1931

Children's Concepts of Truthfulness

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CHILDREN'S CONCEPTS OF TRUTHFULNESS

Marcella Ann Twomey

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Loyola University
April 30, 1931
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Introduction

It has become a truism to speak of the purpose of education as the task of helping the pupil to the attainment of such ideals, attitudes, skills, and knowledge as will enable him to lead a successful life both as an individual and as a member of society. Truthfulness is generally admitted to be among the most important of the ideals necessary for the highest development of character in the individual and the preservation and well-being of the social order. The recognition of this fact is apparent in the work of the parents and teachers of young children, who, as a rule, bring much anxiety and effort to the task of inculcating a high regard for truth and of building up habits of veracity, or, in more unfortunate cases, breaking habits of untruthfulness. To those attempting to give such training it is helpful to know how children themselves think and feel about questions involving problems of truthfulness and what factors influence them in regard to this matter.
CHAPTER I

The Problem and Procedure

Investigation in the Field

The desire for accurate information regarding children's concepts of, and attitudes toward, moral and social ideals has given rise to many interesting investigations.

G. STANLEY HALL, in Children's Lies, published in 1890, gave the results of an investigation which he conducted among three hundred school children whom he regarded as representative. By means of observation and indirect questioning by tactful teachers he studied the ideas of children in regard to juvenile dishonesty; and arrived at the conclusion that no children were destitute of high ideals of truthfulness. Much of his article was devoted to the interpretation of his data in order to determine the motives and influences which lead children to lie (14).

F. W. OSBORN, in 1894, published in a paper entitled The Ethical Content of Children's Minds the results of a small investigation he had undertaken. From a private academy he selected a group of forty-five children ranging in age from nine to eleven years. The number of boys and girls was
approximately equal. A class as nearly identical as possible in grade placement, age, social standing, and distribution of boys and girls was selected from one of the best public schools of Brooklyn. To both of these groups Osborn gave a test which consisted simply of two questions:

"1. What must a boy do to be called a good boy?
2. What must a boy do to be called a bad boy?

When the subject was a girl the word girl was substituted for the word boy. His conclusions from this investigation were that the moral ideas of children tend to concern themselves principally with concrete acts; that children are inclined to regard as right that which is permitted and as wrong that which is forbidden; that children early in life begin to form concepts of morality which are independent of direct instruction and that:

"The two virtues most frequently mentioned as essential to the good boy or the good girl are obedience and truthfulness; the former, however, seems to be more important than the latter" (40:145). This is indeed apparent; for fifty-seven per cent of the boys and fifty-four per cent of the girls in the academy group mentioned obedience as essential to the good boy or girl, while only fourteen per cent of the boys and twenty-nine per cent of the girls required truthfulness. The public school group showed fifty-three per cent of the boys and fifty per cent of the girls exacting obedience as a necessary quality.
in a good child, as contrasted with thirty-six per cent of the boys and thirty per cent of the girls demanding truthfulness (40).

PAUL VOELKER. In *The Functions of Ideals and Attitudes in Social Education* (1921), Paul Voelker gave as the principal aim of his dissertation that of finding a secure basis upon which a broad program of social education might be built. He resolved this general aim into three specific problems, one of which is especially pertinent to this study; namely, whether certain moral, civic, and religious standards of behavior inculcated by specific methods of teaching will actually serve in the guidance and control of conduct. The method of teaching chosen for experimentation was scout training, and the study was confined to its effect upon honesty of those subjected to it. To secure the necessary data two sets of tests to detect deception were given at intervals to groups of boys, some of whom had had scout training, while other had not. The results showed that the groups which had received scout training had a higher average of trustworthiness than those who had not; and that the group which was receiving such training improved in the interval between the two sets of tests, while the control group appeared less trustworthy upon the occasion of the second set of tests than upon the first. The results of his experiments led Voelker to formulate the conclusion that ideals and attitudes
perform an important function in the control of human conduct (50).

MARIE CECILIA McGRATH presented in 1923 *A Study of the Moral Development of Children*, which had the twofold objective of standardizing a series of moral knowledge tests and schematizing the moral development of children. Three types of tests were used: a series of questions and exercises, a group of stories involving moral problems, and a set of pictures representing situations having a moral significance which the children were asked to interpret. These tests were given to four thousand children from both Catholic and public schools. All subjects were above third grade. The situations presented in the tests were such as a child might meet in his environment. The writer interprets her data as showing stages of development in children's moral principles. In the first stage, which appears early in life, principles which have to do with duty to God and the more simple social duties, such as honesty and obedience, are recognized; more complex social duties and duty toward oneself are recognized as moral principles in a second stage of development; duty to the state as a principle does not appear until a third stage is reached.

As part of the first group of tests the children were asked to list the following faults in the order in which they thought they had most frequently been guilty of them:
disobedience, cheating, lying, selfishness, stubbornness, insolence and swearing. The teachers of these children were also asked to list the faults in the order of frequency with which they considered them to be committed by the children. In both these lists lying occupied the fourth place. The lists of things which children considered good to do, another exercise in the first group of tests, do not give a very high place to telling the truth. Thus Miss McGrath, while fully concurring with Osborn in the theory that obedience is the most important virtue to the child mind, is inclined to place less emphasis than he does upon truthfulness as a virtue of outstanding importance in children's consciousness (23).

W. E. SLAGHT published in 1928 the results of an empirical study of truthfulness and untruthfulness in children under the title Untruthfulness in Children: Its Conditioning Factors and Its Setting in Child Nature. By means of three objective tests of deception he selected from among 356 pupils ranging from the fourth to the tenth grades in the public schools of four Iowa cities a group of seventy whom the tests had indicated to be consistently truthful and a second group of seventy who were, according to the tests, consistently untruthful. These two groups were subsequently called the positive and the negative groups. The specific problem of this study was to investigate the traits associated with truthfulness and untruthfulness
among children. Twenty-three tests were given to these two groups in order to investigate the correlation between habitual truthfulness or habitual untruthfulness and the traits of intelligence, memory, suggestibility, imagination, tendency to overstatement, general range of information, sensori-motor response, persistence, moral judgments, and likes and dislikes. A questionnaire sent to the parents was so arranged as to throw light upon home conditions, as did the likes-and-dislikes test. By the use of three forms of intelligence tests Slaght reached the conclusion that intelligence is not a factor which differentiates the habitual liars from the habitually truthful. No correlation between memory and truthfulness were found, but the author stated this as a tentative conclusion, since he did not consider the tests available to be entirely satisfactory. The positive (truthful) group showed a definitely lower degree of suggestibility than did the negative group. Productive imagination, as measured by the ink-blot test, was greater in the negative group, but the difference was slight. Very little difference between the two groups was found in reproductive imagination, but the test used for this involved memory to such a large extent as to lessen its validity. As the results of his work at this point Slaght concludes that there is "some justification for farther investigation of the notion that imagination is a conditioning factor in lying" (47:29). Since he considered that a lack of inhibition in an exciting situation, combined
with a strain of self-assurance, was a probable factor in the tendency to lie, Slaght gave an overstatement test as the one most likely to indicate such characteristics. The amount of overstatement on the part of the negative group exceeded that on the part of the positive group to a degree which the author found clearly significant. In this connection he called attention to the fact that such tests cannot show the extent to which children willfully misrepresent. This test also revealed the fact that the children in the negative group were comparatively lacking in general information. In sensori-motor responses, as measured by card-sorting and cancellation of A's the positive group were found to more deliberate, the negative group being both quicker and more accurate. A third test introducing an element of judgment gave the positive group the advantage in the upper grades, but not in the lower. Persistence was measured by a system which involved pressing a telegraph key every half-minute. The positive group excelled in exact response; the negative group showed more anticipation, more lag, and fewer exact hits. To compare the ability of the two groups to discriminate in the moral field two tests were used, one a carefully prepared moral comprehension test which secured the subjects' judgments upon concrete moral situations, and the other an ethical discrimination test devised by Guy C. Fernald. The latter was too difficult to give valuable results; the former indicated that the members of the positive
group were superior in moral judgment to the members of the negative group. But since the children in the positive group were found to be more deliberate, and since the questionnaire and the likes-and-dislikes test revealed better home backgrounds on their part, Slaght considered that these factors might account for the difference in moral judgment.

A new study was undertaken to obtain an introspective study of the causes of deceit. The seventh and eighth grades of a school which had not been tested were now given the same tests. A prize was offered for the best record, and an opportunity for cheating was provided. The pupils who cheated were questioned in private conferences regarding their motives. In these conferences the investigator found suggestibility to be an important factor in influencing deceit (47).

HUGH HARTSHORNE and MARK A MAY. Probably the most ambitious piece of research in the field was the Character Education Inquiry undertaken by Teachers College, Columbia University, under the direction of Hugh Hartshorne and Mark A. May. The study began in 1924 with two definite projects; a study of deception and a beginning in the use of tests of moral knowledge and attitudes. The results of the first part of the investigation were published in 1928 under the title Studies in Deceit. The first part of the study was concerned with the construction of tests and development of techniques which would adequately
measure three types of deceptive behavior -- cheating, stealing, and lying. When completed, the battery of tests gave opportunities to cheat in classroom work, in school assignments done at home, in athletic contests and in games; to lie in answer to questions; to steal money and small articles. Eleven thousand children were subjected to parts or, in some cases, to all of these tests. The results of the tests were studied in their relationship to such factors as might be supposed to influence the conduct of children when confronted with the opportunity for deception. The following are some of the authors' conclusions:

1. The older pupils in any given school are slightly more deceptive than the younger ones.

2. Contrary to Slaght's findings, intelligence and honesty appear to be positively related in these studies.

3. Emotional instability is more common among children who show a tendency to deceive than among those who do not.

4. Sex apparently makes no difference in deceptiveness.

5. Physical condition and deceit showed no relationship even in the athletic tests.

6. Good home conditions are more common among the less deceptive children than among the others. This corresponds to the result of Slaght's investigation.

7. Children of parents born in Northern Europe or America, as a group, cheat less than children of parents born in
Southern Europe. Cheating is more common among Negro children than among others.

8. Siblings are likely to resemble one another in the tendency to deception.

9. School placement makes practically no difference in the amount of deception practiced.

10. Retarded pupils, as a group, cheat more than do properly graded pupils; but, since these are generally the less intelligent children, the important factor in this case may be intelligence rather than grade placement.

11. Children who get high marks, as a group cheat slightly less than children who get low marks, although when achievement is stated in terms of mental age this relationship disappears.

12. There is less cheating among pupils who receive high deportment marks than among those who receive low ones.

13. Classmates tend to resemble each other in the amount of cheating done.

14. Where there is greater power of resisting suggestion there is less likely to be a tendency to cheat, a finding which corroborates that of Slaght in regard to suggestibility.

15. Frequent attendance at movies is slightly more common among children who cheat than among those who do not.

16. The relationship between teacher and pupils has an influence upon the amount of cheating done, as has the general
school morale.

17. It is interesting to notice that, although there is more cheating among children not enrolled in Sunday School than among those who are enrolled, there is no relationship between attendance at Sunday School and honesty, those who attend regularly being as deceptive as those who seldom or never attend.

18. Membership in organizations purporting to teach honesty showed no positive relationship to honesty in the tests. Indeed, the members of one such organization showed a positive correlation with deceptiveness. This is of interest in that it runs counter Voelker's results in his measurements of the effects of such training among scouts.

19. The studies showed that deceit is not a unified trait — in other words that a child will deceive in one situation and act honestly in another; and that the motives for deceit are complex and often inherent in the situations presented.

The authors give the following summary of their investigation (16).

"The concomitants of deceit are, in order of their importance, (1) classroom associations; (2) general personal handicaps, such as relatively low I. Q.; poor resistance to suggestion, and emotional instability; (3) cultural and social limitations in the home background; and (4) such miscellaneous facts as are loosely correlated with deception" (16: Bk. II-42).
The Problem

The purpose of this study is the investigation of the concepts of truthfulness found in children of the elementary school group. The problems suggested by the topic are:

1. What is a child's concept of truthfulness, and how does it alter from grade to grade?
2. What is a child's attitude toward truthfulness and how does it alter from grade to grade?
3. What psychological factors influence the genesis and alteration of these concepts and attitudes?
4. How do children's concepts and attitudes compare with those of adults, as adult standards are interpreted by recognized authorities on ethics?

The use of the word attitude presents some difficulty. Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines attitude as "Position or bearing as indicating action, feeling, or mood". Voelker uses the term attitude as it was used by the Committee on Education for Citizenship appointed by Dean James E. Russell from the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia University. He quotes from the report of the Committee as follows.

"An attitude is properly settled behavior because of habitual feeling or opinion. Three factors or aspects are here present, (1) an habitual mode of thinking, (2) a settled
interest, (3) a settled mode of acting as growing out of habitual feeling or thinking. These three aspects give rise to three types of attitudes, according as one or the other element is emphasized: (1) a point of view (apperceptive attitude); (2) an interest; (3) an action attitude" (50:47).

It is obvious that an attempt to study attitude in the broad sense of the word is beyond the scope of a paper of this kind, but it is hoped that some information regarding the point of view or apperceptive attitude of children toward truthfulness may be gathered. In other words, we may hope to learn what children think about the importance of truthfulness; whether or not they think that it may be rightly sacrificed for the sake of some other virtue, such as charity, or fidelity to a promise; why they respect this virtue; whether or not they consider it difficult to practice; and what factors consciously influence their thoughts regarding it.
Method of Investigation

The experiment was carried on in a public school of the eight-grade type, situated in a good residential district of Chicago. To get a comprehensive survey it was decided to question the children in the first semester of the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth grades; 168 children in all. Eighty-four were boys and eighty-two, girls. A written questionnaire was decided upon because of the limited time allowed for the experiment, and because the more impersonal nature of the questionnaire made the experience less unpleasant to the older boys and girls than a private conference would be. It was considered best to eliminate subnormal children, but since no intelligence tests had been given in the school, and since the time allowed for the experiment was too brief to permit them to be given in connection with it, this presented a difficulty. It was met by eliminating all children who had been rated "P" in mentality by three teachers who marked their individual record cards. In the school mentioned, "P" is a rating given only those believed to be subnormal.
Construction of the Questionnaire

Since a careful review of published tests and questionnaires failed to discover any which were likely to be of assistance in solving the problems suggested, it was necessary to construct a questionnaire for the purpose. A set of six questions, from which it seemed possible to obtain general information upon the subject, was formulated. As the problem of truthfulness is a vital one in every classroom, it was possible to obtain from many teachers descriptions of specific problems of veracity brought up in school behavior or in class discussion. Two points seemed to stand out in these discussions: first, that there was little difference in the problems raised; secondly, that the problems discussed by children often differed in their setting rather than in their nature from those which a regard for veracity places before adults. With these points in mind the following were tabulated as types of conduct with which the problem of truthfulness is associated.

1. Deception by silence -- such as knowingly taking advantage of a reasonable mistake by wilfully withholding the truth.

2. An unintentional misstatement of facts.

3. The pure mental reservation, interestingly paralleled among children by the mental qualification that either the
member of the body most directly involved or the instrument or object used really committed an act.

4. (a) Deliberate lies told for the good of the deceived person, generally for a serious reason.

   (b) Withholding the truth for a good and serious reason without saying what is false.

5. Lying to shield another.

6. Lying to avoid hurting another's feelings.

7. The use of commonly accepted conventional phrases such as "Not at home".

8. The relative evil of the injurious lie, as compared with that which does not injure another.

9. Avoiding telling the truth in cases of professional trust.

10. Jocose lies, by which no deception is intended.

11. The dilemma with which children frequently feel themselves confronted—lying or breaking a promise.

Eleven short stories which involved situations of the above type were constructed. Questions following each asked the children's judgments as to whether or not the characters were untruthful, whether they did right or wrong, and what course should have been pursued under the given circumstances. All except one of the stories were within a child's range of experience, and that one (involving a doctor's duty to his patient), was not entirely beyond their knowledge.
The completed questionnaires after being submitted to several interested teachers and students for criticism and correction were given to a seventh and an eighth-grade group not included in the experiment in order to discover their probable usefulness, and to indicate weak points which could be corrected. This preliminary test resulted in the dropping of one question, and the alteration of the method used in presenting another.

The first question originally stood as follows:

1. "Is it ever right to tell a lie?
   Give the reason for your answer.
   If you answered yes explain when you think it right."

The third part of the question seemed to suggest that yes was the proper and expected answer, as several children changed from no to yes upon reading it. This impression was confirmed by the statements of children who were later asked about it. To avoid such suggestion it was decided not to include this question on the mimeographed sheets, but to have it presented orally, one part at a time, so that the previous answers could not be influenced by the third part.

One of the original exercises was: "Arrange the following characteristics in order of their greatest importance: politeness, obedience, truthfulness, courage, neatness, unselfishness, punctuality". Since young children have little
interest in abstractions, the teachers consulted considered this unlikely to be of much value, as, in their opinion, children would probably have no real opinions to give, but would attempt to respond with remembered fragments of parents' and teachers' lectures. In the hope of securing the children's own placement of truthfulness among desirable characteristics the question was changed to: "What person do you most admire? What trait of character do you most admire in him?" In spite of the fact that the meaning of "trait of character" had been explained to them the day before, in many cases the quality mentioned as admirable was not associated with character; while in others, highly composite traits, such as good citizenship or good sportsmanship, were mentioned. This exercise was accordingly dropped from the questionnaire.
Procedure

The investigation was carried on simultaneously in the selected rooms by the room teachers, all of whom received the same written instructions in procedure. All these teachers were sufficiently familiar with this type of work, and sufficiently interested in the experiment to insure their keeping the test conditions as uniform as possible. The instructions given were followed exactly, except in the second grade, where reading and spelling difficulties made two alterations necessary. There each pupil was provided with a seventh-grade secretary, who wrote the answers at his whispered dictation. It was also considered advisable for the teacher to read each question and story aloud as the pupil read it silently.
Instructions for Examiners

1. Explain to the children that some people are trying to find out what boys and girls think about certain matters. The only way in which they can learn is by asking the children.

2. Ask children if they are willing to help. Tell them that to help they must write exactly what they think, not what they feel that somebody wants them to say.

3. Explain that you will not look at the papers, but will put them in the paper folder on the desk and send them away immediately.

4. Pass the questionnaires with the blank paper on top.

5. Say: "I am going to ask you a question. Write only yes or no for your answer. Is it ever right to tell a lie?"

6. Allow time for answer then say: "Write your reason for giving the answer which you gave."

7. When all have finished say: "If you answered yes to the first question, write when you think it is right to lie; if you answered no do not write anything now." Repeat this direction.

8. Explain that on the following pages they will find some stories and some questions which they are asked to answer. It is rather like a silent reading lesson.

9. Instruct pupils to place completed questionnaires in
the folders left on the table.

10. Remind the children again that you will not see these exercises, and that they will in no way influence school marks.
CHAPTER II
CHAPTER II

The Questionnaire and Its Results

The method used in constructing a suitable questionnaire having been described, in this chapter the final form with its results will be presented.

I. A. Is it ever right to tell a lie?

B. Give the reason for your answer.

C. If you answered yes, tell when you think it right.

All second and fourth grade children answered "No" to the first part of the question; three affirmative answers, representing 6.31% of the class, were found in the sixth grade; thirteen, or 32.5%, in the eighth. At first glance this might suggest a growing tendency toward laxity among the older children, but a study of the questionnaires revealed the fact that those who answered in the affirmative were, on the whole, not disposed to judge specific cases more leniently than was the tendency of their group. This fact gave rise to the question of whether the answers given were merely spontaneous echoes of past teaching or were really recognized as principles of conduct. Although it was impossible to ascertain whether or not a child who condemned all lying as wrong would consistently attempt to govern his own conduct accordingly, the nature of the questionnaire made it possible to determine
whether or not he would hold to this principle to the extent of pronouncing wrong any conduct which he understood to be untruthful. In comparing pupils' abstract theory with their judgment upon the concrete cases presented in the stories a noticeable absence of consistency was revealed, for only 23.25% of the second-grade children and 30.76% of the fourth-grade condemned as wrong all conduct which they pronounced untruthful; in the upper grades, with the children who feel that it is sometimes right to tell a lie increasing the ranks of the consistent, the conformity between abstract and concrete judgment rises to 50% and 57.5% in the sixth, and eighth grades respectively. This suggests that the more uncompromising attitude of the younger children may be due to a tendency to repeat unquestioningly teaching which has not as yet taken a deep root, while there is sometimes found among the older boys and girls an effort to enunciate a principle to which they feel that they can consistently adhere.

Although second-grade children were unanimous in their agreement that it is never right to tell a lie, only two were able to state a definite reason for this position, one saying that if you lie people will never believe you; another, that it is not nice to make other people believe things which are not true. In general the answers seem to indicate that the children have found in society a force which tends to discourage lying and to make them feel that truthfulness is expected of them,
"It's bad," "It's not nice," "You're not supposed to do it," being typical answers, while one boy gives as his reason, "They don't want you to do it;" "they" probably being adults in authority. These given motives intimate the possibility that to young children truthfulness may appear simply as an aspect of obedience, which according to the results of investigations, is the most important factor in their concepts of morality. In fact, kindergarten and first-grade children, when informally questioned by expert instructors in these grades, sometimes defined truthfulness in terms of obedience. No mention of duty toward God was made in second grade, although over half of these children had experienced a kindergarten training in which a deliberate effort was made to inculcate an attitude of love and reverence toward Him and an understanding that wrong action displeased Him.

Definite reasons for their position become increasingly common in the upper grades. In the fourth grade twenty-three are given, seventeen being based upon the fact that lying is of disadvantage to one's self, three upon the grounds that it is injurious to society, and three upon the point of view that sees in it the violation of a duty toward God. Thirty-six explanations are available in the sixth grade, twenty-four of which are based upon personal disadvantages, two upon duty to society, and ten upon responsibility to God. The rapid increase in the latter case is of no significance, being ex-
explained most probably by the presence of a number of children transferred from a parochial school shortly before the test was given. The eighth-grade pupils invariably answered this question thoughtfully. Of the twenty-eight who said that lying was wrong, seventeen regarded it as detrimental to personal welfare, eight as an injury to society, and three as an offense against God.

Children who thought that it might be right at times to tell a lie always gave a clear reason for their statement. In the sixth grade, where three took this view, only one based his answer entirely upon the personal advantage of lying "when necessary." One evidently considered it an inevitable correlative of obedience, saying: "It is sometimes necessary to lie when people ask you questions which children shouldn't answer." The third thought a lie excusable only when required to prevent death or serious illness. Untruthfulness was justified for a greater variety of reasons in the minds of thirteen eighth-grade pupils. One gave no reason; another stated that it is sometimes necessary; a third thought that "when a thing happens to us accidentally, which we can't explain," we are justified in lying to avoid punishment which is not deserved. The reasons given by the other pupils were more unselfish; lying, in their opinion, being justified by the desire to do good to others in important matters, to prevent fatal shocks to the sick, to serve one's country, and to outwit criminals.
II. Explain what you mean when you say that a person is truthful.

This rather awkward question was decided upon when, after experimenting with several ways of asking the meaning of truthfulness, it was found to bring the greatest number of pertinent answers.

That the term has significance for children of second-grade age is seen in the fact that only two describe the truthful-person as one who is nice, and five as one who is good. Four use the more closely related word "honest." All other children describe a truthful person, positively, as one who tells the truth, or, negatively, as one who does not lie. Fourth-grade pupils, for the most part, describe the truthful person as one who tells the truth, or as one who does not lie, some specifically mentioning telling the truth about faults. Only one gave the general answer that such a person is good; another added that he does not steal. A child who evidently had experienced or noticed an apparent conflict between truthfulness and other requirements said that a truthful person "does not tell a lie when she is not supposed to." The meaning of "truthful becomes broader in scope as children grow older. While the description prevailing in the lower grades was most commonly found in the sixth, new requirements for truthfulness appeared here. The truthful person does not take credit to which he is not entitled; he tells things straight-
forwardly; he does not talk about people behind their backs; he admits his faults; and he can be trusted. Evidently in this grade children are beginning to understand that truthfulness demands more of them than avoiding direct misstatements. Still more factors are involved in the eighth-grade pupils' concept of truthfulness, for, in addition to the conditions mentioned by the younger children, they require of a truthful person that he do not deceive; that he should recite facts exactly, be honest with himself; not present as his own the work of another and avoid exaggeration. In another respect, however, the standard of the older children appeared to grow less exacting, since four sixth-grade pupils considered truthful a person who seldom lies, one eighth-grade pupil, a person who never lies without good reason, and another eighth-grader, as one who never lies unless it is absolutely necessary.

III. Have you ever had any experience which made you wish to be truthful? If you did, tell what it was.

According to the answers given, the most important experiences affecting a child's desire to be truthful are those connected with his former responses to situations involving problems of veracity. Of the eight positive answers received from the second grade, five related such experiences. Three had found that lying brought unpleasant consequences in the form of detection and punishments by elders; two, that truthfulness brought commendation and forgiveness of the fault
admitted. Nine of the fifteen definite replies from the fourth grade were of this kind; four being of the former type, three, of the latter, one alluding to a reward received; while, in the ninth case, an unpleasant consequence of lying in the form of discomfort following undetected deceit is mentioned for the first time. Disagreeable experience resulting from former lies predominated in the sixth grade, twelve of the eighteen children who answered the question saying that they were influenced by these. Here only two were affected by the fortunate results of truthfulness. More far-reaching consequences of lying are perceived in this group, for only five of the twelve describe the situation as the direct one in which the lie is detected and punished by those in authority, whereas seven were influenced by the results of the lie itself. It is of interest to notice that three of these contain social factors; two children having seen that others would be punished for their faults if they did not admit their own blame, and the third young offender having been effectively punished by his own crowd, who considered him permanently ineligible for the position of umpire after he had called a ball a strike. Feeling unhappy after an undetected lie is mentioned three times here. In the eighth grade nineteen of the twenty-eight who admitted experiences which made them wish to be more truthful, mentioned experiences connected with personal problems of veracity. The emotional element is more emphasized; only one
of the eleven who referred to having been detected in a lie seemed to consider the punishment a vital factor, all the others being inclined to stress the resulting sense of shame. Similarly there is no account of reward or commendation for truthfulness, but two mentioned feelings of relief or happiness which followed overcoming an impulse to lie. In this connection two admitted worries arising from trivial and accidental inaccuracies. The social aspect of lying was brought out in two cases, where what seemed to the child to be a harmless fib resulted indirectly in unforeseen suffering to others.

Other types of experience appeared far less frequently. Being deterred from deceit by witnessing it in others appeared four times; two children were impressed by seeing swift detection and punishment; the other two were moved by a sense of disgust at the deceit itself. The favorable example of others as an incentive to truthfulness is not often included among these experiences, but it is mentioned in regard to parents, a chum, adult friends, Washington and Lincoln. Experiences of a religious nature which occasioned a resolution to be truthful were mentioned only twice. These were First Communion and attendance at church.

IV. Did anything which you learned in school make you wish to be more truthful? What was it?

From second to eighth grade the item most frequently mentioned in answer to this question was direct instruction or
advice upon the subject given by various teachers. In several cases the particular phrase or idea which especially impressed the child was quoted; twice lectures were considered forcible because they followed offenses. Telling teachers the truth is regarded as the safest course by eighth-grade pupils, and three fourth-graders noticed that lying in school is likely to result in trouble. History, in awakening a desire to imitate its heroes, creates a desire to be truthful, according to several children. Arithmetic is recognized as giving training in veracity for a far different reason. This study, more than any others, offers opportunity to practice deceit; at the same time dishonesty here is particularly easy of detection. Personal experience resulting in the conclusion that attempted deceit does not pay is consequently common in arithmetic classes. Copying a wrong answer also seems to leave a vivid impression upon a child's mind. Reading lessons which presented ideals of truthfulness were mentioned by second and sixth-grade pupils. The pleasure of being trusted in school was stated to be an incentive in all grades except the sixth. Being left on one's own honor was perceived by one eighth-grade boy as a mark of distinction conferred upon advanced pupils, and hence one which he was eager to merit.

V. Did anything ever happen which made you feel that it is sometimes hard to be truthful? What was it?
Such experiences were reported by 20.93% of the second grade, 51.28% of the fourth grade, 47.27% of the sixth grade, and 67.5% of the eighth grade. The necessity of admitting faults and accidents naturally held first place among the situation which made truthfulness difficult, and was the only difficulty mentioned in the second grade. Social situations rendering veracity unpleasant were mentioned in increasing numbers from the fourth grade to the eighth. In all grades above the second truth which involved friends in trouble ranked second in difficulty. The requirement of concealing bad news from sick relatives, attempts to arrange "surprises" for people, and the necessity for placing truth before friendship when involved in a dispute created hardship from the fourth grade up. The desire to be tactful or kind in conflict with desire to be truthful was recorded only in the eighth grade.

STORY I

When Marian came into her room she found a drawing on her desk. Later when the teacher looked at the work she thought Marian had done it. She said that the drawing was excellent and that she would give Marian a high mark. Marian did not say anything.

1. Was Marian untruthful? ....................
2. Did she do right or wrong? ............

3. Give the reason for your answer. ......

4. What should she have done?

That Marian was not untruthful was the belief of 32.09% of the second grade, 10.25% of the fourth grade, 11.36% of the sixth grade, and 25% of the eighth grade. Nevertheless, 86.04% of the second grade, 97.18% of the fourth grade, and all the sixth and eighth grade pupils condemned her conduct as wrong. Only two children, one in the second grade and one in the fourth, approved her conduct to the point of saying that she had done as she should. All the others thought that she should have explained truthfully. While the younger children merely called the action wrong, untruthful, or cheating, the eighth-grade children explained their decision, chiefly upon the grounds that the person who had earned credit for the work was defrauded as a result of Marian's silence. Second in frequency was the explanation that it is wrong to accept credit for work not done. One pupil seemed to find the evil in this silence to be the possibility that it might lead to a habit of lying.

STORY II

On his clean-up day Bill had charge of the far corner of the boys' yard. He worked so hard that he
did not hear the tardy bell when it was rung. A boy who came late asked if the tardy bell had rung. Bill said "No."

1. Was Bill untruthful? .....................
2. Did he do right or wrong? ............... 
3. Give the reason for your answer.

Bill was regarded as untruthful by 65.11% of the second grade, 53.82% of the fourth grade, 31.81% of the sixth grade, and 25% of the eighth grade. Most of those who judged him untruthful said that he did wrong. In addition, his conduct was thought wrong for other reasons; the second grade, in which he was so frequently called untruthful, showed an equally strong tendency to condemn him for not hearing the bell. The upper-grade children in many cases declared that he did wrong in not attempting to secure accurate information before answering, or in not saying that he did not know, and so avoiding the possibility of a lie.

Most of the children who said Bill had done right gave the obvious reason that he did not know the bell had been rung. Three sixth and six eighth-grade pupils were more explicit, and gave as their decision that Bill was truthful because he said what he believed to be the truth. A few children who apparently regard as untruthful any statement not in accordance with things
as they are, yet who could not blame Bill in this case, called him untruthful, but said that he had done right. Some of these seemed to be aware of a conflict between these two statements, and gave interesting explanations in the attempt to reconcile them. One said he was untruthful, but did right because he did not know he was lying; another, that having said what was not true with the intention of telling the truth, his answer could be called "a sort of a truthful lie."

STORY III

While some boys were alone in their classroom they began to play. Earl knocked the window pole down. In falling the pole broke a window pane. The teacher asked Earl if he had broken the window, but he said "No." He said it was all right to say that because the window pole really broke the glass.

1. Was Earl untruthful? ....................

2. Did he do right or wrong? ............... ,

3. Give the reason for your answer.

4. What should he have done? ..............

In view of the fact that teachers reported that such expedients as this are often used, the children's replies were rather surprising, for while 16.27% of the second grade,
12.82% of the fourth grade, 4.54% of the sixth grade, and 10% of the eighth grade did not regard this answer as untruthful, all except three in the eighth grade regarded it as wrong. Of these, two thought it must have been due to ignorance and hence was excusable; the other called Earl right in saying that he had not broken the window, but wrong in not explaining what he really did. On the other hand, in both the second and the fourth grades two children thought Earl's conduct wrong, not because of lack of veracity, but because he was playing in a classroom. With the exception of these four, who said that he should have remained in his seat, all agreed that the boy should have explained exactly what happened. The replies seem to indicate that children who attempt to use this device and to justify it when questioned do not, themselves, consider such evasions of truth permissible.

STORY IV

Mrs. Smith was very ill. The doctor said that if anything happened to excite her she might die. Her little son Johnny was run over by an automobile and taken to the hospital. When Mrs. Smith asked to see Johnny the nurse told her that he was away from home for a few days. Her friend, Mrs. Brown told her that Jack was visiting his grandmother in the country, and was having a good time.
1. Was the nurse untruthful? ................

2. Was Mrs. Brown untruthful? ................

3. Did the nurse do right or wrong? ......

4. Give the reason for your answer.

5. Did Mrs. Brown do right or wrong? ......

6. Give the reason for your answer.

7. What should have been done? .............

This story was an attempt to bring within the range of childrens' comprehension the problem encountered when concealment of truth seems necessary for a good and serious reason. Two ways of meeting the situation were indicated, withholding information without actually saying what was false and direct lying. This distinction was perceived by some pupils in every grade, for, while the nurse was considered truthful by 34.88%, 47.02%, 40.9%, and 42.5% of the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth grades respectively, only 20.93%, 10.25%, 27.27%, and 35% of these grades declared Mrs. Brown truthful. About 5% of each group said that the nurse was truthful and did right because she had concealed the bad news without saying what was not true. These thought Mrs. Brown wrong and untruthful. But the conduct of the nurse and the friend was contrasted for other
reasons, such as that the nurse had to give some answer, the friend did not; that Mrs. Brown should have repeated the nurse's story exactly, since the discrepancy probably caused worry; that the falsity of such a story was likely to be revealed by another visitor.

The problem involved was difficult, for to most of the children the occasion presented as the only alternatives the sacrifice of the truth or the patient's life. Younger children in a majority of cases decided that the truth should have been told, while the greater number of the older ones regarded both types of deception as right since they were practiced to save life. Attempts to soften or explain decisions were frequent and gave the impression that the subjects were not entirely satisfied even when they had decided upon the proper course. Many who thought that the truth should have been told gave suggestions for lessening the shock. These ranged from telling the bad news "very gently" to having a committee of three or four physicians at hand to assure Mrs. Smith that there was no danger. A fourth-grade pupil, torn between veracity and sympathy, tried to satisfy both by advising that the nurse "tell her the truth, and then right away give her either (ether)". A sixth-grader, disturbed by the situation, endeavored to trace it to its source and ended by placing the blame upon Johnny, who "should have looked up and down the street before crossing."
Then he wouldn't have been run over, and the nurse and Mrs. Brown wouldn't have to tell lies." In contrast to this decision, Johnny's rights gave the key to the whole situation in the minds of two pupils who justified the deception; one thinking he would wish the truth concealed to save his mother's life, the other explaining that things would be worse for Johnny if his mother died.

STORY V

During study time Frank threw a queer seed pod at Peter. Peter threw it back at him, but the teacher saw it fall. She asked who threw it, and Peter, who wished to be truthful stood up. While the teacher was talking to him she noticed what a strange pod it was and asked him where he got it. Peter did not wish to make trouble for Frank, so he told her he found it.

1. Was Peter untruthful? ....................

2. Did he do right or wrong? ............... 

3. Give the reason for your answer.

4. What should Peter have done? ............

The problem set forth in this story is one with which
most children have had personal experience, and with which they tend to deal decisively. It is of interest to notice the number of children who, in spite of his deliberate misstatement, declared Peter was not untruthful, and also to see that this number changed little from grade to grade, consisting of 20.93%, 20.51%, 27.27%, and 25% of the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth grades. In all grades a few pupils were found who considered Peter as at once untruthful and doing right because his lie protected another boy, but this number remained very small until the eighth grade was reached; there 45% of the class thought that Peter had acted rightly, although only 25% considered him truthful. Only twelve children, two each in the second and fourth grades, one in the sixth, and seven in the eighth, thought that Peter should have answered as he did. This number was, in every grade, much smaller than the number who pronounced the given answer right and truthful. All others say that Peter should have told the truth.

STORY VI

Mary had a new dress, of which she was very proud. She asked Helen how she liked it. Helen thought it was an ugly dress, but she did not wish to hurt her friend's feelings. She answered, "It is very pretty."

1. Was Helen untruthful? ..................
2. Did Helen do right or wrong in answering this way? ..................
3. Give the reason for your answer.
4. What should Helen have done? .............

The answers to the above questions gave evidence that in judging concrete cases, wrong is not an association necessarily linked with untruthful in children's minds, for in second grade only 23.25% considered Helen to be truthful, while 32.55% said that she did right; in the fourth grade 15.38% found her truthful, but 46.15% right; in the sixth grade this reply was judged truthful by 15.9% and right by 70.45%; in the eighth grade 37.5% thought her reply could be called truthful, while 70% said that she did right. Several of those who pronounced Helen's answer to be both truthful and right still felt that she should have told her opinion of the dress.

Most of the pupils who approved Helen's conduct did so upon grounds of courtesy or kindness; a few pointed out that frankness would be likely to result in the loss of a friend. One pupil accepted such an answer as truthful "because it is always polite to say other peoples things are pretty." Another explained that peoples ideas of beauty differ, and that it was correct to call the dress pretty, since it was obviously so to
its owner, if not to her friend. Helen's reply was condemned as wrong chiefly because it was considered untruthful, though one pupil thought that Helen should have told her friend the truth to save her the pain of learning it from others.

The answers to the question, "What should Helen have done?" revealed the fact that with one exception each the second and fourth-grade children saw as the only possible responses the expression of an unfavorable opinion or one which the speaker regarded as false. The second-grade child advised telling Mary that she (Helen) did not like it, but it was a nice dress. A fourth-grade pupil suggested as a truthful but polite answer, "It's pretty, but I don't like that part of it." Three sixth-grade children thought that Helen should respect both truth and kindness by giving such answers as calling the dress "all right;" saying that it was pretty, but she didn't like it; mentioning good points and ignoring the others. Seven eighth-grade children devised answers which they felt showed due regard to both courtesy and veracity. Three of these repeated the crude expedient of the second and fourth-grade children, two recommended that good points in the dress be singled out for discussion, one advised changing the subject, and one the answer, "It's nice for you, but I do not like it for myself."

STORY VII

Mrs. Harper was very busy and had no time to spend
visiting or talking. She told the maid to tell anyone who came to see her that she was not at home.

1. Was Mrs. Harper untruthful? ............

2. Did she do right or wrong? ............

3. Give the reason for your answer.

4. What should Mrs. Harper have done? ....

The conventional phrase used by Mrs. Harper was regarded as a falsehood by most of the children, only 4.65% of the second grade, 5.12% of the fourth grade, 2.27% of the sixth grade, and 12.5% of the eighth grade judging that Mrs. Harper was not untruthful in answering in this way. Of these, two eighth-pupils explained that she was not at home to visitors, and one defended her on the grounds that she had a right to be alone in her own house. The others who called her truthful and right justified her conduct because she had to do her work which she could not accomplish while entertaining visitors. The same reason was advanced by those who described her action as right but untruthful. Many children in each of these groups thought that the true explanation should have been offered to visitors.

The phrase "not at home" was considered wrong chiefly because it was regarded as a falsehood, though in three cases it was considered especially serious because the maid had been
ordered to lie. In the minds of several children the morality of Mrs. Harper's action depended upon who was deceived by the message, "not at home" being regarded as a proper answer to the demands of book agents and canvassers, but wrong when addressed to one's friends.

Unfortunately many, especially in the lower grades, seemed rather disturbed by the fact that the woman refused to receive her visitors. This, to some extent, obscured the real issue and led several to judge Mrs. Harper's conduct from the point of view of kindness and hospitality, rather than from that of veracity. In a few cases the phrase was not believed untruthful, but the attitude toward visitors was declared wrong.

STORY VIII

Mary and Helen took some cake from the pantry.
Their mother was angry when she missed it, and they felt afraid when she asked them who took it. Mary said that she didn't take it. Helen said that Eleanor had taken it.

1. Was Mary untruthful? ......................
2. Was Helen untruthful? ......................
3. Did Mary do right or wrong? ..............
4. Give the reason for your answer.

5. Did Helen do right or wrong? .............
6. Give the reason for your answer.

7. Was one of these girls worse than the other? .................................

8. Why?

9. What should they have done?

This story was intended to present an opportunity to distinguish between an apparently harmless lie and one which injures another person. Such a distinction was made in all the grades questioned; 34.86% of the second, 58.97% of the fourth, 68.18% of the sixth, and 65.79% of the eighth grade said that Helen, who wrongfully accused a third person, was worse than Mary, who only lied about her own fault. All, without exception, pronounced the answers of both girls untruthful and wrong.

STORY IX

Mr. White who has been very ill, has been treated by Dr. Harris. Mr. Jones, who is very curious asked Dr. Harris how long Mr. White would have to stay home from work. Dr. Harris thinks that doctors should not talk about their patients' affairs, so he answered,
"I really cannot tell you."

1. Was Dr. Harris untruthful? ............

2. Did he do right or wrong? ............

3. Give the reason for your answer.

4. What should Dr. Harris have done?

The definite answers received from each grade fall into three groups. (1) Dr. Harris was not untruthful in answering thus; he did right: second grade 23.25%, fourth 33 1/3%, sixth grade 34.09%, eighth grade 11.62%. (2) He was untruthful, but did right: second grade none, fourth 2.56%, sixth 15.9%, eighth 15.38%. (3) He was untruthful and so did wrong: second grade 62.78%, fourth 64.1%, sixth 50% and eighth 10.25%.

A few pupils pronounced Dr. Harris truthful and doing right because his reply was not untrue, but most of those who took this position gave the same reason as was given by those who considered him right but untruthful, namely, that Dr. Harris should not have answered the question. Many place emphasis upon the fact that Mr. Jones had no right to the information. One who thought that Dr. Harris should have told the truth, nevertheless pronounced him right because he had acted according to his conscience.

The answer given was condemned as wrong chiefly because it
was considered untruthful, but in a few cases because it was
assumed that Mr. Jones might have had a good reason for asking,
and a right to know the truth.

Two children, one in the second and one in fourth grade,
condemned this answer as wrong, giving as a principle that when
one is asked a question he should answer it.

STORY X

Tom has a habit of asking foolish questions. His
brother Bob teases him about it. Last night when Bob
came home, Tom asked, "Are you home so early?" To
tease him Bob answered, "No, I am still at school."

1. Was Bob untruthful? ......................
2. Did he do right or wrong? ............... 
3. Give the reason for your answer.

This jocose statement, in which there was no possibility
of actual deception, was regarded as lying to a surprising
extent; for 81.84% of the second grade, 84.61% of the fourth
grade, 72.72% of the sixth grade, and 45% of the eighth grade
pronounced Bob untruthful. All second and fourth-grade sub-
jects who answered in this way also believed that Bob had done
wrong, but three sixth and three eighth-grade pupils thought
that, though untruthful, his conduct was permissible because he
was only joking.
STORY XI

Mary's mother told her that she might go to the movies Saturday afternoon. Her friend Eleanor was there. On the way home Eleanor told Mary that her mother did not allow her to attend movies, and begged her not to tell anyone that she had been there. Mary felt sorry for her and promised not to tell. Later Eleanor's mother asked Mary where Eleanor had been that afternoon. Mary did not wish to break her promise, so she said that she did not know.

1. Was Mary untruthful? ....................
2. Did she do right or wrong? ..............
3. Give the reason for your answer.
4. What should Mary have done?

There is, perhaps, no occasion in the actual experience of children upon which truthfulness seems more difficult than when it appears to necessitate the breaking of a promise. These situations are rendered more complex by the prevalent feeling that breaking a promise is a form of lying.

Of those who believed that Mary should have kept her promise, only 6.97%, 17.94%, 13.63% and 20.51% of the second, fourth, sixth and eighth grades, respectively, judged her
truthful; yet in these grades 55.81%, 69.23%, 22.72%, and 35.64% called her conduct right.

The discrepancy is greater in the lower grades. The reason for this is apparent; there the children seemed to see no choice apart from breaking the promise or telling a lie. Other possibilities, that of saying that she had promised not to tell, and that of foreseeing such a consequence and avoiding it by refusing to make the promise, were mentioned by two fourth-graders. These with a third possibility, saying nothing at all, became frequent in the sixth and eighth grades. Another explanation of the greater discrepancy in the lower group is that older children really appreciate consistency in their statements. To secure this, many who said that a lie was always wrong stated that any misrepresentation or false impression which they believed to be right was not untruthful.
CHAPTER III
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Factors Which Influence the Genesis and
Alteration of Children's Concepts of Truthfulness

I. Environmental Factors

From the statements summarized in the preceding chapter, children appear to recognize many factors as affecting their opinions regarding truthfulness. Home, school, church and Sunday school, and other social relationships were mentioned as influencing agencies; also some evidence of how they had induced a modification of behavior was given.

HOME

Home influences mentioned as encouraging truthfulness, or discouraging lying, were precept, reward and punishment, and example. Example received more recognition from older children, while simple precept was especially important to the younger ones.

To these the parental command to refrain from lying evidently presents in itself a strong motive, for although children who said that teachers told them to be truthful were inclined to give the teachers' reasons as they understood them,
this was never done in regard to parents. It is possible, of course, that many parents did not give reasons, but perhaps a more probable explanation lies in the fact that much of the most effective part of the parents' work was accomplished before the children were old enough to understand or appreciate any motive for truth except that its violation displeased parents and brought unpleasant consequences. With two exceptions, second-graders were unable to advance any deeper reason for regarding lying as wrong.

Reward and punishment hold first place among home experiences which children thought made them wish to be more truthful. Reward was mentioned much less frequently than punishment and often took the form of commendation, or the omission of punishment for the fault admitted. It was not mentioned as a motive in eighth grade.

Parental example was only occasionally mentioned. The wording of the questionnaire was not adapted to bring it to the children's attention. However, young children who love and admire their parents take their goodness as a matter of course and are not greatly moved by an exhibition of it. It is likely that example, although an important factor in the development of a child's ideals, may sometimes be an unconscious one.

SCHOOL

The school attempts to influence a child's character
through the subject matter taught, by direct and indirect instruction in regard to behavior, and by the building up of an environment which will tend to stimulate desirable types of conduct and discourage objectionable forms.

Henry Neuman, an exponent of a view frequently found, writes hopefully of the results which may be expected from the subject matter. Science should, when properly taught, lead children to appreciate their debt to those who have made present-day advantages possible and stimulate them to reproduce in their lives a disinterested truth-loving spirit of investigation. History should awaken a strong desire for good citizenship, which must bring with it a desire for the necessary virtues. Literature presents the problems of human life in an interesting and beautiful manner (38:101-102).

On the other hand, A. P. James, in discussing the teaching of morals through the social studies, concludes that the modern tendency among educators is to reject the use of history in the indoctrination of morals (19:90).

Frances R. Dearborn, who made a study of the meaning of honesty to third and fourth-grade children, says of the attempt to utilize literature in inculcating such ideals: "The analysis of stories taken from literature and involving vicarious experiences beyond the possible real achievement of the child seemed to function with negative results" (7:210).
Certainly, the children questioned showed little consciousness of having been led to the formation of high ideals of truthfulness by the subject matter, when asked if anything which they had learned in school made them wish to more truthful. Eight, two each in the fourth and sixth grades, and four in the eighth, mentioned history content as an inspiration. All except one, who referred generally to the founders of our country, specified Washington or Lincoln as their model. Morals drawn from reading lessons were mentioned by one second and two sixth-grade pupils. Arithmetic was frequently mentioned as affording lessons in truthfulness, but, as has been said, this was valued, not for any ideal of accuracy, but because the method of teaching demonstrated the misfortunes which often attend deception.

On the other hand, direct instruction upon truthfulness was the most commonly mentioned motivating force in all grades. This is rather surprising, in view of the commonly accepted theory that children dislike such lectures. However, motives for truthfulness are pointed out in discussions of this type, and while such motives may be accepted because they are confirmed by an individual's past experiences, because they are approved by his reason, because the manner of presentation awakens an emotional response, or what is more likely, because all these conditions play a part, the instruction presents ideals in tangible form and is likely to be remembered as the
sole cause of the motive instead of an occasion upon which it became crystallized. These children have failed to confirm A. P. James's conclusion that schools "must be places where morals exist and not much information about morals is handed out" (19:91). In discussing the influence of sermons, books, and lectures upon character, T. V. Moore says: "Individually these factors usually count for but little; collectively, they form a powerful force in the development of the self-ideal" (37:91). This observation is worth attention in considering the importance of both incidental and direct moral training.

The third way in which the school attempts to modify behavior, the organization of an environment which will stimulate and encourage moral ways of acting, is the one most stressed at present. A variety of means are employed to obtain this result. Among them are found good example and justice on the part of the teachers; reward or commendation for virtuous behavior, even in trivial cases, and the encouragement and stimulation of children to bestow deserved appreciation and praise upon each other; and attempts to arrange an entire curriculum in terms of situation which enable pupils to practice civic virtue.

It is quite evident that the school tested has succeeded in providing an atmosphere favorable to veracity in many respects. Children, especially those in the upper grades, frequently said that they found it best to be truthful in
school, or truthful to their teachers. In discussing stories which involved school situations such remarks as; "Tell the teacher the truth, she may give Mary another chance for being honest;" "Peter should tell the truth, the teacher would probably forgive him if she knew it was an accident," are common.

In some respects these replies are encouraging, although they suggest a question as to the ultimate value of attitudes that seem so intimately connected with a specific situation. Normally they should result in certain habits of truthfulness and are likely to be beneficial in that respect. But the ideal behind it may be merely that, according to school experience, veracity pays. It secures the high regard of those in authority and the respect of the group. It often results in being especially trusted and selected for positions of honor and brings with it a pleasant sense of social approval. Conversely, lying in school does not pay. It is likely to be detected and punished more severely than is the fault whose concealment is attempted. Except in those unfortunate cases where a group is united against authority, a class is likely to condemn the liar for his refusal to acknowledge a fault, especially when the room reputation and honor has suffered from the offender's action or when another is likely to be blamed for it. Such social disapproval is often more painful than punishment.

Often, when such conditions prevail at school, the home presents a similar situation. If this is the case, a child's
idea of truthfulness as the best and most acceptable mode of behavior may develop consistently from year to year, and well-founded habits of veracity are likely to result. But all home and outside environment cannot be relied upon to supplement the work of the school. Frequently situations occur in which unfortunate consequences follow truthfulness, or where a clever lie results in the approval of associates or even of parents. The growing understanding of the world of adults contributes much vicarious, if not actual, experience of this kind, and confusion is likely to result. These conditions, while emphasizing the need for providing in school an environment tending to bring out right habits of behavior, lessen confidence in the strength of the virtue of truthfulness acquired by those who learned that it is best to tell the truth in school, unless it is supported by other intelligent or emotional factors. It is to such conditions that Sisson attributes much of the school's failure to greatly improve public morality, for he contends that the school has always taught a higher morality than the world outside would accept or even tolerate, and that the ideals and habits inculcated by the school are therefore destroyed (46:543-48).

CHURCH

The influence of church and Sunday school upon children's ideals of truthfulness cannot be estimated in this study, for
although eighteen mentioned religious motives for veracity, only
three indicated whether the source of these motives was the
home, the church, the Sunday school, or a combination of these.

SOCIAL GROUPS

The second-grade children seem to have to a slight extent the idea that truthfulness plays a part in living pleasantly in their social group. Two were sufficiently impressed with social motives for truthfulness, ("People do not believe those who lie" and "It is not nice to make people believe things which are not true"), to give them as their reasons for regarding lying as wrong. Two others indicated that they were ashamed when other children discovered their lies. The appreciation of the social aspect of truthfulness becomes more definite and more common among the older children. It is curious to notice that the fourth grade were impressed by the tendency of lies to injure others, while not until sixth grade did they mention the fact that the dishonest person suffered from the group's treatment of him.

II. Psychological Factors

The many differences found in the subjects' ideas of truthfulness, in their feelings of duty regarding it, and in the motives which they recognized as influencing their atti-
tudes toward it, make an effort to classify the psychological factors involved appear rather difficult.

FEELING

If the idea of truthfulness appears first as a specific form of obedience, it must be largely associated with feeling, since obedience is at first secured by making acts which conform to it yield pleasant consequences to the child and disobedience result in unpleasantness. These consequences are soon associated with the emotions of fear and love. The pain caused the parents by a lie, the punishment received for it, or both together, become an inhibitory force against lying long before a child can intellectually perceive inherent evil in truthfulness.

FEAR

According to their answers, fear is regarded as a powerful stimulus toward truthfulness by children. Having been detected in a lie and punished for it, or having witnessed this experience in another was most commonly mentioned as leading to a desire to be truthful below the eighth grade. This group differed only in that the disgrace rather than the punishment of a detected lie was dreaded. Except a few cases which have been distinctly altruistic, the perception of the natural consequences of lying, such as loss of friends, distrust of the
social group, or even the unhappy feeling of guilt when the lie is not detected, must have been more or less accompanied by a reasonable fear, since they were regarded as important enough to awaken a desire to be truthful.

Fear probably held some place in the consciousness of those who condemned lying as an offense against God, but only one specifically mentioned it, saying, "God may punish you."

The recognition that fear is also one of the most important causes of children's lies is common. This fact has received great attention in recent years, and is confirmed by the opinion of many who deal with little children. Triplett sums it up by saying, "Lying is the great refuge of childhood" (49:223). From all sides parents and teachers are warned that severe punishments for slight faults and accidents, as well as undue strictness naturally result in deception. The children's answers support this position, since in all grades they found truthfulness most difficult in admitting faults and accidents. It is significant that the difficulty of acknowledging an accident was remarked almost as often as was the difficulty of confessing a fault.

Although fear obviously exerts both a positive and a negative influence upon the development of habits of veracity, it is impossible to estimate its importance exactly, since it can seldom be isolated from other influences. Even in the most simple cases, where a child stated that he was deterred from
future lying by punishment, it is necessary to assume as a factor sufficient intelligence at least to understand in a general way the meaning of lying and to understand that lying is not a successful way of meeting one's difficulties. The punishment itself might have been rendered more painful because of the love between the parent and child, or because of the wound to his self-respect. In dealing with children we are also likely to forget that pride as well as fear makes the acknowledgment of faults difficult, and that this sentiment is well developed in older children.

LOVE

Love for parents is seldom directly mentioned as a basis for the desire to tell the truth, but it is implied by the readiness with which the younger children accept and quote the position taken by their elders. Among the younger children such affection is often given to the teachers. When a strong feeling of this type is present, merely observing that types of behavior please or grieve the objects of the child's affection is often quite sufficient to result in their repetition of inhibition. The strength of such feeling, as well as its tendency to be expressed in conduct varies in individuals. In some cases it seems to exert no influence unless supplemented by the use of reward and punishment, while at the other extreme are those who find in such results their strongest motives.
The child who resolved to be truthful because she was grieved at hearing her mother say that she could not depend upon her was probably of this type.

SYMPATHY

Other altruistic emotions, especially sympathy, have great weight in influencing children's judgments regarding moral problems. It is noteworthy that, while only one justified lying on the ground of purely personal advantage, and one felt that it might be excused in avoiding undeserved punishment when the truth would not be accepted as such, twelve considered it right to lie in order to benefit others.

When concrete situations were presented all without exception pronounced the conduct of Mary, who lied to conceal her own fault, both untruthful and wrong; yet in judging Peter, who lied to shield a friend, more than one fifth of each class called his conduct right. In the eighth grade there is a sudden rise in the frequency of this decision. There 45% pronounced Peter right, although 75% considered him untruthful. Many factors probably influenced these replies. Children at the eighth-grade level are likely to be conscious of the conflicting elements of such a situation. They are of an age to respond emotionally to the idea of loyalty, and their loyalty is likely to be given whole-heartedly to the members of their group, unlike that of little children, which is often directed
to their elders. The desire to avoid trouble for a classmate is not, however, a simple altruistic impulse. Tattling is contrary to the accepted code of the group, and is likely to result in the discomfort of social disapproval for one who offends.

Sympathy, accompanied by an idea of justice, probably influenced those who admitted faults to save others from being punished for them, and it is likely that this emotion entered into the experience of the children who were impressed by the fact that their lies resulted in unforeseen injuries to others.

Repeatedly subjects who gave as an abstract principle the theory that it is never right to tell a lie reversed the decision when confronted with a specific case in which truthfulness might cause suffering to others, and called certain acts at once untruthful and right.

The finding that altruism plays an important part in the formation of children's moral judgments is confirmed by several investigations. In his early study G. Stanley Hall found children considered lying justified for noble ends; and concluded that the normal child feels the heroism of self-sacrifice far earlier than he appreciates the sublimity of truth (14:69).

Kline found that children from eight to eighteen are, as a rule altruistic rather than selfish; and that their judgments of right and justice are more likely to be the result of emo-
Moore remarks in this connection that sympathy often clouds children's moral judgments (37:164), but advances the theory that, when moral dullness is occasionally found in children who test normally in other respects, it may be due to some defect of emotional resonance which deprives them of the assistance which others obtain from sympathetic feeling (37:164).

It seems reasonable to suppose that the children who were sympathetically distressed at the sight of others suffering or about to suffer from the results of their lies were capable of a more intense appreciation of the social injustice of a lie than would be possible if this were perceived merely as a reasonable proposition.

ADMIRATION

Admiration of others' veracity is not frequently mentioned as stimulating the desire to acquire this trait. The examples of parents, an adult friend, and a chum, were mentioned as eliciting such desires, but the leading exemplars were Washington and Lincoln. The regular appearance of these two names was curious, since no other individual outside the children's actual environment was mentioned. It is possible that the explanation may lie in the many ways in which these men become real to the children. Their stories are told even in the earliest days, with stress placed upon such incidents.
and characteristic as tend to win the interest and approval of young children; their birthdays are celebrated, not only with holidays, but with solemn assemblies; their praises are set forth in song; their pictures ornament the walls of the school rooms; and reverence plays a large part in these particular complexities of admiration.

In these respects they afford a contrast to other great men who are perhaps equally worthy of admiration, and whose exploits, in themselves, seem even more likely to evoke it. The stories of these others are studied at the appropriate time and may or may not be presented in such a way as to awaken a feeling of admiration. The class passes on to the next epoch; and if in some children an incipient glow of hero-worship has been present it is likely to die out, since there is no repeated stimulus to intensify or sustain it.

This study offers no grounds for judging whether or not ideals inspired by admiration serve to assist in the control of conduct. Past investigators differ in their conclusions. Most people would probably agree that, when accompanied by appropriate intellectual and volitional factors, they serve to increase power.

DISSUSTR

Disgust at the sight of another's dishonesty was mentioned twice as an incentive to truthfulness. Most of those
who were affected by another's act seemed impressed by the consequences rather than by the repulsive nature of the lie.

SUGGESTION

Suggestion is one of the most commonly used methods of securing desirable conduct in the classroom. In primary grades it is surprisingly effective in securing results of a physical nature; there such a remark as, "John sits in such a nice position!" will usually cause all the children in the room to subside rapidly into their seats, fold their hands, and strain their backs to the breaking point. It seems reasonable to suppose, therefore, that suggestion in the moral field might affect children's conduct. The reasons given by second-grade pupils for the principle that it is never right to tell a lie permit this view, but give no positive evidence in its support. Older children are far less suggestible, perhaps fortunately so, since the investigations of both Slaght and of Hartshorne and May reveal a positive correlation between suggestibility and deceitfulness (47:58; 16:41).

REMORSE

There is no indication that remorse for untruthfulness makes a vivid impression upon the minds of young children, for a painful feeling following an undetected lie was mentioned first in the fourth grade, and then only once. This appeared
three times in the sixth grade, while in the eighth grade, where more definite terms were employed, the discomfort of a guilty conscience was mentioned six times.

SHAME

Shame at being detected in a lie is more common and was mentioned apart from the idea of punishment as early as second grade. It is probably also an element in many of the cases in which the children mentioned only detection and punishment. While little children emphasize the idea of punishment, it is scarcely referred to in eighth grade, where shame was most frequently mentioned.

DESIRE FOR SOCIAL APPROVAL

The natural desire of men for the approval and good will of their fellows is indicated as a motivating force. Second-grade children showed this in such answers as lying is wrong "because they don't want you to;" "If you lie people will not believe you." The child who said, "I want to be truthful to my friends," was probably actuated by such a desire. Certainly, the one who said that everybody can catch you in a lie was influenced by it. Since these showed so definitely the influence of the desire for approval, it seems likely to have been a factor among those who gave more vague answers. This motive persists and becomes more definite in the upper grades, where
in its negative aspect, shame at deserving disapproval, it was also quite commonly recognized.

Desire for social approval makes truth difficult as well as attractive. It was hard to report a low mark, even when there was little opportunity for successful deception. It was difficult to tell the truth instead of maintaining a friend's position in a dispute. Doubtless, too, this desire is partly responsible for the difficulty experienced in admitting faults and accidents.

INTELLIGENCE

The part which intelligence plays in children's moral concepts, judgments, and mental attitudes is difficult to discuss adequately from a theoretical point of view, since it is, when influencing behavior, almost always associated with other forms of mental activity. Experimental findings do not settle this difficulty, for Hartshorne and May find positive relation between honesty and intelligence (16:408), while Slaght concludes that the intelligence factor is a relatively negligible element in comparing truthful and untruthful children (47:57).

The children tested give evidence of the factor of intelligence in moral judgments in several ways.

Decisions based upon accepted principles were frequent. That it is wrong to tell a lie was, of course, the most frequently stated rule, and was common even in the second grade;
but since this was brought out so strongly by the nature of the questionnaire, it is of less interest than those given spontaneously in solving difficulties. In second grade the principle that people should not refuse to talk to visitors was advanced to support the judgment that Mrs. Harper was untruthful and wrong in her conduct. Curiously enough, this idea continues even to the eighth grade, where it was supported by the text, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In addition to this, fourth-graders accepted as general principles that people should do their own work (that is, not present others' as their own), and that it is wrong to tease little children. Sixth-grade subjects added that it is wrong to accept credit for another's work, and that it is right and truthful to say what you really believe to be true, even if you are mistaken. Rules were frequently quoted in this group. A greater tendency to base judgments upon principles and the use of more generalized principles appeared in the eighth grade. In addition to those used by the lower grades they advanced the following: "A person has a right to be alone in her own house," (thus justifying "not at home"). Lies which injure other people are worse than those which do not. It is right to follow your conscience even though you are mistaken in your idea of what you should do. A little child's conduct is not wrong if he knows no better. A certain amount of fibbing in jokes is acceptable.

The ability to appreciate the relative seriousness of for-
Hidden acts, in which intelligence is the most important factor, appears to increase rapidly up to the sixth grade, but in this the eighth grade do not seem to advance much beyond the sixth. This is illustrated in part by tracing the tendency to discriminate between the lie of excuse and the one which incriminates another, and is brought out especially in the comments on the second story. To the younger children the fault of being out of one's seat and playing in a classroom was so serious as to obscure the real problem of truthfulness. This happened seldom in the fourth grade, and never in the sixth and eighth.

Attention has been called to the attempts of upper-grade children to be consistent in their judgments regarding truthfulness. While some of the expedients used to attain this purpose might appear anything but intelligent to an adult, the desire for consistency indicated an intellectual aspect in their moral judgments.

The effects of emotional factors, in given situations, in swaying children's judgment, as well as the testimony of others upon this subject, have been cited above. But these children do not appear to be governed entirely by emotion in making decisions.

It is a prevailing opinion among those interested in the training of children that fear is one of the most common causes of lying. However, this usually leads them to act against their judgment of what is right, rather than to alter this judgment.
In theory, only one child thought that a lie to save one's self was justified, and then only when innocent and convinced that a true explanation would not be accepted. In concrete situations all, without exception, pronounced the girl who lied to conceal her own fault untruthful and doing wrong. In contrast to this a fifth of each class approved as right and truthful the conduct of Peter, who lied to shield Frank.

The explanation that children are naturally altruistic and sympathetic does not seem sufficient to account for this difference, for the far stronger impulse of self-preservation does not appear to cloud their judgment to such an extent, in spite of its effect upon their behavior. It is possible that in many cases a child recalls, as a result of his training and experience, many rules of conduct, such as: "It is wrong to cause trouble for others"; "It is wrong to tell tales"; "It is wrong to break a promise"; "It is wrong to tell a lie." When these appear to conflict, so that it appears necessary to violate one or the other of them, the altruistic bent of his nature or his social tendency will probably lead him to follow the one which results most agreeably for his associates and consequently for himself. A child, in discussing a situation where the duty of keeping a promise appeared to her to be in direct conflict with the duty of telling the truth, advised lying to a third party on the grounds that it is better to tell one lie than two. To her mind the truth told in violation of her
promise was a lie and also rendered the original promise untruthful. The decision can not be said to be an emotional one, even though an adult would not have followed such a course of reasoning.

In this study emotion does not seem to greatly influence judgment against a single understood principle of action, but when two principles appear to be in conflict, an emotional element attached to one seems, in many cases to augment its influence and causes it to be selected instead of another. In such decisions intelligence plays a part, though the relative importance of the emotional and intellectual factors involved is likely to differ in children as it does in adults.

The conviction, based upon experience, that truthfulness is advantageous frequently occurred, often qualified by the addition of such phrases as, "in school," "with teachers," or "with parents." In both the generalization and the limitation we see the functioning of intelligence. In many cases this appeared to be the strongest motive for desiring to be truthful. If this is so, it raises the question of what should reasonably be expected with a change of environment. This condition seems to furnish the greatest strength and the greatest weakness in these children's training; the strength lying in the good habits of truthfulness formed, and the weakness, in the tendency to accept these habits as sufficient and to overlook the absence of motives of a kind which will carry over into adult
life situations, where the same intelligent insight which found honesty the best policy in school and home may frequently perceive it to be quite unpoltic.
CHAPTER IV
CHAPTER IV

Children Compared with
Adults in Respect to Truthfulness

In the preceding chapters any reference to the conformity or non-conformity of children's judgments regarding truthfulness with those of adults has been avoided, but a brief comparison may be of interest.

The ways in which adults deal with the problem of veracity may be roughly classified into four groups as follows:--

1. Lying is always wrong, although when a good and serious reason exists, the truth may be concealed by other means, such as silence, evasion, or the use of broad mental reservation (11:531; 35:558-59; 8:93; 43:534; 48:470).

"Mental reservation", says Rickaby, "is an act of the mind, limiting the spoken phrase that it may not bear the full sense that at first hearing it seemed to bear. The limitation of the spoken sense, is said to be broad or pure according as it is, or is not, indicated externally. A pure mental reservation, where the speaker uses words in a limited meaning, without giving any outward clue to the limitation, is, as I have already said, in nothing different from a lie, and is wrong as a lie is always wrong. . . . .
Mental reservation, even on the broad gauge, is permissible only as a last resource, when no other means are available for the preservation of some secret, which one has a duty to others, or a right to oneself, to keep" (43:535).

2. Lying is always wrong, but every falsehood is not a lie. It is not a lie to deceive one who has no right to the truth, such as a criminal or a dangerous maniac, or to deceive one who will be benefited rather than injured by the deception (39:314-20; 43:533; 44:165-66).

3. Lying is in general wrong, but may be lawful when it is necessary to our own or our neighbor’s welfare (53:104; 41:672).

4. The idea which leads to what Newman calls the unscientific way of dealing with lies, and of which he gives an entertaining description. “On a great or cruel occasion a man cannot help telling a lie, and he would not be a man did he not tell it, but still it is wrong and he ought not to do it, and he must trust that the sin will be forgiven him, though he goes about to commit it. It is a frailty, and had better not be anticipated, and not thought of again after it is once over” (39:300).

The adults who seriously and thoughtfully take the position that lying is always wrong do so, for the most part, upon the grounds that a lie is intrinsically, as well as extrinsically, evil. Fisher expresses this very clearly.
"Speech is a gift conferred on man by God for the express purpose of manifesting his thoughts to others; this is its essential and primary end; this is the order established by the Divine intellect and commanded by the Divine will. To use speech, therefore, to manifest as the thought of the mind what is not the thought of the mind, is to use the faculty given by God in a way that is contrary to the Divine intention, in a way that violates its primary purpose. When a man knowingly and willingly uses words, actions or gestures which belie his inner convictions, he does violence to his own nature, he outrages his own dignity, he misuses his God-given faculty, he introduces into his soul elements of discord. All this is forbidden by the natural law. Due order requires that there be harmony between the internal judgment and the external expression of it. This harmony the lie destroys. It also destroys the harmony that should exist between the intellect and the will. The intellect accepts the truth, and the will, by moving the faculty of speech to express the false, repudiates the truth. This involves disorder in the soul, which is thus set at variance with itself. The lie, also, by its very nature introduces disorder in the mind of the hearer. It is disorder in the intellect to assent to what is false. This, however is the direct effect of the lie. Moreover, the lie runs counter to man's social nature, for it tends to break down mutual confidence and weakens the bonds of society. And, most fundamen-
tal of all, it misrepresents the truth as expressed in the mind of God" (11:531).

Naturally, the agreement of children to the proposition that lying is always wrong is, even when sincere and consistent, based upon far different reasons. They accept it upon the authority of elders, and in many cases are strengthened in their convictions by their observation and experience of unfortunate results of lying. We have seen that when the question was put theoretically all children below the sixth grade and most of those above it took this position, but all except thirty-three preferred other ways of dealing with the problem when asked to judge definite situations. These thirty-three pronounced untruthful all statements contrary to the mind of the speaker and intended to deceive, and declared each untruthful statement wrong.

No child said anything which would indicate that he consciously accepted as a principle that certain verbal deceptions, or types of speaking against one's mind might not be lying, but their practical judgments seem to indicate an implicit acceptance of this theory, for seventy-three said that statements obviously contrary to the minds of the speakers, and intended to deceive, were not lies when the motives for the deceptions were good ones, especially the saving of life. Their argument would appear to be that, since all lying is wrong, an act which they understand to be right cannot be a lie; although it is
possible that older children, who, in many cases, recognize, to some extent, the social evil of lying, may come far nearer to the reasoning of some adults who hold this view. They may reason that the great evil of a lie resides in its injury to society and, if, in a given case, society is likely to benefit from deception and suffer from the truth, the deception cannot be called a lie.

The idea that a lie is, in general, wrong, but may be lawful when it is necessary to our own or our neighbor's welfare is considered by Westermarck to be upheld by orthodox Protestant theology, and he quotes Sidgwick to the effect that where deception is designed to benefit the person deceived, "common sense seems to concede that it may sometimes be right" (53:104). Paulsen concurs in this view and thinks that everybody acknowledges the lawfulness of the necessary lie (41:664).

In theory only sixteen children took this position, but in making practical judgments this solution of the difficulties involved in problems of veracity became very popular, for sixty-one subjects recognized deceptions practiced with good intentions as untruthful, but, nevertheless, called them right.

Among adults this view seems based upon the idea that a lie is only extrinsically evil, and therefore to be permitted when its effects are good rather than bad. Paulsen bases it upon the assumption that veracity is only a form of benevolence
which is manifested in the communication of thought (41:664). Children gave no reasons to support this view; when the question was asked they either ignored it or replied by telling when they thought that the truth need not be told.

In theory, at least, children who believe that a lie may be permissible compare quite favorably with adults in their opinions as to the circumstances under which it may be allowed. To their minds lying was justified for the following motives: (1) To prevent death or serious illness, which would result from telling the truth; (2) to outwit criminals; (3) to keep insane people from doing harm; (4) to serve one's country in time of war; (5) to keep family secrets from the curious; (6) to make people happy on their deathbeds; (7) to defend one's self, when, although innocent, the truth will not suffice; (8) when necessary. Adult moralists would scarcely approve the seventh motive without much qualification, while the eighth is too vague for discussion; but for most of the others they could find approval in some more mature minds. Paulsen, for example, thinks lying permissible when the physician considers it necessary for the good of a patient, when by a momentary deception life may be saved, when outwitting criminals, in war, and, to a certain extent, in diplomacy, and when the party addressed is unable to understand or to bear the truth. In this statement he justifies lying to the elderly people whose minds are failing, but not to children, whose requests for
unsuitable information can reasonably be refused by authority (41:664-68). Sidgwick mentions, as an example of a suitable motive, speaking falsely to an invalid to avoid shock (53:104). An unsigned article in the Encyclopedia Americana justifies lying to burglars, to the sick, and to an enemy spy (27:404).

While it seems probable that children, as well as adults, may frequently have recourse to that "unscientific" method of solving the problem of veracity which Newman so aptly described, there is no positive indication of this in the investigation.

The reasons given for considering lying wrong were, in order of their frequency; the unhappy effects of lying upon the individual who practices it (ranging from uncomfortable feelings to the formation of bad character and the loss of the esteem of society); the injurious effects of lying upon society, most specifically the more immediate social group; and reasons derived from religious instruction.

Among the older children, in several instances there seemed to be some perception of the ideal that truthfulness is necessary to human dignity, and the feeling that a lie which is undetected, and which in itself seems to offer no harm to others is, nevertheless, degrading. These children are perhaps approaching the point of view of the more mature minds who believe that a lie is, by its own nature, evil (11:529; 24:251; 39:248; 48:469).
Children who perceive the menace to social intercourse which is inherent in lying differ from adults in that they understand this danger only to a limited extent, and are inclined to be influenced only by its effect within small groups.

All children above the fourth grade and most of those in or below it are in agreement with adult opinion in understanding the possibility of unjust deception by silence and in regarding such deception as wrong.

No adult would be likely to condemn as a liar a boy who honestly, but mistakenly, said that a bell had not been rung when it had, yet 25% to 65% of the classes questioned took this view. This suggests that children are not well able to distinguish between a formal and material lie, although the ability becomes greater in the upper grades. However, such a conclusion is weakened by the realization that to many children a lie is "something that is not true." The deficiency of knowledge in such a case makes even a tentative attempt to estimate the deficiency in judgment unsafe.

In judging a specific case all children concurred with the opinions of adult society and moralists that the pure mental reservation is wrong and untruthful.

Children give little consideration to evasion as a means of avoiding both lying and the telling of dangerous or painful
truths. Only a few suggested it as an original solution in given problems, and but 5% recognized it as a lawful device when it was presented in a story. Evasion is certainly in common use among adults, but it is difficult to decide whether children differ in not using it or in not recognizing it.

Over a fifth of each class considered a boy who lied to shield his friend truthful. In view of the fact that the question was asked by one in authority, and that the injury which the friend would suffer from the truth would probably not go beyond a deserved and appropriate punishment for a trivial fault, adults would not be likely to accept this case as one in which a lie is permitted even if they granted the existence of such cases; yet to a child such a situation is an important one, and it might be held that a boy who acted in such a way differs in his application of principle, rather than in his principle, from those adults who would permit lying to prevent serious injury to one's neighbor.

Children, unlike adults, are poor in devices which enable them to keep to themselves opinions whose expression is both unkind and useless without at the same time violating the truth.

Those included in the investigation had little idea of the significance of conventional phrases. Only two gave answers which clearly showed that they understood the phrase, "not at
home" , in its accepted sense , although a few others may have had this in mind. To most children the use of such an expression is a lie.

In distinguishing between officious and injurious lies children seem far inferior to adults. The ability to discriminate between the relative evil of these types increases progressively from grade to grade, but less than 66% of the eighth grade make this distinction.

The duty of respecting a professional secret was not appreciated by younger children, but the eighth-graders more nearly approximate the usual judgment of adults in such matters. Nearly 90% of them approved the action of a doctor who put off a curious person who asked a direct question about his patient with, "I really cannot tell you."

Unlike adults, the majority of these children condemned as untruthful and wrong the jocose lie which could not possibly deceive and which was not intended to do so.

Significance of Should

To many of the children questioned the word should was not simply a term of implying moral obligation, but suggested a more perfect form of behavior than is required. For example, these children thought it right for a doctor questioned by the
curious about his patient's affairs to answer, "I really cannot tell you", and said he was not untruthful in so doing, but he should explain that he knew but did not consider it right to tell. This interpretation of the word should, accompanied by a demand for a full truthful explanation as the thing which should be done in every story (not excepting the case where this might have resulted in death, and where the evasion used was considered right and truthful) occurred in every grade tested.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
Summary and Conclusions

Since the investigation was limited to 168 pupils in one school, and in its results tended to show that environment played a part in the formation of children's concepts of truthfulness, conclusions can be given only for the particular school examined.

The data suggested the following answers to the problems indicated in Chapter One.

1. Except in a few cases, the word "truthful" has a definite meaning for children as low as the second grade, but the concept at this level is a narrow one, being limited to the understanding that a truthful person is one who speaks the truth, or one who does not tell lies. In the fourth grade this concept becomes broader, for the possibility of deceiving by silence is recognized. This idea is enlarged upon in the sixth grade, while eighth-grade subjects include in the meaning of the term "truthful" the avoidance of any sort of deceit as well as of exaggeration.

2. The children's attitudes\(^1\) in regard to truthfulness change considerably between second and eighth grade. In

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\(^1\) Attention is again called to the fact that the word "attitude" is used in the sense of the point of view, or apperceptive attitude.
theory, the lower-grade children condemn all lying as wrong. There is a slight departure from this position in the sixth grade, and in the eighth grade 32.5% believe that lying may at times be justified if the reason for it is serious. Their attitudes as revealed by their judgments in practical cases differ widely from those expressed abstractly, for 76.75% of the second-grade children justified cases of lying when they approved the motives. This inconsistency lessens regularly in the upper grades, but on the whole children cannot be said to be consistent in their attitudes.

3. The subjects gave evidence of having been influenced in the formation of concepts of truthfulness and in their attitudes toward truthfulness largely by such psychological factors as fear, love, sympathy, shame, desire for social approval, and intelligence. Admiration, disgust, remorse, and self-respect were influential to a lesser degree, at least in so far as the subjects were aware. These factors, for the most part, operated both in a positive and in a negative manner, the same emotion or sentiment operating at one time to make veracity appear a desirable goal, and at another occasioning an impulse to conceal the truth. Home, school, and other environmental conditions seemed, in general, to favor the positive functioning of these factors in regard to truthfulness.
4. Children differ to a certain extent from adults in their ways of thinking of truthfulness. They sometimes are inferior to them in judgment, though in many respects they compare quite favorably.

An obvious difference is found in children's limited appreciation of the reasons which make veracity obligatory. Their chief arguments for it are based upon the grounds of authority and expediency, in contrast with adults, who base their acceptance of this virtue upon rational or social grounds.

Children find truthfulness more difficult than do adults, for they are aware of few devices for making truthfulness without offensiveness easy to practice. Conventional phrases are almost without significance to these children, and comparatively few recognize the possibility of evading dangerous and unjustified questions.

They are inferior to adults in the ability to distinguish the relative evil of certain types of lying. They tend to make little distinction between an officious and an injurious lie, and seriously condemn the jocose statement made without the possibility or the intention of deception.

In their unanimous rejection of pure mental reservation they compare very favorably with adults, and also in their tendency to condemn unanimously all lies which they recognize as purely selfish ones.

Children who believe that lying may sometimes be justified,
on the whole tend to limit its use to those occasions on which adult moralists holding this view permit it.
APPENDIX

Questionnaire

1. Is it ever right to tell a lie?\(^1\)

Give the reason for your answer.

If you answered yes explain when you think it right.

2. Explain what you mean when you say that a person is truthful.

3. Have you ever had any experience which made you wish to be truthful? If you did, tell what it was.

4. Did anything which you learned in school make you wish to be more truthful? What was it?

5. Did anything ever happen which made you feel that it is sometimes hard to be truthful? What was it?

\(^1\) Question I was presented orally. The other questions and the stories were given in mimeographed booklets.
SILENCE

When Marian came into her room she found a drawing on her desk. Later when the teacher looked at the work she thought Marian had done it. She said that the drawing was excellent and that she would give Marian a high mark. Marian did not say anything.

1. Was Marian untruthful? .........................
2. Did she do right or wrong? ......................
3. Give the reason for your answer.
4. What should she have done?

On his clean-up day Bill had charge of the far corner of the boys' yard. He worked so hard that he did not hear the tardy bell when it was rung. A boy who came late asked him if the tardy bell had been rung. Bill said "No".

1. Was Bill untruthful? ..............................
2. Did he do right or wrong? ......................
3. Give the reason for your answer.
While some boys were alone in their classroom they began to play. Earl knocked the window pole down. In falling the pole broke a window pane. The teacher asked Earl if he had broken the window, but he said "No". He said it was all right to say that because the window pole broke the glass.

1. Was Earl untruthful? ..........................
2. Did he do right or wrong? .....................
3. Give the reason for your answer.
4. What should he have done? .....................

Mrs. Smith was very ill. The doctor said that if anything happened to excite her she might die. Her little son Johnny was run over by an automobile and taken to the hospital. When Mrs. Smith asked to see Johnny the nurse told her that he was away from home for a few days. Her friend, Mrs. Brown, told her that Jack was visiting his grandmother in the country, and was having a very good time.

1. Was the nurse untruthful? .....................
2. Was Mrs. Brown untruthful? .....................
3. Did the nurse do right or wrong? .................
4. Give the reason for your answer.

5. Did Mrs. Brown do right or wrong? ..............

6. Give the reason for your answer.

7. What should have been done? ......................

(5)

During study time Frank threw a queer seed pod at Peter. Peter threw it back at him, but the teacher saw it fall. She asked who threw it, and Peter, who wished to be truthful stood up. While the teacher was talking to him she noticed what a strange pod it was and asked him where he got it. Peter did not wish to make trouble for Frank, so he told her he found it.

1. Was Peter untruthful? ..............................

2. Did he do right or wrong? ..........................

3. Give the reason for your answer.

4. What should Peter have done?

(6)

Mary had a new dress, of which she was very proud. She
asked Helen how she liked it. Helen thought it was an ugly dress, but she did not wish to hurt her friends feelings. She answered, "It is very pretty."

1. Was Helen untruthful? 

2. Did Helen do right or wrong in answering this way? 

3. Give reasons for your answer. 

4. What should Helen have done? 

Mrs. Harper was very busy and had no time to spend visiting or talking. She told the maid to tell anyone who came to see her that she was not at home.

1. Was Mrs. Harper untruthful? 

2. Did she do right or wrong? 

3. Give the reason for your answer. 

4. What should Mrs. Harper have done?

Mary and Helen took some cake from the pantry. Their mother was angry when she missed it, and they felt afraid when
she asked them who took it. Mary said that she didn't take it. Helen said that Eleanor had taken it.

1. Was Mary untruthful?  
2. Was Helen untruthful?  
3. Did Mary do right or wrong?  
4. Give the reason for your answer.  

5. Did Helen do right or wrong?  
6. Give the reason for your answer.  

7. Was one of these girls worse than the other?  
8. Why?  

9. What should they have done?

Tom has a habit of asking foolish questions. His brother Bob teases him about this. Last night when Bob came home, Tom asked, "Are you home so early?" To tease him Bob answered, "No, I am still at school."

1. Was Bob untruthful?  
2. Did he do right or wrong?  
3. Give the reason for your answer.
Mr. White who has been very ill, has been treated by Dr. Harris. Mr. Jones, who is very curious asked Dr. Harris how long Mr. White would have to stay home from work. Dr. Harris thinks that doctors should not talk about their patients' affairs, so he answered, "I really cannot tell you."

1. Was Dr. Harris untruthful? ......................
2. Did he do right or wrong? ......................
3. Give the reason for your answer.

4. What should Dr. Harris have done?

Mary's mother told her that she might go to the movies Saturday afternoon. Her friend Eleanor was there. On the way home Eleanor told Mary that her mother did not allow her to attend movies, and begged her not to tell anyone that she had been there. Mary felt sorry for her and promised not to tell. Later Eleanor's mother asked Mary where Eleanor had been that afternoon. Mary did not wish to break her promise, so she said that she did not know.

1. Was Mary untruthful? ......................
2. Did she do right or wrong? .................

3. Give the reason for your answer.

4. What should Mary have done?
Bibliography 1


1 *** Indicates books and articles especially useful
** Useful in a general way
* Not especially pertinent to subject

No book or article regarded as of absolutely no use in preparing this paper is included in the bibliography.


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The thesis "Children's Concepts of Truthfulness," written by Marcella Ann Twomey, has been accepted by the Graduate School of Loyola University with reference to form, and by the readers whose names appear below with reference to content. It is, therefore, accepted as a partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree conferred.

George H. Mahowald, S.J.     April, 1931
Austin G. Schmidt, S. J.     April, 1931
Dr. Francis A. Ryan          April, 1931