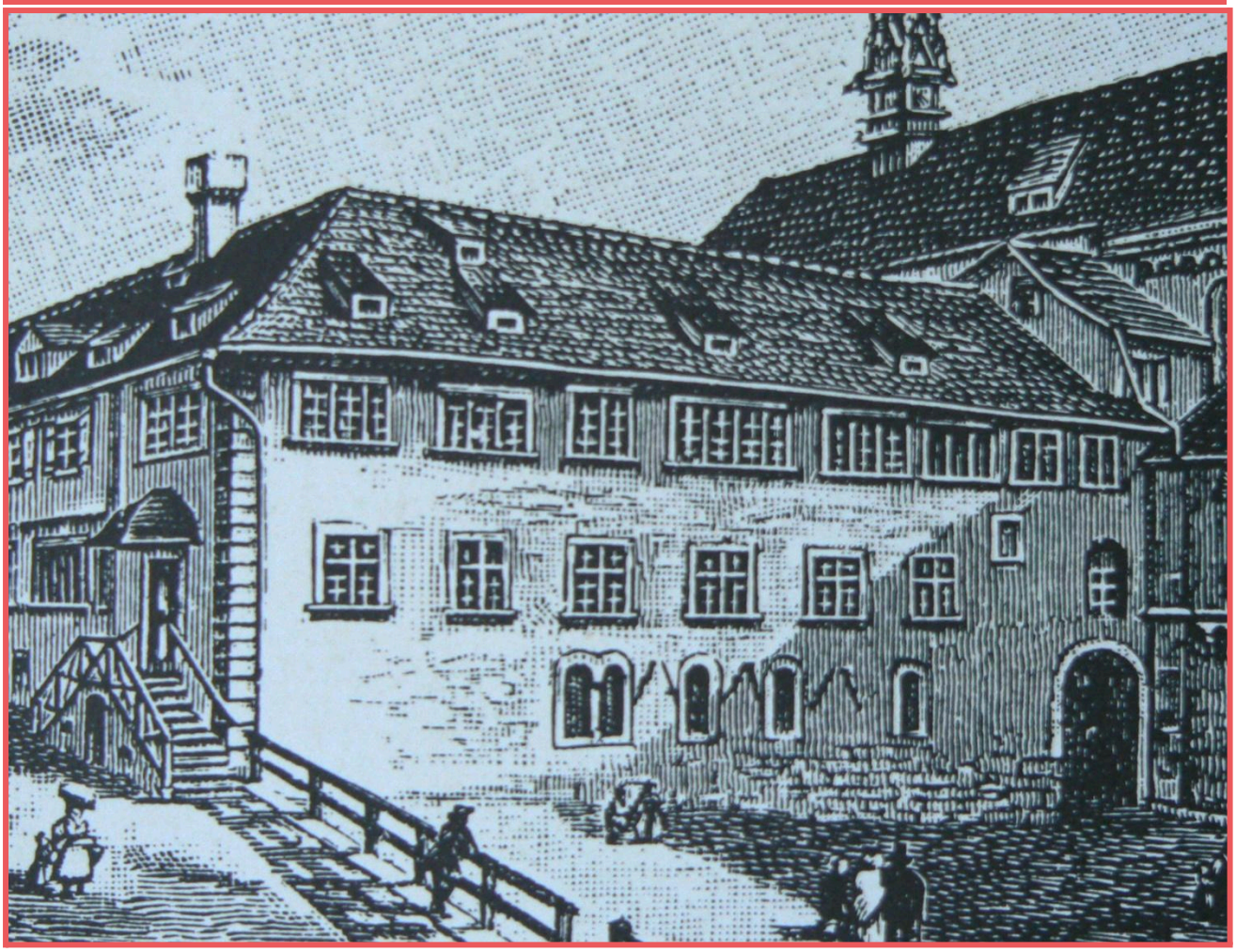
During his holidays and days off Heinrich mostly went to stay with his grandfather in Höngg. In those days Höngg was a small village near the city of Zurich. Today it has become part of the

city. Heinrich's grandfather was the pastor there. He often took Heinrich along when visiting people in their homes. What Heinrich saw there went to his heart. People in the country were extremely poor. They had to obey the masters from the City and had no say in anything. Jobs in which one might make good money were only open to the Citizens of the City. Heinrich saw a lot of children searching hungrily for something to eat.

Many of them were sold to merciless peasants and died as a result of working too hard. Others had to spin cotton and weave on the loom in humid cellars, so that their families would not starve. Or, they had to work all day long in a factory, becoming pale and thin. Most could not learn anything. The few who learnt anything at all did so in an inadequate village school, and then only for a short time. Heinrich saw bands of beggars. At the beginning of every month the police drove them across the border like cattle. He saw how petty thieves were kept prisoner in foxholes, exposed to the rain, the cold and the mockery of the public.

The misery that Heinrich met all over the rural countryside upset him profoundly. He could not bear it. "Something has to be done. I must somehow help these people," he thought. This desire stayed with him throughout his life.

Education, Apprenticeship and Marriage



At the age of seventeen, Pestalozzi entered the Collegium Carolinum, which in those days was the University of Zurich. He no longer wanted to become a clergyman. He no longer took pleasure in formal ceremonies and pious talk. He wanted to be able to say openly what was on his mind. And since there was so much misery and injustice, he wanted to become a lawyer. "In such a position I can best help my country," he thought.

At that time there were already many students who refused to put up with any injustice and who therefore protested against the government. They demanded more justice for the rural population:

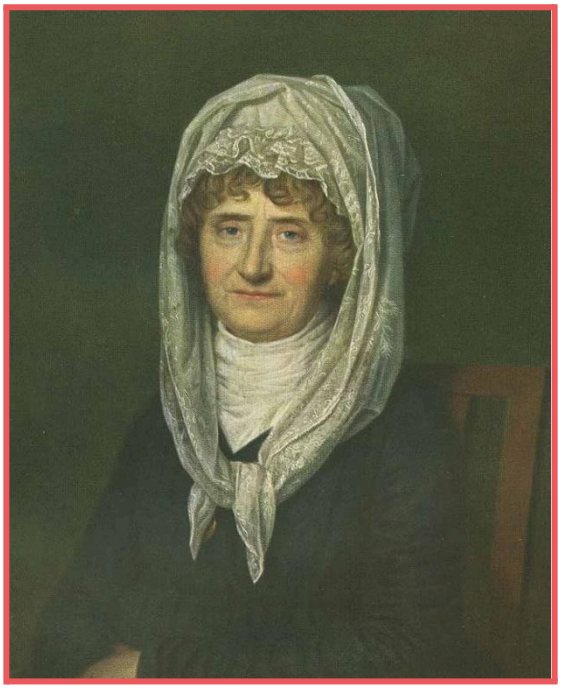
"Here only the citizens of the town are allowed to rule the country. Only citizens of the town can become clergymen and judges and do business. That's not fair. The farmers are to have the same rights as the citizens of the town!"

Whoever expressed such ideas was sure to be arrested and imprisoned. The government also controlled every printing press, so that nothing could be published that might harm its reputation. But the students would not be intimidated. They wrote their ideas down by hand and distributed the copies secretly. At one time Pestalozzi was under suspicion for editing an insurgent pamphlet. He was arrested and put in prison. However, the real writer of the

pamphlet fled abroad and in doing so betrayed himself. Pestalozzi was released after three days. Nevertheless, he had to pay for the wood needed to burn the pamphlet in public. This did not bother him; while the stack of firewood was smoking heavily, he and a few friends watched from a nearby roof. He walked up and down, his hands behind his back, smoking a pipe as if all of this was of no concern to him.

At this time, Pestalozzi was twenty-one. He had not finished his education and he had no profession. Then he fell head over heels in love. This is how it came about. One of Pestalozzi's schoolfriends was called Johann Kaspar Bluntschli.

Everybody called him Menalk. Kaspar Schulthess, the son of a rich confectioner, also belonged to their circle of friends. Now and then the students met in the house of the Schulthess family. On these occasions, Anna, Kaspar's elder sister, enjoyed listening to their conversation. Anna and Menalk were friends. Menalk was a quiet man and had an exemplary character. Then this young man fell ill with a serious pulmonary disease and died at the age of twenty-four. This deeply grieved Anna as well as Pestalozzi.



Pestalozzi wrote Anna a letter in memory of their common friend. Anna answered and before long, and without realizing what was happening, Pestalozzi fell deeply in love with Anna and started to write her passionate love letters.

Anna Schulthess was eight years older than Pestalozzi. She was a very beautiful woman, one of the most beautiful in Zurich. Her parents were very rich and distinguished. Accordingly, Anna was very popular. There was no lack of suitors who would have loved to marry her. She was, however, cautious by nature and reserved. Therefore she was still single.

Heinrich Pestalozzi was the opposite of Anna; he was ugly because an illness had disfigured his face; he had no money and no profession and his family had no prominence in town. His head was full of ideas about how to better the world, but with his hands he could hardly drive a nail in straight.

In addition there was another problem. Anna's parents were very proud of their wealth and their position in town. They looked down on the simple people. The mother in particular was a hard and cold woman. Her sons, and her daughter Anna, got severely punished if they did not obey her. Even at the age of thirty, Anna still got beaten by her parents! She would never have revolted against her parents. She considered it her duty to obey them. There was no way that she would get married without her parents' approval."How can this work?" we ask ourselves. Poor Pestalozzi! Was an unhappy love not inevitable?

At first Anna, as was her nature, reacted only in a brief and reserved fashion to Pestalozzi's passionate letters. In her heart though, a tender affection for this young man started to stir. Of course, she was clever enough to know that he was poor, that he had exaggerated, impracticable ideas in his head, and that he was very clumsy with his hands. But these things

were unimportant to her. She looked deeper into Heinrich's heart, and there she saw what a good, honest and admirable man he was. After careful consideration, she decided to give her consent. Later her friends asked her, "For heaven's sake, why did you choose Pestalozzi of all men?" She answered, "He just has such a fine soul!"

How were Anna's parents to be won over to such a son-in-law? Anna could imagine how shocked they would be. At first, she concealed her love affair from them. Heinrich also was not to tell anybody – not even his own mother. But in the long run they would not and could not keep their marriage plans secret. When the Schulthess parents learnt about them, they turned Pestalozzi out of the house, and he was told not to come back, ever.

From then on the two lovers could only exchange letters secretly. Anna's brothers were their allies and acted as go-betweens. Occasionally, they even helped them to meet in secret. In the two years leading up to their wedding almost five hundred letters went back and forth between Anna and Heinrich. Pestalozzi never tried to fool Anna. He wrote to her, "Above all, I have to live for my country. I pledge that I will always give my best for the good of my country, even if I have to leave my wife and children alone and even if I have to sacrifice my life to do so." He suspected that great tasks lay ahead of him.

A big stumbling block in the way of the marriage was the fact that Pestalozzi had no profession. He thought, "I should like to help people in rural areas to overcome their misery. Urban life is rotten anyway and makes people conceited and dishonest. I want to become a farmer. Then I can also feed my family." In the autumn of 1767, Pestalozzi began his training as a farmer. His master was a well-known farmer called Tschiffeli. This man was familiar with the new methods of cultivation and grew new plants successfully. He shared his knowledge with Pestalozzi. The training lasted only nine months. By then Pestalozzi believed that he was sufficiently prepared to be able to work his own farm.

Pestalozzi wanted to buy land in Birr, a small village about twenty-five kilometres from Zurich, but from where could he get the necessary money to do so? He managed to persuade a rich banker from Zurich to back his farming project. The banker, whose surname was Schulthess, the same as Pestalozzi's wife's, lent him five thousand guilders. His mother was able to give him a further one thousand guilders, which she had secured from his father's inheritance. With that he was able to buy twenty hectares of land and build a farmhouse. He gave it the name 'Neuhof'. Now he was ready to get married.

Little by little, Anna's father yielded and finally agreed to them getting married. He, no doubt, persuaded her mother, and eventually she also gave her consent, although reluctantly. Anna was only allowed to take her clothes and her piano with her. Pestalozzi was forbidden to go and meet his bride at her parents' house, as was the custom. Instead, Anna had to walk alone to her bridegroom's house. The wedding took place on the 30th of September, 1769, in an old, small church. Only Pestalozzi's family and one of Anna's brothers were present. Anna's parents did not come.

At the wedding Heinrich Pestalozzi was twenty-three and Anna was thirty-one years old. The Neuhof was not completed, so they had to move into an old, small farmhouse in the neighbouring village. Only one and a half years later were they able to begin their life together on the Neuhof.

Farm and Industrial School in the Canton of Aargau

Heinrich Pestalozzi dreamed of how, together with Anna and living at the Neuhof, he would achieve the goals he had set for his life. With his wife he enthused, "How happy we will be, dear Anna! On our walks we'll meet our neighbours. They will all be friendly towards us; women whom you have visited when they were ill; men who know that we will help them when in need; children whom we make happy with lots of small presents; labourers who are grateful that they can make a little money working on our farm." Visualising this, Pestalozzi's eyes gleamed with joy, "How wonderful our life will be, dear!"

However, things turned out quite differently. Pestalozzi wanted to run the farm in the way that he had learnt from his master Tschiffeli. He cultivated sainfoin, a new green fodder plant, and he started the cultivation of madder. It is possible to make a red dye used to colour clothes from the roots of the madder plant. Pestalozzi was confident that he would be able to make a good profit out of these things, with which he wanted to help the poor. But to the other farmers in the area, his methods looked unusual and funny. They did not trust this 'city farmer'. They did not understand his new ideas. They trampled through his delicate cultivation as they were used to doing on their own meagre fields. They let their goats and sheep graze on his pastures. They said, "That's what we have always done here. Every three years a field has to lie fallow." If a field lies fallow, it means that, in order to allow the soil to recover, nothing can be grown in the field that year.

"In this year of fallow, all the farmers may allow their animals to graze anywhere. That's the way it has always been." But Tschiffeli had taught Pestalozzi otherwise. He wanted to work the land every year. However the farmers felt that they were in the right. They did not care that the roots of the madder plant required four years to ripen. Pestalozzi wanted to explain it to them; this did not help. He put up fences; they were pulled down. In the end the matter went to court. The court ruled that the farmers had to stay away from Pestalozzi's fields. Now they liked him even less.

It was especially hard for Pestalozzi that the farmers falsely denounced him to his Zurich banker. This was why the banker wanted his loan repaid sooner than originally planned. It was the early summer of 1770. How could Pestalozzi pay back five thousand guilders? He had not even once harvested his crops. The carpenter had not even put up the roof of the new house. Pestalozzi's mother helped out with what was left of her small savings.

For the following two years the crops were poor throughout Europe. Pestalozzi's plants did not do well either. He ran increasingly into debt. In 1774 he had to sell his cattle and lease a major part of the land. In spite of that, there were still heavy debts. Luckily, Anna's parents had become reconciled with their daughter. They paid the remainder of the debts. Then Pestalozzi tried the cotton trade for some time, which, as a citizen of the City of Zurich, he was entitled to do. He bought cotton in Zurich and had it spun and woven by the families of farmers. However, he was not a good businessman. Having people work for his own profit gave him a bad conscience. So once again, he operated at a loss. Pestalozzi himself was now as poor as the country people.

Moreover, there was something else bothering the couple. Three months after their bank credit was cancelled, Anna gave birth to their only child. It was a boy. The parents christened him Jean-Jacques and tenderly called him Schaggeli. Schaggeli was a sickly child. He had epileptic fits. Anna and Heinrich were constantly worried about his health.

All the same, Pestalozzi did not become discouraged by their misfortunes. He was already making new plans as to how he could help the poor. "Thousands of children have to go begging in the streets," he said. "Nobody takes care of them. What they need is a decent job. They should learn to read, to write and to do arithmetic. They need a home." Pestalozzi's relatives did not want to hear of any such plans. Pestalozzi, however, would not change his mind, "I want to take on as many neglected children as I can. They will help us in the house and garden. We will feed and clothe them.

We'll teach them to spin and to weave. Once they have mastered that, we will make enough money from their work to pay for our living expenses. Moreover, I can teach them to read, to write and to do arithmetic while they are working. Above all, they should feel comfortable and at home. In this way they'll stay on the right path and become good people."

Pestalozzi took the risk. Just at the point when he himself had nothing left, he welcomed neglected children into his home. He borrowed money from friends and acquaintances. When that was not enough, he called upon the public to support his industrial school with a loan. He

promised the moneylenders to pay the money back. He was absolutely convinced that he would earn enough money from the work of the children. In 1774, the Neuhof gradually changed into a home and school for poor children. In 1776, there were twenty-two children living in Pestalozzi's house and in 1778 there were thirty-seven. Pestalozzi and his wife fed and clothed them. They built a small factory and a children's home. They hired skilled weavers and spinners, as well as people to work in the fields. These workers instructed the children. While the children were working at the spinning wheel or loom, Pestalozzi taught them to read and to do arithmetic. He wanted to be a loving father to them.

Then Pestalozzi experienced another disappointment. Of course, many children came. They were pleased to be fed and freshly clothed. But rather than work regularly, they soon preferred to go begging again. Certainly, most of them learnt to spin and weave but as soon as they mastered these skills, their parents came to the workhouse and fetched them home, so that they could earn money for the family.

As a result, Pestalozzi was the one who got cheated. He always employed a lot of beginners, but had few experienced workers. Of course, this was not profitable. Nevertheless, this did not curb his enthusiasm. He wrote detailed reports on every child. He also took on disabled children. He allowed a mentally disabled child, called Fridolin Mind, to draw to his heart's content. Friedli, as they called him, always wanted to draw cats, always cats and nothing but cats. People later called him "Cat-Raphael" (after Raphael who was one of the most famous painters and lived five hundred years ago). Later on Fridolin Mind was at times even better known than his foster-father Pestalozzi! Pestalozzi saw a brother or sister in every human being. For him, man was the image of God.

With the Neuhof, however, things went from bad to worse. Already, two years later, it was again heavily in debt. The fabrics from the children's workshop were, more often than not, badly woven. The buyers at the market laughed at Pestalozzi when he offered them his goods. He had to sell them at ridiculously low prices.

Unfortunately, in 1776 and 1777, there were again crop failures, owing to bad weather. To pay the debts, Anna had to use up her inheritance. Two years later Pestalozzi had to sell a third of his land. He entrusted his brother, Baptiste, with the sale of the land. However, when Baptiste had the money in his hands, he could not resist the temptation; he made off with the money and many months later wrote a letter to a friend in Amsterdam informing him of his whereabouts! He then joined a foreign war service and was killed. So Pestalozzi had to sell a lot more of his land and lease out the remainder. After that he had one of his worst experiences – maybe the worst of his life; he had to liquidate his industrial school. He had to send his beloved children back onto the streets. We can hardly imagine how this man felt at this moment. It broke his heart. The dream of his life was destroyed. He was close to losing his mind and could have ended up in a mental asylum; practically everybody deserted him. His neighbours made fun of him. His relatives did not want to see him any more; they did not want to be reminded of the money they had lost. His wife Anna was in poor health, due to the hard work she was required to do. She recuperated with a friend of hers, the young Countess Franziska in the Castle of Hallwil and was away for many months.

Heinrich Pestalozzi was now alone. He could hardly afford food and firewood. All the same, his optimism did not altogether die. Not quite everyone deserted him.

Publishing and Life Crisis

There were two people who supported Pestalozzi in his time of greatest need. One day a young woman knocked at his door. Her name was Elisabeth Naef. She said, "I've heard that you need help. I'd like to help you in the house and garden." Elisabeth was a simple servant with a good heart. For Pestalozzi, she was heaven-sent. From then on she did all the housekeeping and tended the gardens. "There are still people who also think of others, not only of themselves. So, I'm not that abnormal" Pestalozzi thought. Thanks to Elisabeth, he was able to regain his optimism. He pulled himself together and hoped to start anew.

The second person faithful to Pestalozzi was the council secretary of the City of Basel. His name was Isaak Iselin. He asked Pestalolzzi, "Why don't you try to write? You have good ideas. You have something to tell the people. You have had valuable experiences and you have learnt a lot in these times of distress; you just had bad luck. Why don't you enter a literary competition? Your chances are good. You could win a prize and make a little money in addition."

Pestalozzi followed Iselin's advice and started to write. He wrote as if in a dream of all the good and bitter things he had experienced. He filled the empty pages of old account books because he had no money to buy paper. It was in the year 1780 that he walked to Basel with a pile of papers filled with his writing. There he met the beggar to whom he gave the silver buckles from his shoes as a present. Do you remember?

Pestalozzi wanted to show the papers to Iselin. They contained the beginning of a long novel. It was called 'Leonard and Gertrude'. In it, Pestalozzi wrote about life in the farming village of Bonnal; of corrupt people who cheated others, causing a lot of misery and injustice – just as Pestalozzi himself had bitterly experienced. He also wrote about Gertrude, a mother of seven children, a brave woman who, setting her children a good example, courageously stood up for justice.

Pestalozzi read to Iselin and his wife from the pages he had written. Both of them were impressed. Pestalozzi described life in the village in a very lively and exciting way. Iselin then devoted many Sundays to correcting Pestalozzi's manuscript. Pestalozzi's handwriting was rather hard to read and he made many spelling mistakes. With Pestalozzi, matters of the heart always came first. Head and hands were also important to him, but he often neglected them a bit. Above all else, he was a man with a good heart.

In 1781, the first volume of 'Leonard and Gertrude' was printed and published. And lo and behold, the book became a 'bestseller', as we would say nowadays. Suddenly Pestalozzi was famous. All over Europe people wanted to read his book. Within a short time it was translated into other languages. "At long last this useless Pestalozzi has found a way to make himself useful", his relatives and acquaintances thought.

They were relieved. Pestalozzi also began to believe in himself again, "I want to continue 'Leonard and Gertrude'. It is obvious that this is the way in which I can make people understand my ideas." So he then wrote three more volumes. Every two years another volume was published.

However, Pestalozzi's happiness did not last for long. He soon became aware that the people liked to read his fascinating story, but that they did not take to heart the good that he wanted to achieve; they went on living as they were used to. It made him feel very sad, so he sat down at his desk to write another book. The new book, 'Christopher and Elizabeth' (1782) explained the meaning behind 'Leonard and Gertrude' to the reader. However this book was too dull for most people. Only a few read it.

For one year, Pestalozzi published a weekly magazine, the 'Schweizerblatt'. Only a few people bought it. His ideas were challenging and asked too much of people! Most of them did not want to change their comfortable lives.

Among the pamphlets that Pestalozzi wrote on political issues, one was 'On Legislation and Infanticide' (1783). Pestalozzi blamed society and the economic problems of unmarried mothers for the frequency of infanticide. He demanded better, fairer legislation to solve the problem. He argued that laws should be introduced which support the mother rather than disgrace her. Otherwise, a woman may kill her child for fear of punishment and out of feelings of shame.

Pestalozzi also wrote 239 'Fables', which were published in 1797. Nearly all of these are very short and contain an important or original truth about morality, education, society or politics. Many of them are animal fables.

Here are some examples:

The Grass and the Mushroom

The mushroom said to the grass, "I grow in an instant, but you take a whole year."

"True," replied the Grass, "whilst I am acquiring my value, you, in your uselessness, may come and go a hundred times."

A Fool's Fountain

A poor, vain fool whose fountain was almost dry, told his servant to stop the pipe when there was no one near, but to let it run on the approach of strangers.

"That will only make the fountain worse," answered the servant, "and there will often be no water just when it is most needed."

To which his master replied, "I can bear anything so long as people do not know that my fountain is dry."

The Oak and the Grass

Said the Grass to the Oak, under whose shade it grew, "I should thrive better in the open than under your shelter."

"Ungrateful one!" exclaimed the Oak, "You forget that every winter I cover you with my leaves."

"What!" cried the Grass, "Your proud branches rob me of sun, dew, and rain; your roots of the nourishment of the soil; and yet you would have me grateful for the forced alms of a few withered leaves, which serve rather to foster your own growth than to prevent my decay!"

The Crumbling Rock

A rock, which for centuries had sheltered cattle from sun and rain, was crumbling with age. Day after day pieces broke off, and fell upon the animals, till at last they fled from the place where they had formerly loved to rest. But the old herdsman, half blind and half deaf, could not understand what had happened, and thought they had been bewitched by an enemy.

It is sad to see the old shelters becoming dangerous ruins; sadder still to see the leaders of the people failing to understand the danger.

The Interior of the Hill

A simpleton, seeing a hill covered with beautiful verdure, thought that it must be good earth right through; but a man who knew the place took him to a spot where the interior was exposed, and it was nothing but rock and gravel.

The hills of the earth, however green and fertile they may be, have nearly always a hard, barren subsoil. Similarly, men, however noble in heart and mind, are seldom without strata of rock and gravel in the flesh.

Even when outward appearances are most beautiful, and most rich in power, honour, and dignity, shut in below the surface are the vices of our nature. Hence, however high a man may be placed, he must give ear to the precept: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation; for the spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak."

The Lime-Tree and the King

A King, who was standing alone under a lime-tree, was struck by the beauty of its foliage, and exclaimed: "Would that my subjects held to me as these leaves hold to thy branches!"

The Tree answered him; "I am for ever carrying the sap of my roots to each of my leaves."

A Simpleton's Judgment

Some magnificent poplars and a few scrubby, undersized oaks grew by the side of the same stream. Simple Simon therefore concluded that the poplar makes good wood, and the oak bad.

I know teachers who judge their scholars, pastors who judge their flocks, and rulers who judge those they govern, with no more reason than Simple Simon used to judge the merits of the oak and the poplar-tree.

One of the Bad Effects of Proverbs

"It is sad that, in spite of his feelings, a man so often finds himself obliged to be unkind to his horses!" said a kind-hearted wagoner one day, compelled to hurry his over-burdened beasts. And then he gradually got into the habit of repeating the words with little thought, just as he would say 'Good-morning' or 'Good-night', till at last they became a proverb amongst the wagoners of the country; and now, any wretched fellow who ill-treats his horses or his oxen,

excuses himself with: "It cannot be otherwise; a wagoner must be unkind in spite of his feelings."

The Feeling of Equality

A shepherd, who fed his sheep rather poorly but all alike, found that, as a rule, they were satisfied. But one day he picked out a dozen for better treatment, and from that moment there was discontent in the flock, and many ewes died of vexation.

The Limit of Equality

A Dwarf said to a Giant, "I have the same rights as you."

"True, my friend," replied the Giant "but you could not walk in my shoes."

Why Jupiter made the Lion King

The animals stood before Jupiter's throne awaiting his decree, most of them believing and hoping that the elephant would be appointed. The lion had as domineering an air as though he were king already, but the elephant moved quietly to and fro with the greatest unconcern.

Suddenly the voice of Jupiter, the lord of the thunder, was heard: "The lion is king."

"My choice surprises you," said Jupiter to the others, who were standing open-mouthed with astonishment; "you must learn, then, that the elephant needs you not, having intelligence and talents enough to be self-sufficing; but the lion has need of you, and as he is able, at the same time, to make himself respected, I appoint him to be king."

How the Animals Understand Liberty

King Lion one day asked his subjects what they meant when they talked of liberty.

Said the ox: "I should think it is the most desirable liberty to be never fastened to the yoke, but always to the manger."

Said the monkey: "I shall never think myself free so long as I have a tail and a hairy skin. Without these disadvantages I should be quite free, for I should be a man."

Said the draught horse: "I feel free when my harness is taken off, and I have nothing at all to carry."

Said the carriage horse: "When I am magnificently harnessed, and drag a fine carriage for a short distance, I sometimes feel freer than the noble lord behind me."

Said the ass: "To be free is never to have either sack or basket upon your back."

Said the sloth: "If, when I have devoured all the leaves on my branch, somebody would be good enough to carry me to another and put me within reach of the leaves I so much enjoy, I should be free indeed."

Said the fox: "And I should be free if my prey did not cost me so much fear, cunning, and patience."

A man overheard all this and cried, "Surely none but animals can wish for this sort of liberty." He was right; every wish for such liberty, fit only for animals, stifles in a man's soul all true sense of liberty.

The publications mentioned here are only a few examples of the enormous amount Pestalozzi wrote. For 18 years Pestalozzi lived on the Neuhof without a steady job. After the initial success of 'Leonard and Gertrude' he soon felt idle and useless again. He had a wealth of good ideas and suffered because nobody was interested in them. Writing books seemed a poor substitute. He would rather have helped people with his own hands.

He once wrote, "I would have mended your shoes. I would have hauled rocks for you. I would have drawn water from wells for you. I would have given my life for you. But you did not want me. So, all I could do was write." During these 18 long years Pestalozzi came close to losing his faith in mankind.

The people, it seemed to him, were selfish and evil through and through. At times he bitterly claimed, "You can drive out their wickedness only by harshness and force!" At a later time, he wrote about these difficult years on the Neuhof, "I lived like a man up to his eyes in mud and with his imminent death in front of him. I could have spat into the face of the whole world." In this gloomy mood Pestalozzi saw his best years float past.

Now and then he made a little money doing odd jobs. He took on work at home from a textile printing plant and occasionally worked on his farm. Moreover, a businessman trading in silk hired him as a manager because he himself was not a citizen of Zurich but needed someone who could do business in the town.

Pestalozzi did not have much to do there but at least he drew a little income from it. In addition, Anna was able to make a little extra money working in the office of this company.

On the Neuhof, Pestalozzi had already become a grandfather. Jean-Jacques had married and taken over the farm. Pestalozzi felt old. He was already over fifty. Then, in 1798, something happened that was a turning point in his life.

The Orphanage in Stans

In the year 1789 a big revolution, the 'French Revolution', broke out in Paris, the capital of France. This was because, throughout Europe there were laws which gave the nobility and the higher clergy special rights compared to the farmers, business people and craftsmen. This led to the simple people getting poorer and poorer. Therefore the people took up arms and demanded that all people should have equal rights.

All should be safe from oppression. Yes, they should all live together peacefully, as brothers. The former masters resisted with all their might, and this resulted in terrible bloodshed. The King and the Queen were imprisoned, and later they were even beheaded. For a long time the situation in France was absolutely chaotic. Again and again different people rose to the top to govern the country. In the end, a man from Corsica, Napoleon, succeeded in seizing power. His goal was to create a new world order and to bring this revolution to the whole world.

Switzerland was not spared Napoleon's power politics either. In the year 1798, he marched into Switzerland with his soldiers and conquered the country. At first this was quite easy, as there was much injustice in Switzerland at that time. Therefore, there were many people who did not wish to put up any resistance against the French. In Switzerland, the rural population was not dominated by the nobility, but it was dominated by the cities. The farmers had fewer rights and were the only ones who had to pay taxes. Besides, the children of the farmers were not allowed to become clergymen, judges, civil servants, manufacturers or businessmen.

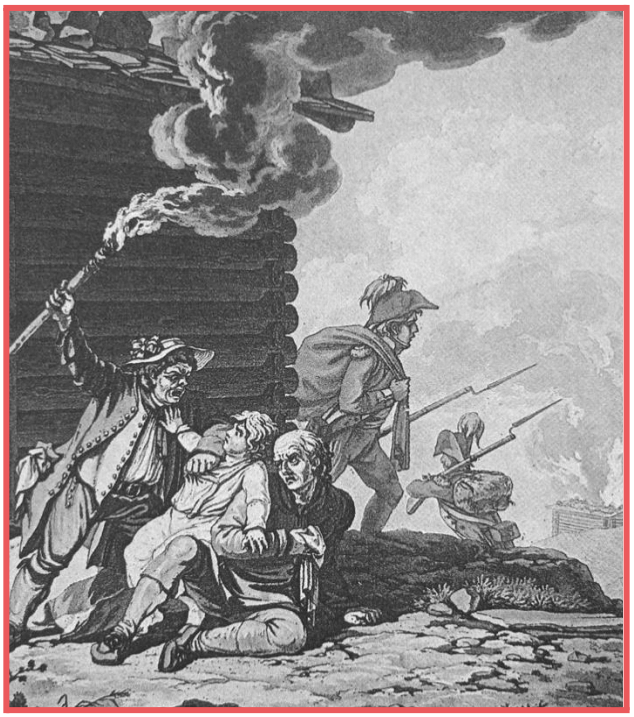
Those occupations were only open to the citizens of the city. All this was indeed unfair. We have heard that Pestalozzi as a student had already protested against these conditions. A great many other people also protested against them.

After the French had conquered Switzerland, they demanded equal rights for everybody. Up until this time, the individual towns and cantons were self-dependent, but Napoleon wanted to change this; the whole of Switzerland should have a uniform government and the same laws should apply all over the country. The most important laws were set down in a small book, which became the constitution. Switzerland was now called 'The Helvetian Republic'. All the people in their villages and towns had to assemble and take the oath that they would comply with the laws in the new constitution.

To begin with, there were many who were pleased with the new situation. Pestalozzi was one of them, although some of the things the new masters demanded were not to his liking. However, most of the people were soon unhappy again. Certainly, the French said, "We bring you freedom" but in reality their main aim was to plunder the country. They stole all the gold from the treasury and transferred it to Paris on ox-carts. The farmers had to feed the French soldiers. Often the French just led their cattle away from their stables.

Lots of people did not want to take the oath of the new constitution, but the French forced them to do so at gunpoint. Therefore everybody complied in the end – except the small canton of Nidwalden, which is situated in the Alps.

Its inhabitants did not want to accept the new regulations. They said, "We don't want this new government. We've seen how the French criticise our religion. For us the Christian belief is important and this is why we won't take the oath!"



Pestalozzi sided with the new system. He thought, "The new constitution has brought us a number of good things. We cannot go back to the old system, otherwise there will be civil war." Therefore he warned the people of Nidwalden, "It's better for you to take the oath.

The French are not really against religion, they just don't want the clergy to have more rights than the ordinary people. In fact, if you don't take the oath, you will put your own country in danger." In the end he said, "If you don't take the oath, the French can do nothing but wage war against you."

However, the people of Nidwalden did not listen to Pestalozzi. They believed their own leaders and refused to take the oath. Then ten thousand French soldiers marched to Nidwalden. The people – men, women and children – fought with all available means, but the French were stronger. They set fire to the villages and many men, women and children lost their lives. A great number of children lost their parents.

Pestalozzi was in great despair when he heard of this disaster. He immediately travelled to Stans, the capital town of Nidwalden. He wanted to help. He put a proposition to the government; that they should establish an orphanage in Stans.

Three months later, the orphanage was completed and Pestalozzi was assigned to manage it. He was happy. "Finally I can do something for the people," he thought. It was already December when he moved to Stans.

There was a large convent in Stans at that time with enough room for the orphanage. Pestalozzi immediately began to gather orphans. In January 1799, the orphanage was officially opened. Originally there were fifty beds, but by spring the orphanage already had eighty children. Pestalozzi wrote of the children who came with festering wounds on their heads, dressed in rags, and full of lice. Many were skeletal, yellow, their eyes full of fear. Some of them were rude. A few were used to begging and conning. There were also delicate, pampered children. They were quite demanding and looked down on the children of the poor. Most of the children had never attended school. Only one in ten children knew the alphabet.

With great patience, Pestalozzi took care of every single child. He washed them with his own hands and cleaned their dirt, sores and abscesses. He gave them food and fresh clothes. His only help was a housekeeper. He lived with the children day and night. He showed them how to keep their rooms tidy. He told them to show consideration for others. He comforted and admonished them. He loved each child as his own.

He could see that the children, who at first were stubborn and suspicious, gradually became friendly and confident. As they felt his love and kindness, their fear melted like snow in the sun. Eventually the orphanage became a large family home. Pestalozzi was father to them all. He also taught the children to work by setting up spinning wheels.

In addition, he taught the children to read, to write and to do arithmetic. Under his guidance, the children loved to learn. In bed in the evenings, some even begged, "Couldn't we study for a bit longer?"

At first the people of Nidwalden did not trust Pestalozzi. People thought he was a missionary sent by the new government and some of them criticised him. Once a woman came to the orphanage and raged at him, "What a pigsty this is!

The children are not even decently fed! She fumbled and fumed and angrily clenched her fists. It was wintertime. The ground was frozen. Suddenly the woman slipped and fell to the ground.

Pestalozzi rushed up to her and helped her to her feet. Full of sympathy he asked her, "Have you hurt yourself?" The woman looked at him and did not say a word. The children had been watching. When the woman had gone, they asked their foster-father, "Why did you help that vicious woman? She insulted you, didn't she?" Pestalozzi replied, "It's only with love that you can have victory over hatred."

Eventually, more and more people realised that what Pestalozzi was doing was a good thing. The nuns living in the convent came and offered to assist him. They brought food and clothes and helped in the orphanage. Pestalozzi was happy. He wrote to his wife who was staying with her friend in the Castle of Hallwil, "At long last, I can achieve the dream of my life."

The dream did not last long, because six months later Pestalozzi had to close the orphanage. The war of the French against the Russians and the Austrians was waged in the midst of Switzerland. The French said, "We need the orphanage for use as a military hospital. The orphans must move out".

Once again, Pestalozzi had to give up a good project. All he could do was to give the children sufficient clothing and a bit of money. Then he was alone again. Maybe this saved him from getting ill, as he was completely overworked. This was the only time in his life that he granted himself a rest. He went to a spa in the mountains. Whilst there he contemplated how he could best help the people.

Pestalozzi as a Teacher in Burgdorf

From the hotel where he recuperated, Pestalozzi could look over a large area of Switzerland. He visualised the people in the villages. He could not help thinking of the many worries that bothered them: how to earn their daily bread and how to pay their taxes. He could not help thinking of the children and of the inferior schools they attended. He wrote, "Our schools are like machines. They stifle the natural vitality of the children. The first five years of their lives they enjoy the great outdoors, but then they are fenced in like sheep. They are driven into a stinking room, where they have to face pitiful, boring letters for hours, days, weeks, months and years. That is worse than beheading a criminal." The longer Pestalozzi reflected on the miserable state of the schools, the stronger his conviction became, "Our schools must get much better. The children must be able to enjoy school. Schools must teach the children subjects that can be put to good use and not such useless things. That's what I want to promote. I wish to become a teacher!"

That was in 1799. Pestalozzi was fifty-three years old. Once more, he started anew and became a teacher.

Most schools at that time were really bad. The teachers were not trained for their task. Most of them were discharged soldiers or craftsmen who needed an additional income. The teachers were poorly paid. There was still no compulsory education. The teacher stood before a class of about eighty children with a cane in one hand and a thick book, the catechism, in the other hand. This was a book of religion. The children did not understand what was written in it. The teacher spelt and recited it to them. The children had to repeat everything parrot-fashion. Woe betide the children who talked to their neighbours! They became acquainted with the cane. Such teaching was unnatural and artificial. Most children did not learn anything that they could put to good use.

Pestalozzi got a teaching post in Burgdorf, but he was not allowed to have a class of his own; he was only allowed to teach some destitute children in the corner of a classroom. The classroom belonged to the teacher and shoemaker Samuel Dysli. That looked very funny indeed. On the one side, in front of the pupils, there was Dysli with the cane and catechism in his hands; on the other side, there was Pestalozzi. Pestalozzi's children were allowed to describe whatever they saw: the ripped-up wallpaper, the holes in the wall, the trees in front of the windows and so on. In this way, they learnt firstly to closely examine an object, then to talk about it in simple words, then to write about the object and finally to read what they had written. For this, they were given slates to draw and write on.

Pestalozzi's lessons were lively and interesting, and the children enjoyed learning. Dysli, the teacher, became jealous and suspicious. He told the parents of Pestalozzi's teaching of the children, "This man cannot read or write himself, otherwise he wouldn't teach in such a ridiculous way. However, the worst thing is his faith, he doesn't even use the catechism!" The parents believed Dysli. Pestalozzi had to leave Dysli's classroom.

However, his friends stood up for him so he was able to get another job. He was permitted to go on with his experiments together with a young teacher. Her name was Staehli. Now Pestalozzi taught the children of the citizens of the town. He wrote letters on small cardboard pieces; the vowels A, E, I, O and U in red and the consonants S, B, R, M and so on in black. With the help of the cardboard pieces the children could put words together. Pestalozzi also etched

letters into transparent horn-leaves. The children could then put these leaves over the letters they had written themselves. In this way, they immediately saw whether they had written the letters correctly. These teaching methods were absolutely unheard of in those days. Nobody taught like that. After eight months the school authorities conducted a test on his class and the results were outstanding. Immediately, Pestalozzi was given a more advanced boys' class, which he was allowed to teach by himself.

The City of Burgdorf lies on a rocky hill. At the top there is a big castle. In this Castle of Burgdorf the government wanted to establish a teachers' college. They wanted to appoint Pestalozzi as supervisor of the college. At first he refused to consider the proposal. "I want to become a proper schoolmaster, before anything else. To begin with, I want to teach small children," he said. Soon after, the supervisor of the college died and Pestalozzi moved up to the castle after all, taking his own class of pupils with him. A teacher with his twenty-six pupils from another part of Switzerland also enrolled. There was a war being waged where they came from, so the children's parents were happy that the children could go to a part of Switzerland where there was peace.

At long last, Pestalozzi could enjoy great success. The school inspector wrote a report on Pestalozzi's school. He praised Pestalozzi enthusiastically and said that he was indeed a model teacher. He wrote, "Pestalozzi's children learn in half a year as much as the children of other teachers learn in three years." Pestalozzi's good reputation spread all over. In the Castle of Burgdorf there was a boys' school, a teachers' college – plus a school for poor children.

Pestalozzi carried out his old dream as soon as he could. To help the poor was always his particular concern. Of course, he could no longer manage everything by himself and now had

several employees to help him. Moreover, groups of scientists and politicians from everywhere came to Burgdorf. They wanted to meet Pestalozzi and learn from him.

Studying all day long was not the only activity in the castle. The pupils were also allowed to get out into the open air. They went climbing on the sandstone rocks, bathing in the nearby river and hiking all over the country, singing songs. Every evening they all gathered in the large assembly room of the castle. Pestalozzi would be there too. The students could tell him whatever was bothering them. He listened to them, encouraging or admonishing them. Together they asked for God's blessing and then went to bed. When all was quiet in the castle, Pestalozzi sat down at his desk and worked at his new book, 'How Gertrude Teaches Her Children'. In it, he wanted to show how to bring up children. His opinion was that all children have the right to a proper education, appropriate for a child; that once the schools became good, nobody would have to suffer poverty any longer. Pestalozzi's book became widely known. He was now considered a great educator and an expert on schools.

In Burgdorf, Pestalozzi at long last had his family with him again. His wife, Anna, came and assisted him. In 1801 his son Jean-Jacques died, at the early age of thirty-one, but his daughter-in-law with his grandchild Gottlieb, and Elisabeth the maid, moved from Neuhof to Burgdorf.

Even though Pestalozzi's institution in Burgdorf was so famous, he had bad luck again, and had to give it up. In 1803, Napoleon removed the Swiss government, which had supported Pestalozzi, and made the cantons independent again. Now each canton could make its own laws, as in former times. The City of Burgdorf belonged to the Canton of Berne. The Bernese government did not approve of Pestalozzi and gave the castle to the new district magistrate as his official residence. So the order came from Berne that Pestalozzi had to clear out of the Castle of Burgdorf by the 1st of July, 1804. For all that, the Bernese government did not want to just turn the famous Pestalozzi out onto the road. They left him an old, dilapidated convent in Münchenbuchsee to use for a year. There, as the situation allowed, he settled down for a short time with his students and co-workers.

Near Pestalozzi's institution, in Hofwil, there was another educational establishment. The proud Bernese aristocrat, Philipp of Fellenberg, supervised it. Fellenberg was an excellent manager. Pestalozzi's co-workers thought that Pestalozzi and Fellenberg would make a good team. Pestalozzi had the good ideas and the big heart, while Fellenberg was the born organiser and ensured orderliness. They suggested this idea to the two men. They tried it out for a while but they did not get along for very long. Fellenberg said, "We can't take on pupils free of charge." Pestalozzi did not agree with him. It was the poor children he wished to help. For this reason he decided to leave Münchenbuchsee.

Then he got a proposal from the Czar of Russia, Alexander I. Pestalozzi could become a professor in Russia and reform the Russian schools. The offer was tempting and Pestalozzi came close to accepting it. His relatives warned him, "You don't know Russian and you don't know the country." He may have gone, but he then received an offer from his own country, from the Canton of Waadt, which had belonged to Berne before the revolution, but was now independent. The Canton of Waadt promised Pestalozzi the Castle of Yverdon on the Lake of Neuenburg, rent-free for the rest of his life. Pestalozzi could carry on his educational institution there.

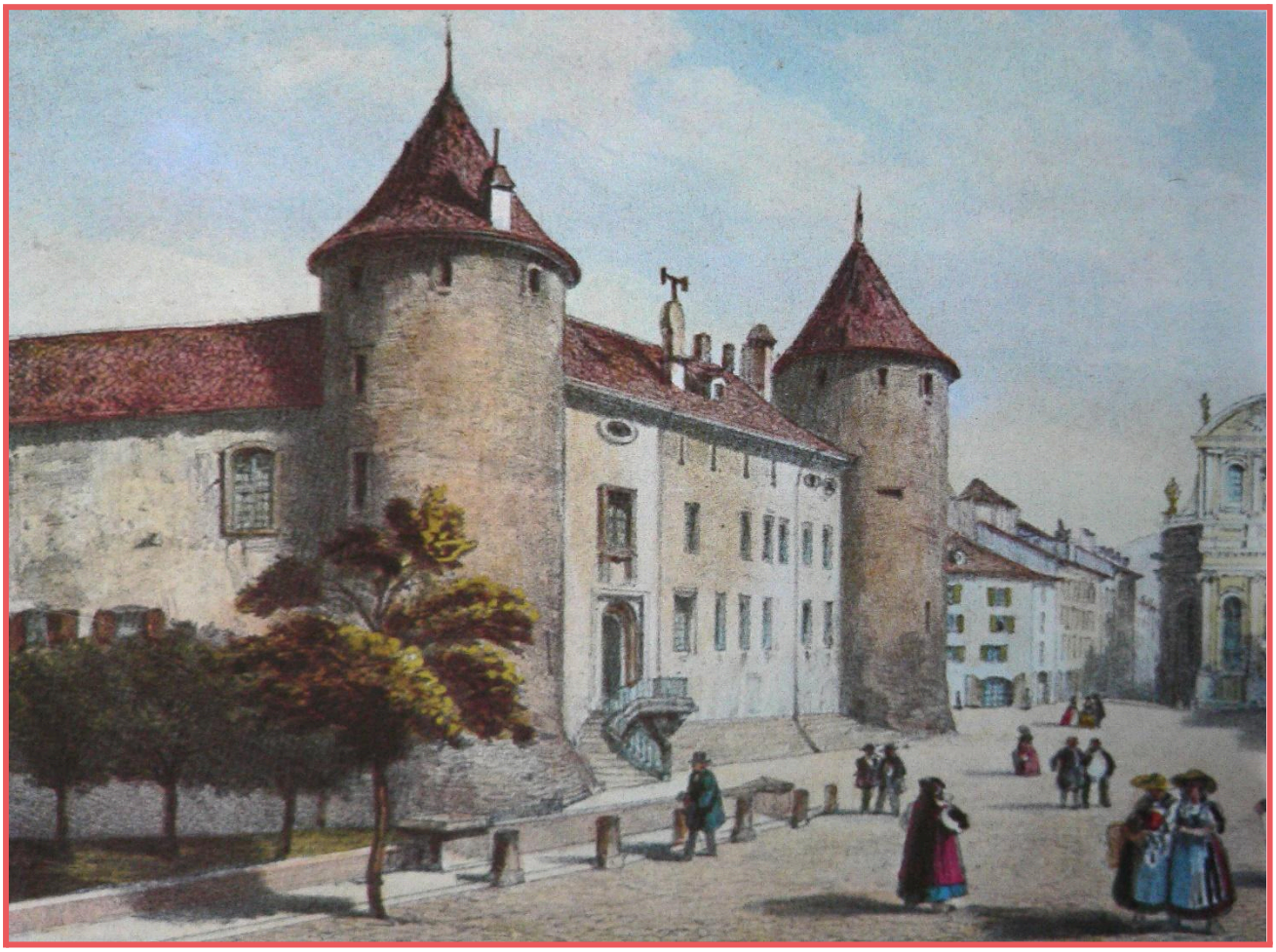
The Educational Institute in Yverdon

In 1804, Pestalozzi,left Münchenbuchsee along with three teachers, . They moved to Yverdon and planned to start anew there. Pestalozzi doubted himself. "I'm already 58 years of age," he thought, "In Stans I had to leave, in Burgdorf they dismissed me, and now in Münchenbuchsee things have gone wrong again. Will I ever succeed in anything?" Then he experienced something very strange, almost a miracle. It was an evening in October. Pestalozzi took a walk through the vineyards. It was foggy, and one could not see far. Besides, he was lost in thought as he quite often was. All of a sudden, two trotting horses emerged out of the fog. He wanted to let them pass, one to the right of him and one to the left. At the very last moment he noticed that it was a wagon, but it was too late. The shaft threw him onto the ground, and he landed under the horses' legs. In seconds the wheels of the wagon would run over him. Then, with youthful strength, he did not know how, he swiftly rolled to one side, between the legs of the horses. The heavy wagon rumbled by. Pestalozzi got up and looked at his clothes; they were torn on the sleeve and the body, but he himself was unharmed. He was astonished that his heart was not beating faster. The sudden danger to his life had brought about a calm and strength in him, in a way he would not have believed possible before. He wondered, "How did I do that?" At once, his inner voice gave him an answer, "No, it's God's doing!" After this experience, Pestalozzi once again believed in himself and trusted in God's help.

Pestalozzi's boys' institute in the Castle of Yverdon soon became world-famous. In Germany, France, Italy, England, Russia and America people studied Pestalozzi's books enthusiastically and admired him. The initial five years in Yverdon were the best. More than one hundred and fifty boys between the ages of seven and fifteen, about thirty teachers, thirty college students who wanted to become teachers, and Pestalozzi's family – all belonged to the community in the castle. In addition, Pestalozzi ran an institute for girls in the City of Yverdon. In those days, boys and girls were educated separately.

The students were mostly taught in groups. Each group decided individually in what way and how fast it wanted to work. The teachers acted more as assistants. Students who had grasped a problem were immediately put into action as teachers of their classmates. There were about three times as many lessons as today; a full sixty hours a week was spent at school and holidays were non-existent. Instead, there were many hiking excursions for the pupils, which often lasted several weeks. Teachers and pupils hiked in the local mountains or in the neighbouring countries. By thoroughly preparing these hiking trips together the children learnt geography and natural science in a very practical way. Pestalozzi said, "Learning from books is a cheap substitute. It's a much better idea to look at things directly in the open air." In addition, the teachers often took their classes outdoors, where they studied plants, animals, landscapes and rock formations, describing them and drawing sketches of them.

Often the teacher just said a word, such as 'dandelion' or 'squirrel', and the pupils had to find out all about it. Otherwise, the children in the institute had similar subjects to those we have today: Mathematics, German and French, History, Drawing, Gymnastics, Singing, Religious Instruction, as well as Latin, Bookkeeping and Correspondence. Of course, they had no computer science and no typing, as there were neither computers nor typewriters at that time.



Handicraft and Housekeeping were not subjects on the timetable. But, as everybody knows, Pestalozzi kept repeating that the head, the heart and the hands are all important. Outside the school, the children learnt to work with a hammer, a saw and a plane and were even allowed to work at the lathe. They also helped in the house. The Institute owned its own printing office and bookbinding shop, in which the children could take an active role. They were allowed to 'snoop around', exploring and helping in the workshops of the carpenters, the mechanics, the watchmakers and the turners of Yverdon. In the Institute, they kept rabbits and sometimes lambs, and also took care of their own garden beds.

Sports and games were also important. When the children were not working, they played games and enjoyed themselves. The children were often given permission to go bathing in the Lake of Neuenburg and all of them learnt to swim. In winter they built tremendous snow castles and, when the lake was frozen, they could go ice-skating. Pestalozzi liked them to be out in the healthy, fresh air as much as possible, even in the bitterest cold.

Every day was open house for the parents of the children of Yverdon Castle. Pestalozzi was pleased to have visitors and welcomed them in person. They were welcome at any time, in all the classrooms. The class teachers had to inform the parents regularly, in writing, on the progress of their child, though not in marks. In no way did Pestalozzi want school reports to

include marks. He said, "No child is to compare himself with others. Each of them is to assess himself only by his own capability and achievements."

There were children in the Institute with various talents. Pestalozzi also took on children with emotional problems. He even opened a section for children who were hard of hearing.

The Institute never became rich. Pestalozzi asked for much lower school fees than other institutes. In addition, he accepted children of poor parents at no cost. Every third child did not pay. The teachers worked for practically no wages, only for food and lodging. To them working for Pestalozzi meant far more than money. At times the Institute had one common cashbox for everybody. The teachers could help themselves when they needed something and the pupils could ask for it when they needed money. This could have been wonderful except that nobody was really responsible for the money; as a result, the Institute had money problems over and over again.

The community was like a large family. The teachers took their meals with the boys and slept in the same rooms. All of them enjoyed great freedom. To be sure, there were important regulations in the castle. Nobody was to be ambitious and think they were better than others. Nobody was to be dishonest and flatter others. Nobody was to insult others or hurt them. The teachers were not to use corporal punishment. Once a Latin teacher hit a student on the head with a book. Right away two students ran to the headmaster – that was Joseph Schmid – and complained. Schmid commended the boys for their courage and dismissed the teacher.

Pestalozzi himself did not teach any more. He was like the father of the family. He wrote a lot and received the numerous visitors to the Institute. He talked to any student who seemed to be worried about something. He worked with individual students to further their particular talents. Every day he addressed the whole community with a few words. On festive days he made his famous official speeches, which you can read in his books. Every week the teachers had to present each child to him and report on the progress made. It was the emotional progress of the child, the heart, that interested Pestalozzi the most. He said, "The main thing is not the accumulation of knowledge and know-how. The most important thing is to develop into a genuine human being; the essential thing is love." Pestalozzi himself was a living example of this as he radiated an indescribable feeling of love. He gave everybody entering the house a hug as if they were his own brother or sister. The pupils and college students loved and honoured him.

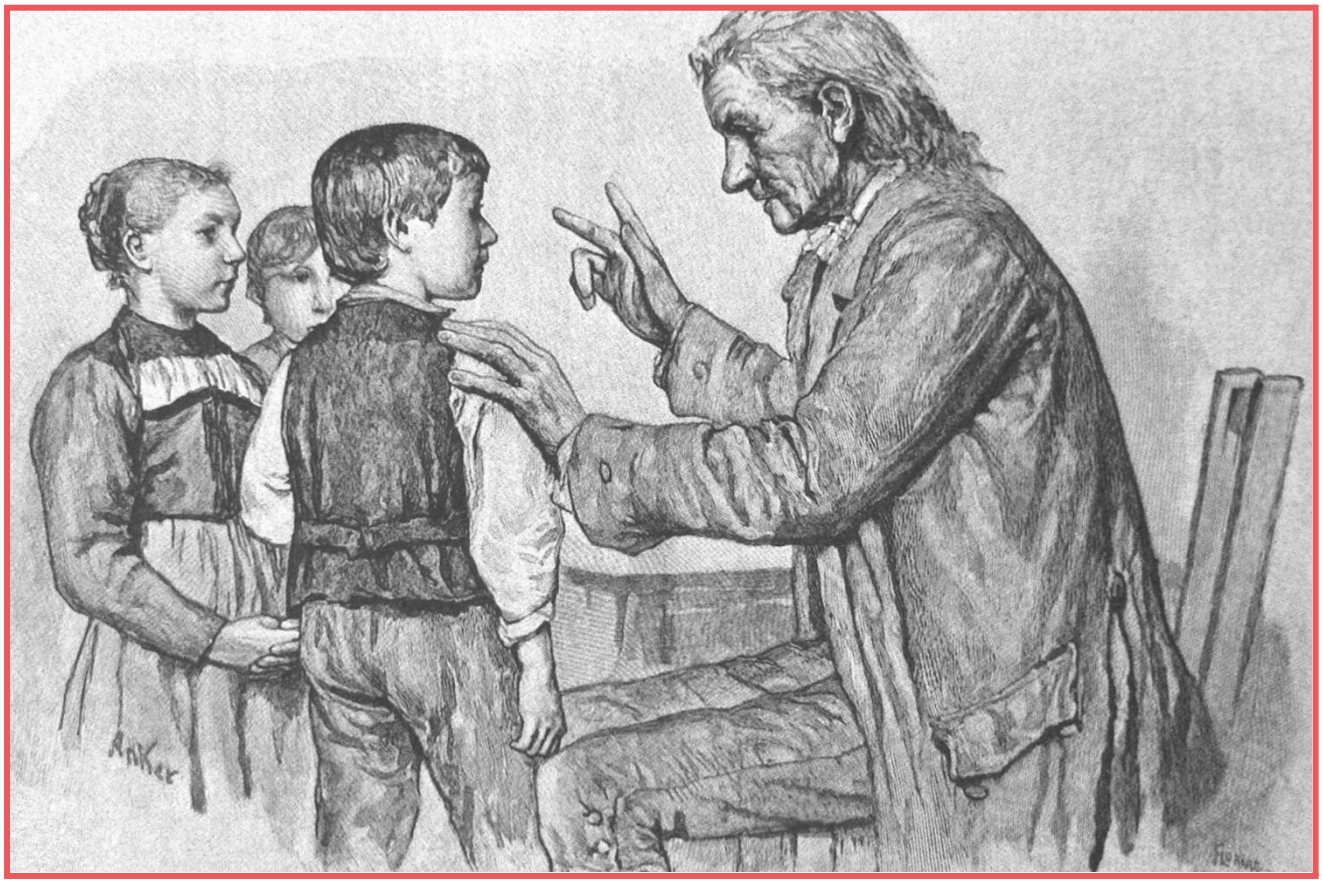
Big as Pestalozzi's heart was, he continued to be a bit clumsy with his hands throughout his life. In 1812, lost in thought, he once poked in his ear with a knitting needle. All of a sudden he pierced through the eardrum and seriously hurt himself. He was confined to bed for four months. In 1984, his skeleton was exhumed near the school in Birr (close to the Neuhof). There, behind the ear, a small hole in the skull could be made out. Obviously, the doctors had had to drill this hole in the skull to save his life, all without anaesthesia!

In 1813, the same misfortune suffered by the orphanage in Stans threatened the boys' Institute. Napoleon's time came to an end. The Russian, German and Austrian armies pushed the French back. The war was fought in Switzerland as well. Again foreign armies were stationed in Switzerland. The word was that a military hospital would be set up in the Castle of Yverdon. Without a moment's thought, Pestalozzi travelled to Basel where the headquarters of the allied sovereigns of Russia, Prussia and Austria were located. Czar Alexander I of Russia had a high opinion of Pestalozzi. He received him for talks. Standing before the Czar,

Pestalozzi forgot why he had come. Instead, he started to talk the Czar into abolishing serfdom in Russia. He told the Czar that he should build schools, so that the millions of peasants could learn something. Pestalozzi got very heated about it; he approached the Czar, grabbed his uniform and was about to shake him to persuade him. The Czar gently pushed him back. Pestalozzi simply asked too much of him! After all this, the Institute was permitted to remain in the castle and the soldiers took up their quarters somewhere else.

During these war years the number of pupils dropped drastically and the Institute almost went bankrupt. Once again Anna, Pestalozzi's wife, had to help out. She was able to save the Institute with money from an inheritance. In other respects as well, Anna Pestalozzi played an important role. She had what Pestalozzi lacked; a calm, well-balanced nature. Anna was an island of calm in the house. Everybody appreciated her as a housemother and felt fortunate to have her. In 1815, Anna died at the age of seventy-seven years. This was a painful loss for Pestalozzi and the Institute. Anna had not only frequently saved her Heinrich from financial disasters, but had repeatedly helped him with his bold projects, although she would have preferred a quiet family life. Now he was all by himself. This scared him a bit, but he believed in himself and his mission. He prayed to God and found new strength.

Pestalozzi's misfortune remained with him. To be sure, the Institute in Yverdon was world-famous. After all, it existed for twenty years, longer than any other project of Pestalozzi's. But the Institute in Yverdon came to an end while Pestalozzi was still alive. Pestalozzi was honest enough with himself; he knew that the fault was mostly his own. He did not have sufficient practical skill. He had fantastic ideas, and he knew exactly what was missing in the world – but to many people his way of speaking was too complex. He loved all his fellow men from the bottom of his heart, but was not good at organising things, managing and guiding people, or running a business efficiently. It was this very flaw in his character that was his undoing in Yverdon.



To the teachers in his institute, Pestalozzi was a great model of humanity, but in practical life he set no example for them. He trusted them entirely and let them do what they wanted. Not all of them were as generous as he was.

Two of them were particularly dear to his heart, and he thought of them as his own sons. Their names were Josef Schmid and Johannes Niederer. These two had an irreconcilable quarrel. Each eventually wanted to become Pestalozzi's successor. Ambition had them in its grasp.

Each of them thought he was the best manager for the institute. They forgot what Pestalozzi kept saying, "Nobody should believe himself to be better than others." Their hearts grew hard. They began to hate one another. Soon they infected others with their jealousy; some were for Schmid, others for Niederer. Relations in the institute became poisoned, with the teachers blaming and even insulting each other.

In 1816, Niederer left the institute with sixteen other teachers. In spite of this, there was no peace; Niederer now wrongfully accused the institute wherever he could and also talked badly about Pestalozzi. For years he claimed that Pestalozzi owed him a lot of money. He even took Pestalozzi to court. Pestalozzi was acquitted by the court but Niederer did not give up until Schmid left the institute as well.

The quarrels among the teachers destroyed the good reputation of Pestalozzi's institute and in 1825 he had to close it down.

Pestalozzi's Death

Now, at the age of 79, Pestalozzi retired to the Neuhof for good. His grandson, Gottlieb, had been working the farm for a number of years. Pestalozzi still stuck to his idea of running a home for poor children, where they would also be able to work and get an education. Together with Gottlieb, he started out to construct a new building for this purpose. In the middle of winter, the eighty year old man hauled rocks to the place, but he did not survive to see the completion of the building.

Pestalozzi's life often took a sad course. It also ended sadly. Johannes Niederer could not get over his blind hatred for Pestalozzi. He instigated a young German teacher, named Eduard Biber, to write a book in which he called Pestalozzi a hypocrite and a criminal. "Pestalozzi's books and his institute are a load of trash," he said. The book was published in January 1827.

On the 12th of January, 1827 Pestalozzi celebrated his 81st birthday. He was still in the best of health. Shortly afterwards Biber's book fell into his hands. It offended him so much that he fell seriously ill. He wanted to defend himself against the lies that Biber spread, but he was no longer able to do so. Passing his pen over the paper to write, he did not realise that there was no ink left in it.

Three weeks after he had read Biber's book, Heinrich Pestalozzi died; it was the 17th February 1827. In his last hours he wrote, "I am on my deathbed. I would have loved to live a few more months, but God has decided otherwise, and I reconcile myself to his will. May the peace which I am entering also lead my enemies to peace. Be it as it may, I forgive them. I bless my friends and hope that they will remember me with love and will further the ideas of my life to the best of their abilities."

Pestalozzi's last wishes did not remain a fantasy; Eduard Biber kept busy studying Pestalozzi's life and achievements. He converted from being an enemy into being a great admirer of Pestalozzi. He devoted his whole life to Pestalozzi's ideas and tried to establish them in the schools.

Two days after his death, Pestalozzi was buried near the school in Birr. This is what he had wished for. In spite of the enormous quantity of snow, a great number of adults and schoolchildren from the neighbouring villages followed the coffin. Teachers carried it, and at his grave they thanked him with a song. According to his wish a white rosebush was planted on his grave.

In 1846, to celebrate the 100th year since his birth, the Canton of Aargau placed a monument on Pestalozzi's grave. In golden letters the main tasks of, and places in, Pestalozzi's life are chiselled into the gravestone:

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi:

Saviour of the Poor on the Neuhof.

Preacher to the People in Leonard and Gertrude

In Stans, Father of the orphan,

In Burgdorf and Münchenbuchsee,

Founder of the New Primary Education.

In Yverdon, Educator of Humanity.

He was an individual, a Christian and a citizen.

He did everything for others, nothing for himself!

Bless his name!

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