

Joseph Lee: His Philosophy and Its Influence
on the Playground Movement

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As a relatively organized community action the playground movement in America began to take form in the 1890's. It was then that several Northern cities began to look at the problem of children in the streets of large urban areas. The problem of boys who had nothing to do was part of a greater problem: the adjustment of a previously rural American society to a new urban, industrially-oriented mode of life. With this larger problem pushing out from behind, the playground movement became a part of the Progressive Movement.

The early work of the movement, however, did not always have this larger overview of adjusting society. Many people at the turn of the century were concerned with the excessively high rates of crime in urban areas. Court cases revealed a large proportion of juvenile criminals. After school and during other hours on their own these boys found nothing to occupy them but the streets of large cities. With no outlet for their energies they tended to get into trouble by breaking windows, by trampling down what little grass grew, or by stealing just for the thrill of adventure and danger.

With the desire to prevent crime came the realization that the city was a bad place for the child to grow up. Not only was he led along a path of crime, but his physical needs and wants were not satisfied. Fresh air, sunlight, and room to run and play were denied the growing child. If society did not act, future generations would grow into adulthood physically and socially warped. The need for keeping American society fit and strong called for action on the part of the

leaders of society.

At its inception the playground movement as such was concerned only with children. Earlier efforts, however, had provided space for recreation and sports. During the 1820's outdoor gymnasiums had been established at New England. In 1826 the first public outdoor gymnasium was established in Boston.¹ Although people lost interest in these efforts in the 1840's, they were the first attempts at combining physical training with education and public concern.² Further interest in recreation was provided in the 1850's and 1860's when land was set aside for public parks such as Central Park and Van Courtlandt Park in New York City, Washington Park in Chicago, and Fairmount Park in Philadelphia.³

The recognition of the need for playgrounds for growing children did not appear until 1872. In that year the town of Brookline, Massachusetts, voted to set aside land for the express use as a playground, not a recreation area. Later such a playground materialized.⁴ Only with the establishment, however, of a sand garden in Boston in 1885 did the actual playground movement come to life.⁵ This first garden was open three days a week for six weeks in July and August. By 1887 ten

¹E. B. Mero, American Playgrounds (Springfield, Mass., 1908), p. 245.

²Massachusetts towns had provided the commons for games, and Southerners enjoyed many outdoor types of amusement such as horse racing, cock fights, and bowling.

³E. B. Mero, American Playgrounds, p. 239.

⁴Ibid., p. 242.

⁵The idea of a sand garden had been imported from Germany after the visit of Dr. Marie Zakrewska to Berlin. This sand pile was placed in the yard of the Children's Mission on Parmeter Street in Boston by the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association. George D. Butler, Introduction to Community Recreation (New York, 1940), p. 61.

play centers had been opened, and paid matrons were used for the first time.⁶

These early efforts had been conducted by private individuals and philanthropic organizations interested in their community. In 1893 a supervisor and trained kindergarteners began to be used at the sand gardens. When all sand piles were removed from private property and placed on school yards in 1894, the sand gardens had come to be called playgrounds. Until 1899 the Massachusetts Emergency and Hygiene Association was the sole supporter of these playgrounds. This association maintained control and operation of many play areas for a long while, but the Boston School Committee, which began to support some areas in 1901, finally took full control.⁷ Because most of the early efforts to provide playground facilities were privately backed, it took some time before a well-organized and well-supervised program was put into effect.

Boston led the way again in providing for the first free, equipped and supervised outdoor gymnasium. In 1889 the Boston Park Department converted a ten-acre tract along the Charles River into an outdoor gymnasium for men and boys. Located in a congested part of the city, the Charlesbank Outdoor Gymnasium established a new pattern among playgrounds. It was fenced and land-scaped and was provided with swings, ladders, seesaws, a sand garden, and a fifth-mile running track. Wading, bathing, and rowing facilities were also present, along with supervisors to conduct the program.⁸

⁶George D. Butler, Introduction, p. 61.

⁷Ibid., p. 61.

⁸A section for girls and women was provided in 1891. George D. Butler, Introduction, p. 63.

Boston's example was followed by a number of other urban areas. The work was almost always done by private individuals or charitable organizations. In 1889 a playground opened in New York, and by 1899 there were 31 school play centers conducted by the School Board. New York also took steps to acquire public playgrounds such as the Charlesbank Outdoor Gymnasium.⁹ In Philadelphia the Civic Club, the Culture Extension League, the City Park Association, and the College Settlement were instrumental in getting playgrounds started. By 1898 the school board with the aid of the Civic Club maintained 25 playgrounds. In addition to the public playgrounds a number of civic groups maintained playgrounds privately in order to provide greater opportunities for play.¹⁰ Chicago was another important center of playground work. The South Park System had been established in 1869, but it was not able to satisfy the needs of Chicago.¹¹ Beginning in 1892 with the opening of a model playground at Hull House, Chicago started out on a program which did more to influence playground and park development than any city other than Boston.

Because of the work done by private citizens and charities, ten

⁹Due to the efforts of Jacob A. Riis a 2 5/8-acre plot was purchased and developed in a neighborhood of five- and six-story tenements. Known as Seward Park this well-equipped model playground was opened in 1899. It was intended that the playground should be a neighborhood affair. Because Seward Park was so successful, the Park Department was induced to provide similar facilities in other congested areas of the city. George D. Butler, Introduction, p. 63.

¹⁰The United Women of Maryland were instrumental in providing five playgrounds for Baltimore in 1898. E. B. Mero, American Playgrounds, p. 248.

¹¹The South Park System consisted of ten parks to provide open spaces for Chicagoans. These were later converted into playgrounds. E. B. Mero, American Playgrounds, p. 250.

cities had established fairly well-organized park and playground systems by 1900.¹² Work begun by civic groups was later taken over by the municipalities. Still, by 1900 much of the work was controlled privately. A feeling of community was present only among the small groups of men and women who desired to improve the areas in which they lived. It would be a number of years before the municipal governments would take full control and promote a city-wide community spirit.

1900 seems to be a good spot to pause to reconsider the underlying motives of the playground movement and to look into the philosophy of the movement. The twentieth century witnessed the urbanization of America. The playground movement itself really began to function as a viable organization after 1900. The 1880's and 1890's were the years of experiment and first attempts. After 1900 the movement grew rapidly and became part of the larger Progressive Movement.

The concern over juvenile delinquency and the desire to keep children healthy were the underlying causes of the playground movement. The problem of aimless youth in a large urban area was the product of industrial growth and ^{the} concern of an urban society. With this aspect of the playground movement was tied most urban progressive reform: the struggle of man to adjust to a new environment, to a new way of life.

Because the individual had lost control of his environment, the state had to step in to help the situation. Judge Ben B. Lindsey, famed juvenile court judge, felt that youth had been deprived of proper

¹²The ten cities were Baltimore, Boston, Brooklyn, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New York, and Philadelphia. George D. Butler, Introduction, p. 62.

means to play and had been led to crime to fulfill this need to play. Lindsey advocated state intervention to satisfy the needs left by an uncaring society. Such needs were free education, playgrounds, trade schools, and juvenile courts. It was the duty of the state to provide for the education and growth of the child so that he could fulfill his obligation to society, since the state suffered just as far as the child was ignorant or weak.¹³

If the other source of the movement, the desire to preserve the health of urban dwellers, started men to look toward physical training, this search led to ideas more than it did to physical exercise. Although the first ideas may have been spotlighted by the feeling that urban life seemed to weaken men physically, most theorists of the playground movement became concerned with the place of play in forming a man socially and morally.¹⁴

Civic leaders recognized that industrialization meant urbanization. As people moved into the cities, they became crowded together. There was little opportunity or room for leisure. Children grew up lacking places to play. Juvenile delinquency increased. Separating the physical and social reasoning behind the movement is a difficult task. Ideas imported from Germany had their origins in the physical category, but when they were placed in the atmosphere of American industrial society at the turn of the century, they tended to take on a social connotation.

¹³Judge Ben B. Lindsey, "Public Playgrounds and Juvenile Delinquency," The Independent, v. 65 (August 20, 1908), pp. 420-423.

¹⁴Henry S. Curtis, The Practical Conduct of Play (New York, 1915), p. 6.

German educational leaders of the 1880's realized that formal physical exercises were not making the German people any stronger. The desire of the Kaiser to improve the power of the German "race" was not being realized because the emphasis was on gymnastics and not on play. From 1874 to 1884 different men formulated their own ideas on play and physical training. Although Germany had developed a play philosophy in these years, the English, the Germans felt, had an intuitive love for play and were thus capable of gaining more from their play. Attempts were made to substitute English games for gymnastics, but these failed because a mixture of games and exercise was needed,¹⁵ (games to provide expression and exercise to build young bodies.)

Although many ideas on play, such as the sand gardens, were put into effect and even exported to other nations, a practical play movement was not developed in Germany until 1892. Having four hundred well-equipped playgrounds by 1894, the nation had the resources and atmosphere for a successful movement. The emphasis of the movement was that the child should be taught to love to play so that he would play. The leaders were to instill a desire for play among the children. Because play was natural, a self-activity, the danger of leadership was the stifling of spontaneity, but it was felt that some supervision was needed. As the child played, he would grow physically, intellectually, and morally. It was through play that his capacities could be fully developed.¹⁶

¹⁵James L. Hughes, "The Educational Value of Play and the Recent Play-Movement in Germany," Educational Review, v. 8 (Nov. 1894), pp. 327-329.

¹⁶James L. Hughes, "Educational Value," pp. 329-330.

Since the German play movement was directed primarily toward physical fitness, it could only offer ideas and inspiration to Americans, who did not want to adopt the militaristic foundation of the movement. The American playground movement, therefore, took up much of the philosophy of the Germans but oriented it toward solving some of the social problems arising in industrial America.

Joseph Lee has been called the father of the playground movement in America, but he described himself simply as a social worker in Who's Who. Lee was dedicated to his principles and worked hard for them. Born in Brookline, Massachusetts, on March 8, 1862, he was the fourth son and seventh of eight children in the family of Henry and Elizabeth Perkins (Cabot) Lee. The family background was important in helping to form many of Lee's principles.¹⁷

His uncle, James Eliot Cabot, a friend of Emerson's, was singled out by Lee as one person who especially influenced him as he grew up. Joseph Lee had an independent cast of mind and became a free-trader, a Democrat, and a Unitarian. Favoring causes which tended to strengthen community life and individual development, he advocated such things as birth control and immigration restriction and opposed charities, which only gave men material needs. As an adherent of John Stuart Mill he hoped to strengthen men to cope with life as they found it, not to make them dependent upon assistance. He said: "Don't tie on the flower, water the plant."¹⁸

Educated at Exeter and Harvard, from which he received his A.B. in

¹⁷Dictionary of American Biography, v. 22, Supplement Two, p. 374.
¹⁸A.B., p. 374.

1883, he played on the freshman eleven, rowed sophomore crew, and won the junior middleweight boxing championship. After receiving his A.M. and L.L.B. in 1887, Lee decided to use his legal abilities for social work. His father left him a large inheritance which Lee considered as a trust fund for the public welfare. In 1893 he planned the exhibition of Charities and Corrections for Massachusetts at the World's Fair.¹⁹

Lee was interested in three major aspects of community improvement: better functioning of democratic institutions, education, and play and recreation. In 1897 he helped found the Massachusetts Civic League, of which he was president until 1935. Concerned mainly with local government, the Civic League was instrumental in influencing and enacting social legislation in Massachusetts.²⁰

In education, his second major concern, Lee was influential as a member of the Boston School Committee, on which he served from 1908 to 1917. He supported the School Visitor's Association and was especially interested in the question of the age at which children left school, the needs of both gifted and dull children, medical examinations of all pupils, attention to a child's physical defects, school lunches, school dental care, Americanization classes, and the wider use of buildings for adult classes and community affairs. For him public education was to aid the family in educating the child, not to undermine the importance of the family. Lee also gave his personal service and money to the Graduate Department of Education at Harvard, of which he was an overseer for a number of years.²¹

¹⁹The New York Times, July 29, 1937.

²⁰D.A.B., p. 374.

²¹D.A.B., p. 374-375.

Mrs. Lee, the former Margaret Copley Cabot, whom he married on May 20, 1897, was very interested in the kindergarten movement. She was also concerned with the more general application of the philosophy Froebel, a German philosopher, to education.²² Froebel had a large impact upon educational thought and especially upon Joseph Lee, when Lee was devising his philosophy of play.²³

Play and recreation came to be synonymous with the name Joseph Lee. While he was considered the father of the playground movement, Lee did more to gain this reputation as president of the Playground Association of America and philosopher of the movement than as its originator. It was only in the late 1890's that he became aware of the problem. He read of boys being arrested for playing in the streets, and this disturbed him. "To me," he said, "it was as if these boys had been arrested for living."²⁴

His first real contact with the movement was his participation in making a survey of play space in badly congested areas of Boston. Miss Zilpha D. Smith, a Boston Social worker, assigned Lee two districts: one in the North End of Boston and the other in the South End. Later

²²The kindergarten movement appeared in the 1880's as an implementation of Froebel's philosophy on child education. Concerned with "creative activity" and based upon the experiences, the activities, and the interests of children, the movement helped change the emphasis of elementary education from the "3 R's" to the expression of the child's desires. The kindergarten movement influenced art, education, music, nature-study, and physical training and was important in furthering the use of Froebelian methods in American education. Nina Vandewalker's "The History of Kindergarten Influence in Elementary Education," The Sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education, Part II (Chicago, Ill., 1907), pp. 115-133.

²³D.A.B., p. 375.

²⁴N. Y. Times, July 29, 1937.

playgrounds were opened in these areas. In 1898 Lee helped develop the Columbus Avenue model playground. This served as an example of what community playgrounds could do to help the neighborhoods.²⁵

After this first contact Lee became interested in playground programs and administration. His contribution was not so much as a playground founder but as one who was surprised to find them not being used efficiently. Lee was determined to secure good leadership for the children's play.²⁶ Playgrounds were to provide the fullest opportunities for boys and girls to grow up as human beings according to the curriculum nature had marked out. Play was more than a childhood experience: it was preparation for life and had to be channeled in the right direction.

Joseph Lee was a very complex individual. Interested in a vast number of community projects Lee used his magnetism and his keen mind to get the work done. From his wide reading, his knowledge of natural history and human nature, and his deep probing into poetry and religion, Lee compounded a philosophy of community service which spread into the field of play and recreation. With a sense of public service as reflected in his attitude toward his inheritance, something to be used for the public good, Joseph Lee spent his entire adult life trying to improve the conditions in which man lived.

There seem to have been two basic roots of Lee's philosophy. The first was his New England background. Arthur Mann has well described the Yankee reformers of Boston.²⁷ Here were men who were sensitive

²⁵D.A.B., p. 375.

²⁶D.A.B., p. 375.

²⁷Arthur Mann, Yankee Reformers in the Urban Age (Cambridge, Mass., 1954).

to evil, sensitive because of their occupations, religion, group traditions, ancestry, role and status in the community, and degree of personal involvement. Although Lee was trained to be a lawyer, he lived from the inheritance of his banker father. Many prominent Bostonians had gone into commerce--many became bankers, backing commercial voyages of others as well as their own. These men had more time to consider the problems of society.

As a Unitarian of the late nineteenth century Lee shared the modernist conceptions of God, man, and society. Society was no longer made up of individuals struggling for salvation but was an organic body held together by a greater spirit, Christ. Sin came not only from inner wickedness but also from the evil of the environment. Every man had a worldly duty to benefit society.²⁸

There was more, however, than just an awareness of evil. There was the tradition of service to the community which had come down from Emerson's day. Lee was from the same line of men who became abolitionists: those men who refused to acquiesce to the status quo, who felt that by tinkering with institutions good could be brought out and evil could be suppressed in society, and who were dedicated to improving the condition of disadvantaged groups. Not only did New Englanders have the resources and knowledge to attack societal evil, they had a tradition of leading the attack. Of great importance was the Yankee belief in democracy and the will of the community.²⁹

The second major influence on Lee was the philosophy of Froebel,

²⁸Arthur Mann, Yankee Reformers, pp. 72-75.

²⁹Ibid. pp. 1-17.

who built what he had to say on the writings of such men as Rousseau and Hegel. The eighteenth century saw a break with authority; both civil and ecclesiastical leaders were challenged. Individualism emerged, but it was not an atomistic, particular individualism. Rousseau felt a common reason and a general will were needed to construct society. The problem was to reconcile the individual to the universe, to take into account man's dual nature--he is part of the world but not a part or product of nature. He cannot be subject to the limitations of the world which is the object of his knowledge. Will becomes the essence of man. Realization of self and of the world takes place through man's own activity, man's own thought.³⁰

From Hegel Froebel got the ideas of organic unity and development. Self-consciousness is the unity to which every manifold (composed of many individual forces) must be referred. Unity is not an "empty oneness" but an organic whole. While existence is a unity, it is at the same time manifold. Each individual must be in life and at the same time be a whole in himself and a part of a whole. Here the opposition between self and the external is overcome, for reality is not natural but spiritual. "Nature like mind, is rational, but through consciousness mind spiritualizes and informs nature as an instrument of its purpose."³¹

The idea of development depends on a dynamic view of reality (the world). Existence is a process of becoming, for each individual differentiates into manifold while remaining a unity. Realizing himself,

³⁰John Angus McVannel, "The Philosophy of Froebel," Teachers' College Record, v. 4 (Nov. 1903), pp. 335-344.

³¹James A. McVannel, "Philosophy of Froebel," p. 347.

he then integrates to form a new unity. Evolution is present in all life and is an orderly and progressive movement upward as the inorganic prepares the way for the organic, the organic for the spiritual. Thus:

Man is the last term in the evolution of nature and yet different from nature: for in him the power that gives life to all things comes to consciousness, enabling him as a spiritual being to transcend nature.³²

Since each individual is part of the large organism of humanity, each successive generation (each child) is imitative to a certain extent. It must pass through past stages to understand them, but there should not be exact copying but living, spontaneous self-activity. The end purpose of each individual life is to realize itself as an element of the larger organism of reality: it must come into harmonious relationship with nature and humanity in their organic development and unity, and with God.³³ This can only happen, however, through self-activity or the power of self-determination.³⁴

As man evolves upward, he must surrender himself to the life of nature and of humanity. The spiritual evolution of the individual thus consists of conformity with the purpose that seems to be manifested in the world of nature and human life, and the realization of this purpose can be brought about only through free activity of man. The soul takes

³²James A. McVannel, "Philosophy of Froebel," p. 353.

³³"Individuality is nothing but the vehicle of universality, the process of becoming effective. Nothing can be achieved if it does not become a passion of man: nothing great can be done without passion. And passion is activity, which is directed toward particular interests and ends. So much is it true that particular interest is the vehicle of the universal, that men by the very pursuit of their own private ends realize the universal." Benedetto Croce, What is Living and What is Dead of the Philosophy of Hegel (London, 1915), p. 63.

³⁴James A. McVannel, "Philosophy of Froebel," pp. 356-360.

possession of the body, and the body becomes the expression of the soul. Man is therefore a creative activity--creative in the sense of self-realization. By expression (creation) the individual becomes conscious of his destiny and his life. Education's purpose is then to foster the creative spirit but also to control the direction of the activities so as to make man fit his environment.³⁵

Both roots of Lee's philosophy were based on the idea of subjecting the self to some purpose greater than the self. The Yankee reformer felt that he should work to help the society around him. The individual of Froebel had to give himself to humanity. These two ideas thus agreed on the superiority of the community over the individual.

Joseph Lee was interested in producing in man as full a life as possible. It can probably be said that everything he did evolved from this desire to give man the opportunity to live. Lee felt that life was expressed in the seven play instincts: creation, rhythm, hunting, fighting, nurture, curiosity, and team play. They were the basic motives of life, for, in reality, to Lee play was life and was experienced by all men, women, and children.³⁶

Many theories of play were being expressed around 1900, most correct in what they had to say, but few adequate to completely explain the desire for and the need to play. One of the earliest theories, that of surplus energy, stated that play was the expression of animal spirits and that the individual was so charged with muscular energy that he could not keep still. Play was therefore aimless, following only a

³⁵James A. McVannel, "Philosophy of Froebel," pp. 360-376.

³⁶Joseph Lee, Play in Education (New York, 1918), p. 13.

muscular nervousness. This theory was questioned because most play was not aimless and because much play was engaged in when a child's physical and mental energies were depleted.

A theory based on opposite principles was that of recuperative play. Play was engaged in when physical and mental energies needed to be restored. An example of this type of play was rest and relaxation. As the person relaxed (or played), he built up his energies. This theory explained some adult recreation but did not take into account the hearty play of physically and mentally able young children.

Other theories of play dealt with the growth and development of children. Karl Groos felt that play was due to certain instincts in the child to do such things as run, jump, fish, or swim. Play was nature's way of preparing children for adult life. The critics of this theory stated that childhood was also life. A person lived as a child as well as an adult. While play experiences did contribute to adult life, they were not only for the future but also for the present.

G. Stanley Hall explained play in terms of biological inheritance. His theory rested on the premise of "play as the motor habits and spirits of the past of the race." The child passed through a series of stages which recapitulated the "culture epochs" in which the race developed. These stages were animal, savage, nomad, agricultural, and tribal, and each child at certain ages passed from one stage to the others. In play the child relived these stages and was occupied with the activities of his ancestors. Criticism of Hall was directed at the assumed inheritance of acquired characteristics with little allowance for the reconditioning of play habits by the environment.

Play also had been felt to be necessary in developing the growing body. Since play came to be associated with recreation and thus not only for children, the participation of physically developed adults in tennis, golf, swimming, music, and drama seemed to undermine this theory as a universal explanation of the desire for and the need to play.³⁷

For Joseph Lee play came to mean many things, but when he talked of children's play, Lee was concerned with development. He agreed to a certain extent with Karl Groos, who said play was to prepare the infant for later life. Extending this, Lee brought in the ideas of Froebel. As the child fulfills his purpose, his preparation for adult life, he becomes absorbed in what he is doing. Play is serious and is not engaged in for pleasure. A child answers certain instincts--to hunt, to fight, to throw--but he does so to fulfill the ends of hunting, fighting, throwing. The methods make no difference; it is the ends that count.

In successful play a child does not know that he is having a good time. He does not know that he is having any time at all. Time, in fact, has ceased along with self-consciousness. He is not a receiver of impressions but a doer, pure and simple, and exists for nothing else.³⁸

It is not that the child chooses to play, but that the end prescribed in play chooses the child and adjusts him to itself--the child becomes absorbed. Purpose then takes precedent over all else. It is the fulfillment of purpose and of life that makes real play.

The child's need for play took on this theoretical clothing as

³⁷See George D. Butler, Introduction, pp. 6-7, for theories on play.

³⁸Joseph Lee, "Two Kinds of Play," American Physical Education Review, v. 16, (Oct. 1911), p. 441.

Lee expanded his concept of play. No longer were health and social reasons sufficient to warrant large-scale community action. Lee's thoughts focused on the meaning of play. Examining the means and methods of play, Lee found that play not only kept the child away from unhealthy influences but more importantly provided the means for his physical and moral growth. Yet, growth was not the real purpose of play. Play was life to the child, and play was the meaning of existence. Without play life was nothing.

There had to be action for reality to exist. Lee dismissed the idea that the play age was only a preparation period for later life, for the play age encompassed all of life.³⁹ The philosophy of Lee was a philosophy of social life, a blueprint for all of society to follow. Much of what Lee had to say depended on his organic view of society. The individual was important but not as important as the community. Hidden beneath his expressions of concern for "man" was Lee's greater concern for society as a whole.

In Lee's analysis of child play there were four stages of development. The first was the period of babyhood, from birth to the age of three, during which the child's life was closely related to that of his mother. The dramatic age lasted from three until six and was filled with the impulse to impersonate all things. The age of self-assertion, of Big Injun age, which lasted to age eleven, was dominated largely by the fighting instinct. The fourth was the age of loyalty, in which

³⁹Play for Lee meant more than child's play. The expression of the play instincts; in reality, the expression of the instincts of life; was play. Play, therefore, was life.

the team instinct first appeared.⁴⁰

The team instinct was the important one for Lee. Lee did not ignore the instincts appropriate to earlier ages but he had a greater concern for the boys of the loyalty age group. In the loyalty age each boy learned to give up himself for the benefit of the team. The idea was to get the job done, to fulfill a purpose.

In an article on team games Lee expressed the idea that growing up was more difficult in some ways than in others. Team games inevitably taught certain things. Boys learned intricate plays in which strength and purpose were combined. Team spirit was also learned. Here the individual personality was merged into the larger whole. Courage, address, and team play, the things men were built upon, came through action and participation. Besides the inevitable lessons were those learned fairly easily. Learning how to be a good loser and a good sport did not take a great effort. Other than the inevitable and the easy were those moral lessons which appeared only under favorable conditions. These were a sense of fair play, a pride in the team effort, a respect for the opponent, and the feeling of chivalry (providing a common service to do good).⁴¹

The important part of the Lee philosophy was its insistence upon the primacy of the play instincts. Connected with this was the idea of purpose resulting from the team instinct. Lee explained how a little

⁴⁰The age limits were not hard and set rules, since they only showed general tendencies. The characteristics of play were more important than children's ages in determining in which stage the child was. Joseph Lee, Play in Education, pp. 62-66.

⁴¹Joseph Lee, "Moral Lessons from the Great Team Games," Recreation, v. 25 (Sept. 1931), pp. 321-322.

girl who fed her dolls mud cakes was really pursuing her instinct to nurture. The boys who played cowboys and Indians were actually satisfying the fighting instinct. Since the team play instinct was the most important in Lee's mind, he devoted much time to articles on the community.⁴² It was in a strong community that Lee felt team play could be used best to fulfill the great purpose of life.

Although Lee never articulated a full explanation of society, his numerous writings formed a solid base for such a theory. Beginning with the basic play instincts Lee showed how man developed as a child. Provided with the proper tools (playthings, swings, athletic equipment, etc.) the child would follow nature's prearranged plan. Certain instincts would win out over others. The artist would find that he could recreate the scenes around him. The hunter would develop his abilities to track and kill animals. None of this would be forced upon the child. With the proper opportunities each child would develop his best resources. The important things were the opportunity to play and the lack of restraint needed to produce spontaneity. Each child had to be free to act, and act he had to in order to receive the full benefits of play. Without action play and life meant nothing. Play was not fun, but work.

Lee realized that society had changed. With industry came the end of opportunities for real spontaneity. Even if the child could be brought up in a free atmosphere his freedom was lost as soon as he entered a factory to work. Lee then looked at the role of education.

⁴² Joseph Lee, "The Community, Maker of Men," Survey, v. 49 (Feb. 1923), pp. 576-579+.

_____, "The Community, Home of Lost Talents," Conference of Social Work, 1919.

Some said that each boy⁴³ should be taught a skill in school so he could be prepared for his future job. Lee agreed to a point. Feeling that no real sense of belonging occurred until the age of fourteen, Lee wanted the years before this to be filled with knowledge of the beauty and meaning of life. During these years the boy would learn that there was some purpose to life--that he had a place in society. When he reached the age of loyalty (14), he would find that he wanted to belong. To belong he had to contribute, and to contribute he had to be able to work. This (the age of loyalty) was the time to introduce vocational education. It would mean much more then.

Progressive educators shared Lee's ideas on the role of education. Jane Addams felt the school could become a social force by casting itself into the world of daily affairs and by exerting an influence toward humanizing the productive system.⁴⁴ Industrial civilization's alienation of man was attacked. The school was to be a community center to teach men how to live in their environment. It was to link society and education. "'The problem of the twentieth century,' wrote sociologist Frank Tracy Carlton of Albion College, 'is to make education an engine for social betterment.'"⁴⁵

Lee also proposed to alleviate the dull conditions in factory work by providing an overflow for the expression of the instincts. Lee

⁴³Lee always talked about the boy when he spoke of play. Girls experienced the same instincts of the first three ages of development but went a separate way at the age of loyalty. Lee felt that men were the leaders of society, and thus the question of girls disappeared after the age of 14.

⁴⁴Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School (New York, 1964), pp. 62-63.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 86.

knew that only a few people could be artists, but many could learn to appreciate good music and art. Since the number of scientists was limited, the curiosity instinct would have to be satisfied by providing popular science magazines. Nurturing would be left to mothers. The opportunity to hunt would be provided to those who could get to the country.

Through schools and shorter hours the worker would find the places and the time to broaden his knowledge. Lee felt that the love of beauty was the thing that would keep the community together. In the appreciation of beauty men could share their feelings. Music, art, and dance provided this opportunity to share. Lee also favored the broader use of Sundays. He wanted men to enjoy life as much as they could. The playground became an important place where men and women could meet and join together.

In industry Lee hoped to provide purpose--a sense of achievement--by giving the worker greater opportunities for the expression of the creative impulse. Before industrialization began, each man had contributed to the greater benefit of the community. With the loss of personal craftsmanship and production, the individual also lost the feeling that he was contributing to a greater social cause. His life then lost some of its meaning. In industry competition was to be preserved by making each man part of a team in charge of producing a certain quantity and quality of goods. Men had to feel that they were more than a part of a machine. Opportunity for creation was to be provided to every man. Jobs were found to fit each man's skills. Leisure and the creation of beautiful things were to fill the time between work hours. Through

industrial co-operatives and responsibility-sharing the obstacles to a community feeling would be overcome.

Lee's ideas on law and government were important, because law was the expression of community ideas. To Joseph Lee the law was an axe--the instrument for giving effect to human will. Although he believed in democracy, Lee was not opposed to regulatory legislation, because he felt that such legislation gave freedom to humanity. Laws on building, housing, and earning a living gave people a better life. Health laws gave freedom from sickness and death and thus freedom to live life. Although some liberty was given up in legislation, much more was gained. Laws were to develop in every citizen the power to create a place for himself by working with his own hands. Legislation provided opportunities and thus freedom. This type of liberty was the power of the will, the ability to deal with situations as they arose.⁴⁶

Viewing the role of government in a similar way, Lee felt that governments should provide the opportunities to live. It was their duty to provide public money for schools, playgrounds, and parks. They were to protect the rights of individuals. Legislation was not to be passed to end crying abuses alone but was to continually provide the greatest opportunity. Thorough studies of situations were to be made in order to educate public opinion. Only through community spirit and public action could life be provided with greater opportunity.

The most important job of governments was producing citizens. Like that of every other human institution, the true function of government

⁴⁶ Joseph Lee, "Liberty Through Legislation," New England Magazine, v. 20 (June 1899), pp. 434-443.

was to educate. The only known means of education was through the activity of the people to be educated. For governments to do their job there had to be participation by the people. Self-government was needed to raise the country (in an evolutionary pattern), to find out the most characteristic expression of the ideals and aspirations of the people. A man had to feel that he was a part of the governing body, a contributor to the public good. In this way law became a legitimate expression of public life and purpose of which he partook.

Hegel was probably influential in forming Lee's views toward the state. Hegel opposed the idea that man is free by nature and that the state curtails freedom. Without the state, freedom remains merely man's destiny. To insure freedom, to maintain security, and to make possible the development of art and philosophy a good state is wanted.⁴⁷ A full life of the community and the state becomes possible as man breaks away from the limitations of his purely natural individual life and loses himself to find himself once more in the great life of the world. This view of the state is important in analyzing Lee's philosophy because the individual man suffers somewhat at the hands of Joseph Lee.⁴⁸

Lee's system of life depended then on the play instincts with the team instinct being supreme. These instincts helped "mold" man as a child. Although the instincts could not be fully developed in adults, attempts should be made to provide means of expression in the industrial world. The important binding quality needed to preserve the community

⁴⁷Walter Kaufmann, Hegel (New York, 1965), pp. 269-270.

⁴⁸Millicent MacKenzie, Hegel's Educational Theory and Practice (London, 1909), pp. 64-65.

would be the love of beauty. Here Lee added an element of special goodness that made his system very idyllic. A community spirit was amorphous in its own right, but such a spirit based on love of beauty would have necessitated a society of ideal men.

Although an ideal state Lee's system was based on less laudable suppositions. The purpose that Lee proposed for his community was never really set down. It remained for Lee and the leaders of the new society to decide. Lee called for democracy. He wanted everyone to approve of what the society was to do, but he never mentioned how the individual could make his voice heard. The leaders of society, the philanthropists, who had their own wealth and time to pursue knowledge, were to make thorough studies of conditions. These men could then propose legislation.⁴⁹

Lee believed in the idea that society was built upon the labor of the "masses." He related how other cultures such as those of the Greeks and the medieval manor lords had been based on slave and serf labor. In Lee's proposed community the wealth would be produced in the factories. His society differed from the others, however, by providing for cultural education of all men. Art, science, and music would be shared by the worker as well as the philanthropist, society's leaders.

In the final analysis Lee appears in two roles. As an idealist he proposed his plan for the community. Poverty, ugliness, and loneliness were to be eliminated. Industry would produce the wealth to make all men capable of leading a decent life, but each man had to

⁴⁹Joseph Lee, "The Philanthropist's Legislative Function," New England Magazine, v. 20 (March 1899), pp. 52-53.

work.⁵⁰ The wealth of society produced the beauty needed to make life livable. Industrial co-operatives would make factory work less boring and more purposeful. Schools, parks, museums, theaters, and dancing areas would provide the opportunities for expression of self. Each individual would thus be allowed to live a full life.

In order that these goals might be achieved, Lee called for means that were in some ways suspect. The purpose of the community was to be determined by those leaders who had a "better understanding" of the needs of society. Although the laws would be passed in a republican manner, they were to be proposed by experts. Still more patronizing was Lee's position toward the worker. All societies need experts in many subjects, but these experts do not determine how the majority of the people are to live. In Lee there was too much of the paternalistic attitude. His ideas may have been for the betterment of the workingman, but the worker had little choice. The Joseph Lees would determine what was beautiful. More importantly, the worker appeared to be caught in the status quo for his entire life. He would be trained at age fourteen to do a certain job. He would produce what society thought was beautiful. He could not, therefore, become more than a worker.⁵¹

If Lee is to be criticized, it is for his attitude. Lee hoped to

⁵⁰ Lee had no place for the idler. Each man had to contribute through his abilities. There was to be no charity. Lee advocated preventive philanthropy, the improvement of conditions, not handouts. With opportunities present each man should be able to provide for his family and himself.

⁵¹ Joseph Lee, "Two Realities in Education," School and Society, v. 3 (Jan. 15, 1916), pp. 79-80.

provide a full life for every man, but it was a life which Lee thought each man would enjoy. Lee kept the idea that the laborers provided the wealth of society, but he wanted to make laborers "livers" (those who appreciated the beauty of life). His motives were fine, but he could not divorce himself from the idea that the former "livers" (men such as himself) were really the only people who knew how to live. For Lee the worker should live, but he should live as a true "liver," because he could not rise above his position in society. Life for the worker would only be a show, a mirror of the attitudes of the "livers." Lee failed then to bring full life to all. As long as one group determined what was beautiful, all others would be servants to them. True life could come only if all men were workers, then each man could really make his own choices.⁵² Joseph Lee and most progressive leaders were not workers but lived from wealth long before accumulated. With their wealth and knowledge they could be paternalistic toward but never equal with the worker.

Lee proposed solutions for the average man. In his writings the primacy of the play instincts continued to be the dominant theme, while he tended to shift his emphasis from child play to play by all people. Play took on a broader meaning, and in the end meant leisure. Lee was really the barometer of the playground movement. It appears that both Lee's ideas and those of the movement changed with the needs of society. Lee and the movement were so interconnected that it is hard to distinguish whether Lee or the movement controlled the other. Lee's

⁵² Joseph Lee, "The Philanthropist's Legislative Function," New England Magazine, 20 (March 1899), pp. 52-53.

philosophy kept the same premises but broadened its scope, and in so doing it articulated the broadened scope of the playground movement. The important thing was the new attitudes taken toward play.

When Lee became connected with the movement, ten cities had working play centers.⁵³ Most of these centers were provided by private organizations or individuals acting in a philanthropic manner. From 1900 to 1906 twenty-six other cities were provided with playground facilities. Although most of the playgrounds remained in private hands, a Board of Playground Commissioners was appointed in Los Angeles in September 1904. Here was the first public recognition of the need to provide municipal control of playground areas. The Los Angeles playgrounds were probably the first tax-supported ones not on park or school property.⁵⁴

In 1903 Chicago's citizens had voted to establish small recreation parks in the crowded areas of South Chicago. Using the South Park System as a base, Chicagoans opened ten parks in 1905. Providing indoor and outdoor facilities for persons of all ages, the parks offered year-round service. The parks varied from seven to three hundred acres and were beautifully land-scaped. The most important facility was the field house which included a stage, a gymnasium, showers and locker rooms, a refectory, clubrooms, and a branch of the public library. Outdoor facilities included a swimming pool, athletic fields, and play areas for young children. Chicago's example was to influence many cities in providing park facilities for their citizens.⁵⁵

⁵³See note on page 5.

⁵⁴George D. Butler, Introduction, pp. 64-65.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 64.

During the six years after 1900 there was another important development. School buildings began to be opened for public recreation. Evening programs brought young and old together to enjoy the use of the auditoriums, gymnasiums, and swimming pools. Summer programs were also begun to provide for young people who could not leave the city.⁵⁶ The use of public schools, the provision for public recreation, and the desire of municipal governments to direct recreation were three important steps forward in the movement to provide full-scale public recreation.

Progress was slow, however. The majority of the playgrounds were still individually controlled. Many people were interested in forming playgrounds, but some type of controlling body was needed to direct the work. The major leaders of the movement in various cities met together in Washington, D.C., in April 1906. They had received many requests from other interested people to provide what information they had to areas without play facilities. The meeting in Washington was to be a discussion of ways to provide the needed help for interested communities. For three days such civic leaders as Jane Addams, Henry S. Curtis, and Luther H. Gulick considered the Nation's play needs. At one meeting it was decided to organize a national body to help communities develop adequate playground facilities.⁵⁷

The Playground Association of America was formed to:

collect and distribute knowledge of and promote interest in playgrounds throughout the country, to seek to further the establishment of playgrounds and athletic fields in all

⁵⁶George D. Butler, Introduction, p. 65.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 65.

communities and directed play in connection with the schools.⁵⁸

Formed with President Roosevelt's endorsement, the Association became the national organ of the playground movement. Roosevelt was named honorary president, and Jacob Riis honorary vice-president. Dr. Luther H. Gulick became the new president, and Henry S. Curtis became the secretary-treasurer. The Association had no funds, but its members were filled with a desire to serve.⁵⁹

In June 1906, the Association's magazine Playground was first published. During the next year an office was set up in New York City, and funds were received from the Russell Sage Foundation. Field workers were employed, and they travelled across the country meeting with committees and public officials, relating past problems and experiences, and helping in any way to found playgrounds and recreation centers. The Association served as a clearinghouse for information and published materials helpful in establishing playgrounds. In 1907 the first annual Playground Congress was held at Chicago.⁶⁰ The playground movement now had the tool it needed. The next item was the formulation of a program of action.

The writings of Joseph Lee and Henry S. Curtis in the years before 1912 were concerned with child play. Curtis made the point that the first efforts of the movement were to keep the children off the streets. In 1909 he set forth a series of positive physical and social ideals:

⁵⁸George D. Butler, Introduction, p. 66.

⁵⁹Henry S. Curtis, The Play Movement and Its Significance (New York, 1917), pp. 15-16.

⁶⁰George D. Butler, Introduction, p. 66.

- 1) Physical health was to be promoted through open air and exercise.
- 2) Physical strength was to be promoted through muscular activity.
- 3) The vital organs such as the heart, lungs, and stomach were to be developed through physical activity.
- 4) The right habits--courtesy, kindness, fairness, honesty, and loyalty were to be developed through group activity.
- 5) Energy and enthusiasms were to be developed by action.
- 6) Pleasure--the joy of life--was to be promoted by complete play.⁶¹

A sophistication began to appear in the writings on play. The movement was losing its aspect of spontaneity. The desire just to provide playgrounds was no longer sufficient to generate needed public support. An intellectual justification was put forth; now Americans began to get the work done.

By 1907, ninety cities had playgrounds; by 1908, 177 cities were equipped to provide some type of play facility. Summer programs were no longer run four or five weeks but provided continuous summer recreation. Playgrounds were being formed more and more by local playground associations, groups of public-minded citizens who ran the playgrounds until the cities took over. These associations were aided by the national Association through advice and literature on the subject of play. In these years playgrounds became the fashion. No longer a charitable, but a public function, the work needed legislation to back it. In 1908 Massachusetts passed a playground law requiring all cities of 10,000 people to vote whether or not to have playgrounds.⁶² Other states followed this example.

⁶¹Henry S. Curtis, "The Growth, Present Extent and Prospects of the Playground Movement in America," The American City, v. 1 (Sept. 1909), pp. 28-29.

⁶²Joseph Lee was instrumental in pushing through this law. The New York Times, July 29, 1937.

From 1906 to 1912 two movements were actually appearing. The first was concerned with school children and children on school yards. Minimum requirements for school play space and a curriculum of play were worked on. Roofs of schools were equipped to utilize all possible space. Streets were closed off at certain hours. Any possible means were employed to provide more and better opportunities to play.⁶³ The second movement had to do with municipal or park playgrounds. These playgrounds were larger than the school yards but small in comparison to the South Park System of Chicago. Located in congested urban areas and averaging two to six acres, these playgrounds served a community need. Boys could get together for team games and for city athletic leagues. Field houses were provided for bad weather. With these areas under the supervision of the park boards or recreation committees and school yards under school board control, municipalities showed that they were taking an interest in play.

In 1910 Joseph Lee became president of the Playground Association of America. Under his directorship the name of the organization was changed to the Playground and Recreation Association of America in 1911. With this name change came a shift in the emphasis of the movement. The leaders were concerned with the increased congestion of the cities. Not only were children denied the opportunities to play, but adults were without the means to express their feelings (as Lee would say, their instincts). Urban life was new to most Americans, accustomed to intimate

⁶³ Efforts were usually carried on by the school boards and carried over into Saturdays and the summers. Serving as a member of the Boston School Committee, Lee worked to improve play conditions in the schools.

exchanges of small communities. The alienation of the individual and the loss of the "community spirit" left many urban people with a sense of loneliness and uselessness.

Lee and the other leaders of the playground movement proposed community recreation as an answer to the problem. A program of activities at playgrounds and community centers were to provide entertainment as well as participation. In Lee's philosophy self-activity was needed for real results. Men could become a part of music, drama, the arts, and civic functions. To belong, to be needed, to add something were traits Lee and the playground movement felt had to be expressed. Projects of a city-wide nature, such as festivals and pageants, were to be carried out. The Y. M. C. A., the Boy Scouts, Boys' Clubs, and other community organizations focused on civic pride and service. City-wide recreation surveys were conducted to find out the needs of the community as well as to encourage participation.⁶⁴

The shift toward community recreation was intensified by the First World War. Lee had an interesting view toward war. As an ultimate (fighting was one of the seven play instincts), war was carried on for its own sake and not for ulterior or utilitarian purposes. In its manifestation of devotion, self-surrender, and sacrifices of love, home, and ambition, war became "an expression of the highest power of a constant, ineradicable ideal of the human soul."⁶⁵ More importantly, war took all citizens and made them patriots. Devotion to the community

⁶⁴George D. Butler, Introduction, pp. 67-68.

⁶⁵Joseph Lee, "What Substitute for War?" Survey, v. 33 (Oct. 3, 1914), pp. 31-32.

(the state) became the dominant feeling in society. With a war feeling great achievements could be made.

Lee felt that efforts had to be made to preserve this quality. The War Camp Community Service was organized by the Playground and Recreation Association at the request of the War Department. Its job was to provide an atmosphere of community for those soldiers stationed at training camps. While in these camps, the soldiers were separated from the natural human relationships: society, athletics, girls, friends, church, and business. Band concerts, athletic opportunities, and clubs were to be provided by the nearby communities. The local recreation resources were to instill the right attitudes of fighting for homes and loved-ones. Not only the opportunity of recreation per se but the spirit of community (especially the spirit of a good community) was to be provided.⁶⁶

The war showed the importance of recreation to physical condition and morale. Servicemen accustomed to physical exercise and community relationships desired similar programs in their home towns and cities. Members of communities which had experienced the programs during the war wanted to continue that type of activity. Both soldiers and civilians had benefited from the work of the War Camp Community Service. The emphasis on neighborhood and community recreation led to more pageants, community singing, athletic meets, and neighborhood

⁶⁶As president of the War Camp Community Service Lee received the Distinguished Service Medal. His service in boosting the morale of the soldiers was felt to have aided the war effort.

parties. Construction began on a number of community centers.⁶⁷

By the early 1920's the idea of community recreation had become the prime issue of the playground movement (which could be said to have become the recreation movement). In articles written in the 1920's, Lee concentrated on two things. He felt that recreation had to be provided for all people, young and old. This recreation should be provided or paid for by the government. If the localities and states could not afford it, the federal government should step in. Secondly, Lee argued for higher quality in recreation. He felt that trained leadership was the best thing to provide this quality.

Lee and the Playground and Recreation Association in the 1920's provided the push for recreation but left the theory alone. It was enough that men and women wanted the opportunities. Experience had shown that community recreation was a good thing. The 1920's then were years in which the work of the movement expanded. Community centers were established over the entire nation. Programs were enlarged in scope to provide greater opportunities, and the number of people participating increased. Much literature was published as a result of research into the needs and the projected future of the recreation movement.⁶⁸

Besides being an era of expansion, the 1920's were also a time of synthesizing and concentration. In 1925 Lee wrote on the need to

⁶⁷Financed through private funds and managed by a board of directors, the buildings contained meeting rooms, assembly halls, and recreation facilities. In some cases a trained recreation leader was employed. George D. Butler, Introduction, pp. 67-69.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 63-69.

abolish the ugly playground.⁶⁹ Earlier the movement had been thrilled to get any kind of space it could. With the great expansion, quality became the new emphasis. Playgrounds were to be land-scaped and provided with space for children's gardens. Quality of play itself was a subject of discussion. Lee felt that "play under the proper leadership and governed by the right tradition (was) the great teacher of moral conduct."⁷⁰ The mid-1920's was then another important landmark for the playground movement. The need to provide facilities for all people had been realized; children's facilities seemed adequate to allow considerations of quality to supersede those of quantity; the majority of Americans wanted some type of recreation; and the community spirit seemed to prevail.

As industrialization increased, it became apparent that men would have more time to themselves. Prior to industrialization and even during the early years of the twentieth century, most men spent the majority of their time on their jobs. The unionization drives and industrial conditions produced a sharply decreased working day. The late 1920's saw an increased interest in the idea of leisure. Recreation had been concerned with the provision of some relaxation from work and with a spirit of community. Leisure meant much more than relaxation. Industrial society had provided the opportunities to spend the majority of the non-sleeping hours in pursuits other than work.

Here was a problem greater than recreation. Since the majority

⁶⁹Joseph Lee, "Time Has Come to Abolish the Ugly Playground," School Life, v. 11 (Nov. 1925), p. 45.

⁷⁰Joseph Lee, "Play, the Architect of Man," Survey, v. 59 (Nov. 1, 1927), p. 123.

of a person's time would be free, something had to be found to fill these hours. The playground movement had at first tried to find the time for play and recreation needed to mold the full man. Now methods were needed to fill the hours in which man was molded. Greater variety, better facilities, and greater opportunities of expression were the desired goals.

It was really a new question based on the same premises. Lee had known all along that men were formed by their play instincts. In pre-industrial society the opportunity was there for all instincts to find expression. In early industrial society the instincts had been stifled by urban life and the factory system. In fully industrialized society the instincts were being denied the means of fulfillment. Early industrial conditions had not permitted enough time for the instincts. Recreation allowed limited expression. Leisure meant that men had the time but needed the means, which earlier limited recreation could not supply.

Lee hoped to provide the answer by giving preference to less strenuous recreation than to physical exercise. It was the 1930's that brought out Lee's thoughts on community love for beauty. Contemplation, the appreciation of poetry and music, of philosophy, and of the wonders of the universe, was to occupy the leisure hours. In 1930 he felt that he had gotten beyond play, because he knew all about it. Now interested in leisure, the people would want beautiful things but not always the best art. They had to be educated. It was here that Lee asked whether one should give the people what they wanted or what

was best for them.⁷¹ One year later he answered the question by advocating the use of leaders who knew the meaning of the phrase, "to let alone," to direct the new leisure hours. Opportunities were to be provided, and recreation was to be stimulated by allowing free expression. Expression was the important thing; not so much what kind, but just expression.

Lee no longer felt that society had to be manipulated in order to produce the "correct" expression in men. If theaters, dances, and other opportunities for some type of self-activity were provided, these would be enough to give leisure hours some meaning. Recreation leaders and anyone else occupied with stimulating recreation among men would provide vast and various means of expression but would not demand uniform acceptance of a predetermined standard of "correct" leisure pursuits. Lee was not overjoyed that society should lose the leadership of certain "cultured experts" (men of his class), but he reconciled himself to the facts that men needed some type of expression and that free expression was better than that determined by others.

Lee was interested in the fact that man had to live, to take part in the world to exist. His earlier writings gave the impression that the choice of life to be lived would be left to the leaders of society. That view seems to have changed, however, as Lee grew older. It may have been the shock of the Depression and the realization that each man needed faith in himself to survive. Even in the years before when Lee truly wanted to help the average American worker, the slight

⁷¹ Joseph Lee, "A Critical Look at Recreation as Viewed at the Seventeenth Annual Congress," Recreation, v. 24 (Dec. 1930), pp. 506-507.

feeling of superiority---the realization that he knew more than the majority of men--prevented him from losing the element of paternalism. If Lee once had had a superiority mentality, it is probable that he became "an older but wiser man" and in so doing realized that superiority did not make him leader of society.

Although Lee concentrated on helping the men caught in industrial and urban society, it was not a love for, but a hatred of this society that led him to formulate his thoughts. Lee's background and training had prepared him for a role of leadership in a society of less strain and complexity. His ideas on community service, self-expression and self-activity, the role of leaders, the vigorous life, and war were better suited for a more serene and simplified life than that of twentieth century America.

Lee's philosophy was too personal to be enjoyed by the average American worker. It was perfect for a man of Lee's means and abilities but not of urban dwellers who could never take full advantage of the opportunities for expression. The playground and recreation movement suffered from the defects of the philosophy and was never able to satisfy the needs of an urban society.

The movement itself while failing to transform society as it wished was able to play a role in adjusting rural America to industrialization. The philosophy of Lee and the movement called for a society based on community spirit and individual self-expression following a basic pattern set by the leaders of the community. Neither goal was realizable in the form proposed by Lee but each has influenced urban culture. Every urban center has a type of unanimity of feeling which

is present only in that city (Boston is made up of Bostonians and New York of New Yorkers). Each city has a type of common (community) spirit which is manifested more in neighborhood responsibility but still is present on a city-made basis. The second goal has been realized in the fact that Americans now have an urban culture in which they can express themselves and enjoy their leisure hours. Lee and his philosophy though unable to form the society he wanted was able to aid in the transition from rural to urban life. The movement itself may have failed in its premises but helped in a slight way in the development of twentieth century American society.

Joseph Lee continued as the president of the National Recreation Association until his death on July 28, 1937. He had entered the ranks of the playground movement when it was just beginning to take form. His thoughts and expressions articulated its motives and desires. His energy helped push through legislation and develop a public sentiment for public recreation. As the symbol of play and recreation Lee carried the movement's ideals to the people. For his long service and devotion to his fellow men Lee gained their love and respect.

The playground movement thus passed through a number of stages before it developed into a recreation movement and finally faded away, no longer a distinct progressive movement of its own identity. The early desires to get children off the streets and to provide them with a proper atmosphere in which to grow passed into a desire to provide all people the opportunity to express themselves (their play instincts) through recreation and later through the use of leisure hours. In all these efforts was the larger question of adjusting industrial man to

his new environment. In these efforts Joseph Lee was significant in presenting his ideas on the future of society.

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