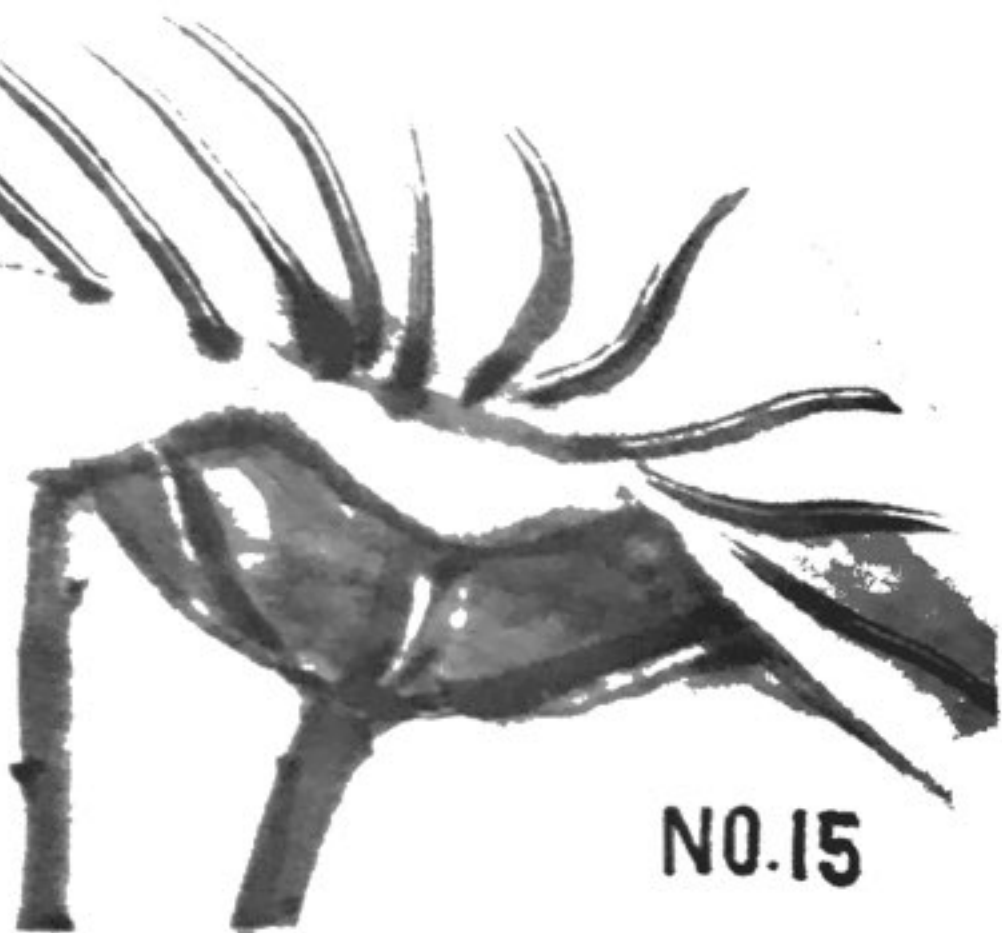


TALENT EDUCATION JOURNAL

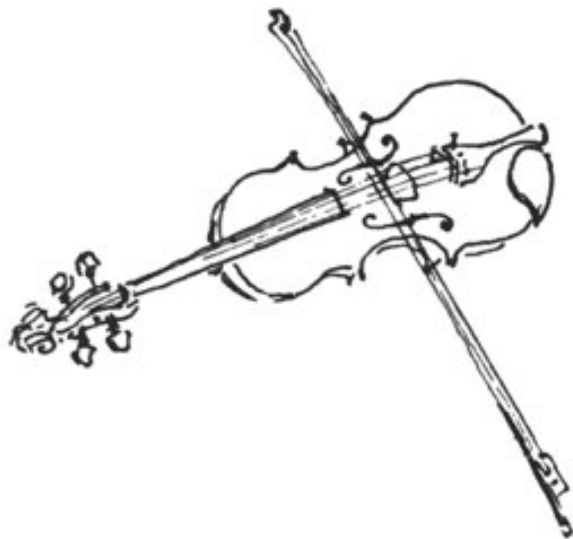


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EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

Last fall Mr. Suzuki toured the States and stirred much response. I think he, too, received a strong impression about the spread of talent education in the States. "October 3rd: Suzuki Day in Illinois" is his report on the tour published in *Talent Education* on his return.

Toshiko Hasegawa provides a detailed report on the Teachers' Conference. The conference, which is held every summer, gathers teachers from all over Japan. Her article, "On the Teachers' Conference," contains an inside look at the training and mutual learning among Japanese teachers as well as valuable instructional materials for instructors everywhere.

We conclude the final installment of Haruko Kataoka's "On Elementary Instruction by the Suzuki Method" with Part III. The dialogue provides frank discussion of the fundamentals of instruction by talent education.

Mr. Suzuki's Lectures on Music Instruction introduced here are Parts I and II of "My Lessons." He explains at length how to produce beautiful, fine tone. I hope you will savor these writings.

This issue also contains Hiromu Yasuda's recollections of his teacher trainee days in Matsumoto, "Memo of an Inferior Student." Mr. Yasuda is the teacher of Eguchi Yuka, introduced in the "Mother's Note" in the last issue. He has come to the States several times with the tour children.

"Parents' Notes" is a selection from brief essays by parents whose children graduated from the Advanced Level last year.

OCTOBER 3RD: SUZUKI DAY IN ILLINOIS

Report on American Tour

Shin'ichi Suzuki

Leaving Tokyo from Narita Airport, on October 1st I arrived at the first stop on this tour, Chicago. Many students and teachers were at the airport, and the students greeted us with a fine welcoming performance of the Vivaldi a minor. The occasion was made even more festive by TV recording. I was so happy to see many dear teachers.

One other thing that made me happy was receiving, the following day, a letter from President Reagan welcoming me to the States. Dated September 30th, the letter ran as follows:

Dear Dr. Suzuki:

I take great pleasure in saluting you for the extraordinary contribution you have made to the world of music.

Through the development of the Suzuki method, a unique way of teaching music to children, you have revolutionized musical instruction for the young child and won the respect of music educators all over the world. Countless thousands of children have benefited from this instruction, bringing enjoyment not only to their families but to all who have heard them play.

I join with students, parents, the music world, and the listening audience in sending this message of appreciation to you and in wishing you good fortune in your future work.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

This totally unexpected letter from the President with its heart warming content was a real delight to me.

On October 3, cello and violin workshops were held from nine in the morning at the big hall of the Auditorium Theater, Chicago. I gave lessons trying various new approaches which might be helpful to teachers. More than 700 students participated, and their tone and posture seemed quite well developed. Veracini's Sonata and Bach's Concerto, among others, were very fine performances. The real concert started at six o'clock in the evening, filling the hall that seats 4,000 people. Here in a city with a long history of the Suzuki method, the high level of student growth was evident. The concert, including wonderful performances, was a great success.

On the same day, another red letter event was announced: the Illinois legislature in Chicago had designated October 3 "Suzuki Day," and I received a certificate from the Governor.

This commemorated our educational revolution involving the discovery that ability is not inborn, and the discovery of the mother tongue approach through which every child grows.

This resolution by Americans who correctly understand my movement made me happier than anything else. That reminds me that regrettably the same is not easily appreciated in Japan despite our efforts over forty years. It is too bad that understanding is slow in Japan.

On October 4 we left Chicago for Philadelphia. Here again, many students gave us a welcoming concert at the airport, and many dear teachers welcomed us; I couldn't have been more delighted.

The following day was a day of group lessons. I gave lessons starting in the morning to some 750 students divided into groups of different levels from beginner to advanced. Here there is also a long history: both posture and tone of the students were very well fostered, showing a high level of the American standard.



Welcoming concert, Tucson

On this tour, both in Chicago and Philadelphia everyone in a big hall stood up to sing happy birthday to the students' violin accompaniment though my real birthday is October 17. Despite the fact that I was not yet born either on October 3 or 5, I received a pre-celebration in these

places. At Monroe, Tucson, San Francisco, and in Hawaii, similar pre-birthday celebrations took place, and on my birthday, I was on the flight from Hawaii to Japan.

The October 6 concert in Philadelphia was very well performed. The tempo which was slow according to the piece at the group lessons the previous day was all corrected, contributing to the very good concert.

On October 7 we left Philadelphia for Monroe, Louisiana. Again at Monroe we were met by students' welcoming concert and many dear teachers' greetings. Another happy occasion came that afternoon at city hall: I received a certificate from the Mayor who greeted me with these words: "I hereby appoint Dr. Suzuki an honorable citizen of Monroe City."

At Monroe, which I visited for the first time, I was happy to see Joe Cleveland who headed this event, and other dear friends from different areas who participated as clinicians including Margery Aber, Evelyn Hermann, Anastasia Jempelis, Lorraine Fink, Kay Slone, Barbara Barber of cello, and Doris Preucil, the new president of the American Suzuki Association and her family. This six Preucils gave a family concert at eight on October 8; it was a lovely night.

On October 9, we left Monroe and went to Tucson. We were again welcomed by many students who played

a concert, and many parents and teachers. I had visited this beautiful and fine city in the midst of the desert eighteen years ago in 1964. The bright red evening glow in the sky then was breath-taking: it was a city of an unforgettable, beautiful memory.

I was so glad to see the dear Starrs, Mrs. Primrose, Louise Scott, and Yvonne Tait of cello, former ASA president and resident of Tucson.

The following day we started in the morning with group lessons for 150 or 160 children. There were cello and piano also; their standards were not yet very high, but I am sure they will grow in strides in the future. The successful evening concert included cello, piano, and violin solos.

On the 11th, the teachers' workshop was followed by a dinner with the teachers at a beautiful restaurant on a hill. I enjoyed the pleasant dinner party, once again viewing the setting sun over the desert, recalling the bright red evening sky eighteen years ago.

We flew to San Francisco on the 12th. This time there was just a workshop with teachers, with the 13th reserved as the day of rest. On the 14th we flew to Hawaii, and attended group lessons and a concert on the 15th and 16th. We were welcomed at the airport by many students who performed a welcoming concert, and subsequent events took place at the University of Hawaii concert hall under the leadership of the cellist Janice Yokoyama who had studied in Matsumoto as a teacher trainee.

Many other teachers also participated. Feeling that student growth was uneven, I suggested that Hawaii instructors might meet in the future for joint study conferences. The evening concert before a full house audience was very good, a big change from the day before.

* * *

This American tour was very meaningful, a good tour for knowing the growth of Suzuki children in different

areas of the States.

I left Hawaii on October 17 and arrived at Narita on the afternoon of the 18th.

Talent Education, no. 62



*The earlier period
The better environment
The better teaching method
The more training
The superior instruction.*

*(Five Mottoes of
Talent Education)*

ON THE TEACHERS' CONFERENCE

Toshiko Hasegawa
Instructor, Tokai District

"To be able to appreciate Mr. Suzuki's profound study is an important ability. He has studied really hard. If one makes efforts always paying attention to sound, if one continues this ten years or fifteen years, one comes to understand and respect Mr. Suzuki and his study. One comes to really feel the greatness of Kreisler and Casals. Probably anyone can reach that point So, for two hours every day, let's study the technique of string playing."

On the morning of the 24th, Mr. Yamamura, chairman of the education committee, opened the teachers' conference with these words, inspiring in us deep reflection and new awareness.


Face to face with Mr. Suzuki's intricately detailed study report presented during the five days (May 24-28), I was impressed by how concretely and in what easy-to-understand terms he was able to explain things. (If students don't grow in spite of this, what else can we say but that we teachers are lazy?) Again, what we have repeatedly heard freshly confronted us as though they were new problems. As things hidden from the eyes gradually revealed themselves, I was grateful for such awakening experiences.

* * *

STUDY AND PRACTICE (SUMMARY)

A Instruction in the Technique of String Playing A

A. Technique of string playing does not mean rubbing the strings with the bow.

(1) It means to let the strings ring. The weight of the bow comes together with the entire body and with the arm, and the whole thing makes a semi-circle movement (). The string should ring like a pizzicato sound.

(2) Make a circular elbow movement which draws a small circle. Emphasize training in making a small circle with the elbow. In many cases the bow tip makes a squash or a carrot, far from a circle.

(3) Consider how to instruct to play with the arm.



It's no good just to say, "Play with your arm." Lightly fix the left palm in place as in the illustration, and see if the right elbow goes back and forth passing through the same point.

Let the student try this many times.

(4) If the arm is to play, one must avoid tension in the shoulders. Put strength in the shoulders (i), then instantly shift the strength down to the lower abdomen. Call out, "Lower tummy!" (ii).



(i)



(ii)

B. Technique of string playing means to let the string ring with the spring of the horse hair by utilizing changes in the weight of the bow and the arm.

C. Have the student understand the balance of the bow on the string. As an approach to fostering this ability, instruct the student in playing with the bow upside down, holding it at the tip.

(1) Use a flat bow (if the bow tilts, the students does not feel the elasticity of the horse hair). The entire bow should move straight without so much as a tilt even at the tip or at the bottom.

(2) Play Bach's Bourree with the bow upside down. Play the Fiocco Allegro. Tell the student, "The bow does not dance. It never does," as you place the bow on the desk.

(3) Training in upside down bow: keep the bow horizontal, and move the elbow up and down without letting the tip of the bow wobble. Fix the tip with the



little finger and the index finger; do the up and down movement while singing the Twinkle melody. (The bow feels heavy when the tip is wobbly. If the elbow moves

together, it is fine. It only weighs 63 grams.)

(4) "Come back after you play with the upside down bow for one week." It is no good if the student tries only a little bit. Considerable change occurs when the student keeps at this for one week.

D. Instruct in the ability to ring the string with the same volume and tone color at the tip, middle, and frog. Be persistent in the tonalization training in ringing the string with the entire bow with consistent volume and tone color.

(1) Create the ear which hears the bumps in the sound. In order for this, play with the upside down bow and listen to the well balanced sound which carries the weight of the bow. Train the student to achieve the same sound even with the regular bow hold. Practise playing with alternate bow holds using the Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus, changing the bow every four measures. A fair amount of change is seen after repeating this only four times.

(2) Mr. Navarra, the cellist, kept the back of his hand in the same shape no matter how freely he moved.

It is important to keep the back of the hand unchanged. In the same way as a machine that digs earth, ring the same sound whether at the tip or the frog in the

same condition (the back of the hand).



(3) Hold the bow at different places; create the ability to be able to place the

weight of the entire bow no matter where the bow is held.

(4) The "water mill" movement in which the tip of the bow comes down in good control. If the elbow stops, the bow bounces *pa-pang* in reaction, so it is important for the elbow to get into the movement so that it becomes one with the bow.

E. Do not put strength in the wrist and the elbow of the bow arm. This is a crucial point in instruction from the beginner stage. It will be fine to say, "A student with stiffening in the wrist and elbow is an inferior student."

(A good instructional method is to let the student stop the bow after each stroke to relax the tension in the wrist.)

(1)



relax
relax
relax
relax
relax
relax
relax
relax

Rest the bow
on the string;
relax the wrist.

When this is repeated, the child begins to do it on his own accord: the elbow learns to wait, already relaxed.

F. Instruct in the ability to place the weight of the bow on the string. While playing the open D string with the entire bow, let the little finger go, then the ring finger, then the middle finger. Teach the ability to let the string ring always with the same volume even when holding the bow with just the forefinger and the thumb. (This is for advanced students.)

(Many students play holding the bow tight in their hands, and have no ability to let the bow sit on the string with its weight. In this case, the tone is poor, and also thin.)

Hold up a cat's tail, and say, "come on, walk." When you let your hand go, the cat walks as he should. In the same way, rest on the string the bow which you somehow ended up holding in your hand. In other

words, return to the violin the bow that belongs to the violin.

(1) Play the Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus while sliding the fingers upwards on the bow.

(2) Play only with the forefinger and the thumb. Withdraw your power, relax, and see if the bow is resting on the strings; then start. Place the bow, play one bow; place the bow, play one bow. (At first, use small bows in the middle; gradually increase the bow space to the entire bow.)

Δ The Panda Instruction (Creating Finger Maneuvering Ability) (The Power at the Tip which Does Not Wobble) Δ

G. Fix the power at the tip. This is the way of string playing for producing a required, beautiful, fine tone. Instruct both beginners and advanced students in this repeatedly. Use ball-points for small children. (Include finger maneuvering for tipping the ball-point up and down.) Use just the forefinger and the little finger. Let the student hold the ball-point as in the photograph (do not twist the forefinger); the tip of the ball-point should not move at all when pushed with the left hand. Instruct in the ability to hold the bow (the ball-point) with this strength. Let the student repeat this practice a lot at home also. (For very small beginner children, add the ring finger, and let them try with only the middle finger raised.) Also let them play a piece they have already learned with the forefinger and little finger only. It is effective.

Pay attention to the correct bow hold. (Cf. K).

Don't twist the forefinger to the left. This is an important point of violin playing. The little finger should be rounded. Always check the angle of the thumb. When you bring your bow hand forward from the shoulder, the corner of the thumb is on the corner of the bow frame.

H. Again, instruct the student to play a piece with

the index and the ring finger (the panda maneuver by the fingers). The Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus, for example.

I. Play with the little finger off. With students whose sound does not ring well, try letting them play with the little finger off. Some students suddenly change to a bigger volume. Their sound did not ring because they were pressing with their little fingers. Give it a try.

J. Hold the ball-point with the middle finger, ring finger, and thumb. With the thumb in the center, move the tip of the ball-point up and down by maneuvering the fingers. Repeat this practice a lot. Tell the student to put strength in the ring finger and the thumb for down bows, and in the middle finger and the thumb for up bows. Let him hold the bow, train him to play a piece like Chorus with these three fingers.

(1) Performance using the two fingered panda as in G, H, and J. Create ability in gradual steps. The student learns the panda through playing with two fingers.

(2) Mix G, H, and J; alternate phrase by phrase.

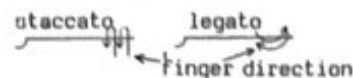
G.  H.  J. 

Use Bach's Bourrée and other pieces.

(3) Play the beginning section of the Mozart Rondo with the J-fingers.



It's not that you try to let the bow bounce; as you are at it, the bow kindly skips on its own accord. The direction in which the three fingers move is toward you and down. This direction is for staccato; when the direction of the fingers is sideways, it becomes legato.

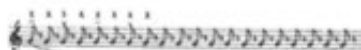


(4) How to use the panda for playing with sound. Emphasize the three points at the start of the sound; where the well balanced bow, with its tip nicely fixed, is placed on the string (i); the point where the fingers



are focused when the panda motion is done (ii); the point of the elbow (iii). These three points move together as if connected by a thread in a semi-circular motion. Always there are these three fellow travellers.

(a)



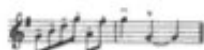
from the tip (elbow moves up) to the frog
from the frog (elbow moves down) to the tip
at the middle

Play ∇ bows. Place the tip of the bow on the string; mind the three points. Withdraw power from the wrist, relax the elbow. If the wrist is stiff, you get zero, far from three points.

Play Π bows. Don't forget the ring finger. See if the ring finger is balanced in the direction in which your playing motion is made. The elbow should dip in with each bow. It gradually moves down lower.

Play $\Pi \nabla$. Play two by two in the middle of the bow.

(b)



Pay attention to the start of the sound. At the tip (three times). In the middle (three times). At the frog (three times).

(c) Watch how you start the sound when you shift strings.



(d) Recall what a pianist does if the same note is repeated more than once. Don't just play them but try to feel that you are playing twice. With the panda.

Δ The Most Important Instruction in Maneuvering Fingers for $\Pi \nabla$ Bows Δ

K. Hold the bow correctly. Always watch the finger

shape and finger position in instructing the student. It is crucial. See the photos below.

(1) First make a fox with your fingers; put down the little finger, rounded, on the bow.

(2) The root of the forefinger should be level with the bow. (Watch carefully.)

(3) Watch carefully so that the forefinger does not get tilted to the left.

(4) (The angle of the thumb to the bow:) Bend the thumb. Let the student hold the edge of the frame of the bow at the right corner of the nail at the tip of the bent thumb.



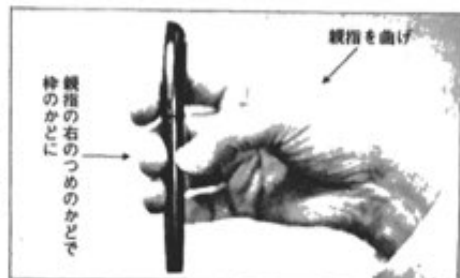
Bend the thumb this way.



The bow and the root of the forefinger should be level.

Tip should point toward the bridge.

Put the little finger on the bow somewhere lower than the center line.



Put the right edge of the thumb nail on the corner of the frame.

Bend the thumb.

L. Let the student hold the ball-point and maneuver just the fingers so that the ball-point goes up and down straight. Repeatedly train the student in this finger maneuvering ability. (At first it will also be fine to do this with the middle finger off.) This is a crucial way to create the most important ability to play **V Π**. (Try this on the desk). The back of the hand does not move up and down; move only the fingers.


(Pay attention.) Show the pictures for **K** and help the student hold the bow with finger tips. If the student holds the bow deeply with the fingers, the up and down movement of the bow becomes very small; it hardly moves. Also, pay attention to the angle of the thumb as well as the position of the thumb making an angle against the frame of the bow.

(1) Hold the bow horizontally, operate the bow in the air only with the fingers. Make a movement that draws a semi-circle under the silver thread. The little finger stretches and contracts. If the bow hold is deep, the bow cannot move. The first joint of the forefinger should touch the bow; go as much toward the tip with the other fingers.

(2) Under the silver thread, make a sound with the fingers but without moving the hand (the weight of the arm is on the string).



V bows. Start from the "ghost hand" with fingers dangling.

Keep the back of the hand level.  Fingers down.

Π bows. Wait after each note.

Π V bows.


Δ Create the Ability to Play the Whole Bow Parallel to the Bridge Δ

M. Make sure to instruct in playing whole bows on the Kreisler highway parallel to the bridge. Use the first eight measures of Chorus to create the habit of

playing on the Kreisler highway with whole bows without the tip of the bow swerving to the front. With beautiful vibrato.

N. Make big harmonic sounds. Instruct advanced students in this without fail. Let them play right near the bridge. If you train your student to do this with the whole bow, this also serves as training in playing a straight line parallel to the bridge. Again, the correct right hand and arm posture develops through this.

(1) Play Chorus with eyes closed. Try to keep parallel.



(2) Develop good posture so that the instrument does not hang down: "the chocolate hand!" The left hand should be at the level which allows it to carry a  chocolate to the mouth. In this way the right arm position also settles.

Δ Rub as Far as the Left Shoulder; Repeatedly Train the Student in a Motion for Creating Good Right Shoulder and Arm Positions Δ

O. The right hand, right arm, and right shoulder positions as well as the right arm posture are crucial. Be sure to conduct the new training from the beginner stage for creating correct posture of the body, right arm and shoulder. It is very effective.

If the right arm is by the side of the body (without coming forward), and the bow moves in front of the body right and left, while the elbow moves backwards, this is "bad posture." Please correct this posture by the training in rubbing as far as the left shoulder. This creates good posture. Do not fail to correct students whose right elbow moves back and forth.

(1) Massage the left shoulder with the right hand.

 Play with the massage arm. The elbow should hang. You are working where the violin is, so  the right shoulder should come a little forward.

(2) Play Chorus; after each two measures, hit the left shoulder knock knock with the right hand while still

holding the bow. "Greet the shoulder." The right shoulder should always stay forward.

Δ The Lottery Approach is the Suzuki Method Δ

P. This is the first important teaching method for fostering ability. Be sure to carry out the lottery approach, helping the student to keep improving earlier pieces better and better through practising them with the accompaniment tapes at home. At lessons remember to let the student play a piece or two by the lottery and examine how his ability is growing. This is our method.

If you throw out earlier pieces, you will not grow. Follow the rule of creating ability using materials you can handle.

Δ Make Efforts toward Casals' Tonalization Instruction Δ

Q. I consider the basics of string playing method to lie in instruction of this ability. The way of playing with absolute freedom in the weight to be given to the string is indeed the basic ability in string playing. Let's listen to Maestro Casals' sound which has absolute freedom and try to instruct it. Sound breathes life.

"Let the sound ring," "sing the sound" - this creates freedom in musical expression.

(1) Play vertically. Instead of aiming to draw sideways, think that the energy should work up and down. Consider the changes in the weight in a vertical sense. Put the bow on the string, balance it; the elbow goes down relaxed, and carries the bow making a semi-circle. How to hold the bow - the correct bow hold is important. Fix with the middle to the right corner of the thumb and try panda; only the edge of the nail touches the bow, and that single point delicately changes the strength in the sound. If you



hold the bow as if holding a stick, your sound will be stiff.



Watch this bow motion and elbow performance, and listen to the sound. This is the highest of the basics.

(3) Suppose the body is walking. There a leg remains, here the lower back remains - no, the entire body is moving together. Similarly, not just the forearm, but the whole arm moves together as a unit when you play. (Use Grétry's Tambourin.)



Watch the reverberation after the sound: not "tah-e" but "tah-yan." The speed changes.

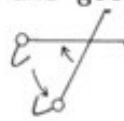
Those who have mastered Casals' tonalization to the point of absolute freedom are considered a level higher because this is important ability. (The better the tone, the more advanced and the more skilled the student is.)

Δ The Importance of String Shifting Ability and Its Practice Δ

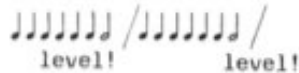
Many students still have bad string shifting posture. Study this well so that it penetrates to all students. This should be our project for the year.

(1) Train using "no-tone arpeggio." Watch the bow as it passes the strings: whether the arm is inside of (not higher than) the string is the fundamental point.

When you reach for something in a higher place, the hand goes up first; when you take it down, the elbow comes down first. Follow this principle: when you are coming down (G to E), the elbow moves first. The elbow should be in front of the body (in front of the side of the



body). When you are going up (E to G), hold the elbow, the bow goes up first to the level position (the elbow follows). Play Twinkle without tone, practising with each note the motion: "G-E-G, level!" On the G string, the bow should be parallel to the floor.



(2) Play the following arpeggio. Use a small bow space, stay at the same point of the bow without moving away. Here again, watch whether the bow is level when on the G string.

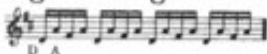


(3)



While you repeat this, you will find yourself string shifting without disturbing the good contact with the strings.

(4) Play Etude. Since this is a piece specifically written for the purpose of string shifting, use this to instruct the steps of string shifting.

(5) Practise shifting. 

(a) In the middle of the bow. Hold the elbow in place, use the pliant motion of the wrist. The wrist only moves up. There is no down motion. This is the ability to shift strings with the wrist.

(b) At the frog. Below the silver thread. String shifting by maneuvering the fingers: relax the wrist and elbow; fix the bow with the little finger to go to the A string, and loosen the little finger to go to the D string.

(c) While moving from the frog to the tip; from the tip to the frog.

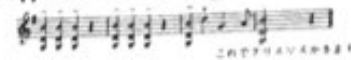
(d) In the air. See if you can do the string shifting operation just with the fingers that are holding the bow.

(6) Play the arpeggio in (2), alternating between the middle and frog of the bow. It has to sound the same.

 little finger thumb

(7) Chords. Don't leave yourself alone until you can

shift strings at the frog.



You can celebrate Christmas with this.

Δ Study in Vibrato Instruction Δ

In so many cases the student thinks he is vibrating plenty but there is no vibrato in the sound. I would like you to seriously tackle instruction in beautiful sounding vibrato.

(1) The left hand shape from the beginner stage is important.

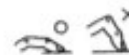
(a) From the very beginning Twinkle stage instruct the shaping of the hand when the little finger (fourth finger) presses the string.

(b) Shift the left hand from position 1 to position 2 with the elbow. The wrist at 2 should be the same as at 1. Repeat 1, 2, 1, 2, . . .

(2) The finger shape of the left hand.



The so-called crepe vibrato is common. It goes crinkle crinkle from a high place, with the first joint unable to move freely. Partly for creating width in the finger tip, the shape of the finger that presses the string should be emphasized.



*After this Instructor Ōuchi gave a detailed, six part report on how to teach vibrato.

Δ Instruction in Correct Intonation: the Single Point of Sympathetic Vibration Δ

There is only one point which causes resonance, so it is easy. Let me ask you to instruct your students so that the intonation of the three lowest notes will be correct:



Check the intonation of 1 on A by the 4th.

Don't see with your eyes but see with your fingers.
Always produce a sound that rings.

* * *

"If there is no sound in music, there is nothing."

"The foundation of music is how to refine that sound."

"In teaching ability, sound is the essence."

"The instructor badly needs the ear to clearly discern what the student is doing through listening to his sound."

"Things can change faster, bang, bang! Renew your mind."

"To be able to let feeling come alive in your sound - that is what the string playing technique is all about."

"Look, you have so many fingers (as many as five), so have the delicacy to combine all of them to create a wonderful sound."

"Use a model about which you can say 'I want to make this sound.' Since man is a child of the environment, we are apt to be educated by our own sound."

"In so many cases, it is 'I understand what you say;' but it has to be 'my arm understands what you say.' The arm is to comprehend the instruction. In order to arrive at that point, after all one needs to repeat it at least 10,000 times. 10,000 times is not enough; it starts from the 10,000th time."

"You can't say it's enough because you did it last time. You've been doing Japanese much longer."

"It can always change. It can change each year. One whose present sound is the same as that he produced five years ago will play with the same sound 500 years from now."

"Great men instantly correct themselves; small men don't easily change."

"It's still wrong. It's still wrong. I'll try to correct it. - This is what study is all about."

"If you think you're not good, that's fine. People with weak points can correct them."

"Don't be ashamed of what you can't do; be happy

about it. There is no embarrassment in education."

"When you stand up and walk, I wonder if you ask yourself each time: how am I doing? Can I walk with this balance? . . . This won't do as ability. . . ."

"While you are at it every day this way, eventually it becomes easy."

"Rather than move your bow with efforts, serve your bow with efforts."

"I am a cleaner of sound."

"In music is life, not circles of notation. In it is the composer's heart. This is the basis of instruction."

"What is important should be continued."

"It is not the piece but the sound that determines who is more advanced and good."

"We use the word ' --power, [dumb power, in contempt of simple physical strength], but this is the most difficult to achieve."

"I would like you teachers to understand clearly how different our method is from the prevalent education. One who actually drives it through is a Suzuki teacher."

"First discard such a thought as 'I am going to do it according to my own idea.'"

"Man is a child of the environment. In this sense there is no such thing as individuality. The only thing there is is what we call ability."

"Ignoring individuality? How can you ignore individuality so much as to teach all German children to become German speaking people?!"

Cause, interaction, effect. It is not just cause and effect, but interaction is in the middle. We should seriously study the various interacting conditions (environment) between cause and effect."

"Instead of dropping the piece that you have just learned to play, add it to the next piece, add the two together An equation of addition -- this is the Suzuki method."

"Even if the teachers' abilities are quite varied, there ought to be a way for all children to develop Even if mothers' abilities are all different, all Japanese children learn to correctly speak Japanese."

"How to help children to attain musical expression

with wonderful sound according to the teacher's ability
"

"You must prepare a lead for the child's wish as to what kind of sound he wants to produce."

"So that I can ask you to practice this kind of instruction, I must ask you to be able to do it yourselves before you teach it."

The above is a collection of Mr. Suzuki's words which came out of his mouth with refreshing poignancy on various occasions during the conference. As felt through these gleanings, the topic which was particularly emphasized this year was tonalization.

"How to produce good tone," a question of instruction in tonalization, is a central point in any conference, but I think this year it received special emphasis with respect to the instructor's ability to guide children toward sound. It made us aware that the posture of consistent search for sound must be the most important thing. I would like to start by helping students to have an inner model of sound through daily listening to Casals, Kreisler, and others.

Mr. Suzuki also emphasized thorough practice of the lottery approach during his lecture on "the law of ability." This is meant to create ability by the pieces the child can play; moreover, this method which involves always playing with the record easily raises the child's ability even before he knows it, through absorbing the record's sensitivity, rhythm, and ability. This method can beautifully foster children even if instructors' abilities differ. What a saving grace these words are for me suffering from lack of strength! My thought is that I will first try following the method which he shows us as the Suzuki method, instead of misdirecting myself by saying that I will go my own way; I will try walking the same road.

Entrusted with the two-sided approach of tonalization and lottery, we left Hotel Lake Biwa, the location of the conference, feeling weighed down with grave responsibility.

Talent Education, no. 61

MY LESSONS (I)

Shin'ichi Suzuki
 Lectures on Music Instruction
 no. 34

— Let's Give Lessons which Foster the Ear that Distinguishes the Pure Ringing Sound of the String —

With that beautiful sound of ringing strings of master cellist Casals as my guide, that sound of the ringing string as my goal, I have been studying the violin playing technique for the past forty years. When Maestro Casals came to Japan for the first time in 1961, 200 children gave him a welcoming concert at the Bunkyo Public Hall, Tokyo, introducing him to the performance of talent education children. I said to him, whom I met for the first time then,

"Professor Casals, I am your student."

"I'm afraid I don't recognize you," he said, looking puzzled.

"I have taken lessons from your records over twenty years," I said. "You have really taught me a lot. Thank you very much."

That beautiful ringing reverberation Casals created on the strings, the beauty and variety of its tone - what profound study he made of sound.

Now at lesson, although there are many problems concerning how to study the beautiful tone color and volume, the first is to foster the ability of the ear in the student so that he will learn to distinguish the pure, natural sound of the ringing string.

When you start lessons, if you only teach at the beginning how to rub the strings with the bow, you are

giving inferior instruction in tonalization. The kind of instruction which fosters the ear to discern the pure ringing sound of the string and helps the student to aim at that sound should be the first step in instruction in tonalization.

How to Instruct with the Plucked Sound of the String as the Model

Pluck the open D string; ring for your student a sound beautiful in tone and rich in volume. Let him listen to the ring and reverberation of this beautiful sound of the string, and tell him that you will now produce the same sound with the horse hair.

Instruct this as follows: teach the student how to rest the bow (horse hair) on the string holding the bow in a well balanced way. Show him the string playing technique by which the right arm draws a small semi-circle (∪) with the wrist always relaxed. The student should practise producing with the horse hair and the arm the same amount of sound as the pizzicato sound he played. Show him how to pizz twice, then try to produce the same ringing sound twice using the horse hair and the arm making a semi-circle.

As for the placement of the bow for ringing the string, at first near the frog would be good. For the semi-circle movement of the right arm, which is the purpose of this practice, is more evident there. Starting with the open D string, I give thorough instruction in this bow execution and beautiful sound for a long time until it becomes part of the student's ability. It would be good to let the student raise the middle finger from the bow, let him try the "panda" with the other fingers, and when the power is thus fixed at the tip, let him ring the string with this bow. Above all pay attention to always playing with a relaxed wrist.

It is of prime importance to first know the beautiful pure sound of the string that rings like a plucked open string. And when the ear which can hear this sound is ready, let the student practise tonalization aiming at this sound.

Listen to Maestro Casals' beautiful sound of the strings. Listen to him thinking of how the variety of tone and beauty of the changes in the weight on the sound are studied and mastered. On the horse hair of the bow whose tip never wobbles, the weight of the right arm is working, changing freely. Think of the string playing technique of Maestro Casals who has absolute freedom in variation for musical expression. Trace it back from his sound and find the correct technique. At that point you will realize what string playing technique means.

Knowing the Sound Produced with a Properly Balanced Bow

To know how to rest the weight of the bow on the string is the most important basic ability in string playing technique. The horse hair then properly rings the string. The bow hold is the crux; in other words being able to balance the bow in such a way as to rest the weight of the entire bow no matter where (where at the tip or at the frog) is precisely the most important ability of string playing.

And the sound produced when you rest the bow on the string with perfect balance is indeed the sound with the ideal conditions of string playing technique. Then power and beautiful reverberation are created in the sound.

The Most Effective Training: Upside Down Bow

Here is a very effective method which I have been using with my students for balancing the bow with its weight resting on the string. Let the student hold the bow upside down, that means at the tip (watch the fingers so the bow hold will be correct). The horse hair and the wooden part of the bow should be kept straight in the up and down direction flat to the string (don't let the bow collapse sideways or tilt its angle) when putting it on the string. Let the student play an easy piece (melody) according to his ability. Have him practise it as homework.

For beginners in Books 1 and 2 assign Twinkle for

daily home practice. Let them play it at the lesson as a test. While you repeat this, their sound changes greatly. A big effect will also occur with more advanced students: let them practice at home a melody or a piece with the bow upside down and test the effect at lessons. Tell them to continue practising this way at home. I would like to see this carried out everywhere.

The skill to rest the weight of the bow, balance, and variation in the weight - the most important thing in string playing technique - is gradually absorbed till it becomes ability. Eventually when you guide the student to achieve with the normal bow hold the same volume and beauty of the sound as when playing with the upside down bow, and compare the two, the effect of the reverse bow practice will become great. If the student coolly does it when asked to play his present piece with the bow upside down, this is proof of the fact that his ability has grown fairly well.

Talent Education, no. 61

*Fix my power
firmly at the tip:
bow won't wobble.
Move on, pony hair,
as my elbow moves.
I won't let you float,
I won't press you down.*



Shin'ichi Suzuki

MY LESSONS (2)

Shin'ichi Suzuki
Lectures on Music Instruction
no. 35

— Instruction in the Correct Shape of the Fingers on the Strings and the Left Hand; Left Arm String Shifting —

I think it is good from the beginner stage to prepare good finger shape and finger power for pressing the strings in the following ways:

A. Have the student make a circle with the little finger and the thumb of the left hand (without the instrument). Ask him to do the "meeting of the nail tips," the two nails facing each other. Tell him to put firmness in the finger tips, and test how much strength is there. When he strongly pushes up from underneath with the forefinger of his right hand, it should not go through between the little finger and the thumb: the tips of the two fingers should be pressing against each other firmly. If the finger strength is weak, the forefinger of the right hand, when testing, slips through between them.

The student should test this every day by himself so that the tip power of the little finger and the thumb will gradually increase. Test his strength with your forefinger at lessons. After the little finger and the thumb, guide your student to create the ability to strengthen the tips of other fingers: the ring finger and the thumb, the middle finger and the thumb, and the forefinger and the thumb should have a "meeting of the nail tips" with the fingers rounded and the tips pressed firmly.

Instruction in Left Arm String Shifting

B. Now, let your student hold the violin, and instruct him in the finger shape as he puts down the fourth finger on the A string: the finger should be curved as in the "meeting of the nail tips." The proper shape of the fourth finger requires a good left hand shape. Therefore along with the shape of the fourth finger, good left hand shape develops. In other words, it is partly for preparing good left hand form that we need to assign the student to practise pressing the right place with a round little finger. Thus we instruct him in correct shape of the little finger and the whole left hand.

Next, go on to 4 on D, then 4 on G. Teach the student in this order to put down the little finger in the proper, round shape on the string, and assign this as homework. What is important in this instruction is to show how the left arm moves as you shift strings from E to A, from A to D, from D to G, and again from G to D, to A, and to E: the arm swings to the right or to the left. Teach him to coordinate the left arm in this way with string shifting. If the student can't do this left arm string shifting, the little finger, for example on G, has a poor shape: you tend to flatten the little finger straight in order to press the string. Carefully instruct every student in correct left arm string shifting.

Instruction in Vibrato with the Little Finger

C. When a good shape of the little finger is ready, instruct advanced students in beautiful little finger vibrato in high positions. Nearly all students play without vibrato in high positions (such as around the fifth position) when playing high notes in a piece. Change this from now on. It will be effective for you to instruct them in creating the ability to vibrate whether with the fourth or the third finger, using the following tonalization exercise.

On the D string (slowly)

Train the student until the third and fourth fingers can achieve the same beautiful vibrato. Have him practise the same thing on the G, A, and E strings also, and at lessons teach the correct fourth finger shape and fine vibrato.

* * *

— Instruction which Helps the Tone to Become Markedly Bigger and Better —

Instructors, please study this and carry it out immediately. The sound changes a lot.

(1) An Instruction for Creating Left Hand Finger Power

Since children's finger power is weak when pressing the strings, their sound is bound to be small.

How can the sound become firm, and also big? As a result of studying this from various angles, I came upon this: a method for fostering the strength with which to securely and firmly press down the string. When you instruct this, children start to play with a louder and securer sound. It is also effective in adults. When I tried it on teacher trainees in Music School, their sound went through a big change. Beginners particularly change well. This is because at the early stage the finger power pressing the string is weak.

Physiologically, if the left fingers only lightly press the strings, the right hand fingers and the power of the bow are also weak. On records, you can occasionally hear Casals' fingers pressing the string with a loud tap before he plays the note. The power with which the finger presses the string has to be in the same condition as when the open string rings with an echo. From this principle I have long repeated "short bow, open string," explaining the condition for ringing the string pressed by a finger.

Now, my new teaching method involves the use of the bow as in the photographs. First hold just the bow (instead of the violin) as in photograph 1 and 2. Form

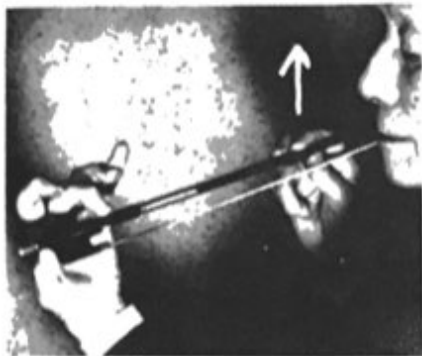


Photo 1

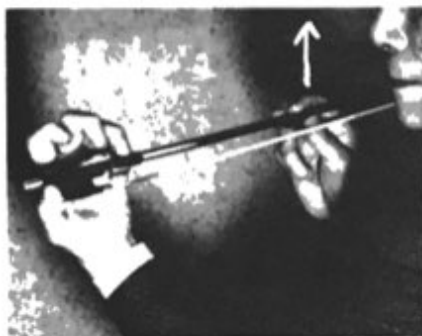


Photo 2



Photo 3: how to hold the bow.

your posture around the bow, put down the third finger (ring finger), with the thumb under the screw of the bow.

When you are ready, push up the bow with the right hand (at the position of the bow shown in the picture). Fix the ring finger firmly, pressing the bow down so that this end of the bow won't go up above the horizontal position. Teach this at lessons, and proceed to the middle finger, forefinger, and to the weakest, the little finger. Instruct so that students work at home on this finger power exercise with the use of the bow. At the first lesson, the teacher should hold the student's bow replacing his right hand, and push it up for him to test finger power.

With small students, I recommend that you explain it well to their mothers, and have the mothers push up the bow at home. Try this using the melody of the Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus. The sound will become bigger and

more powerful. Let me ask you to carry this out thoroughly everywhere as an important new approach.

(2) Hold the Bow with the Right Corner of the Thumb Nail, with the Thumb Bent

The bow hold affects the quality of tone. Please instruct your students to hold the bow "with the thumb bent," and "at the right corner of the thumb nail."

Examine photograph 3 carefully.

Have the student fix the bow with the little finger and the forefinger (putting strength in the thumb, relaxing the little finger), then lower the tip (this is the panda), holding it still. Touch the tip, push it up a little, and examine whether the tip power is firm. With the bow thus held - "Fix my power at the tip: bow won't wobble," - let him play something like Chorus, guiding him toward more and more refined tone.

Have students repeatedly practise playing with this panda bow hold with a good thumb in order to foster them toward finer tone; at the same time it is also necessary to have them play pieces with the little finger, forefinger, and thumb only, or with these and the ring finger, paying attention to holding the bow "at the right corner of the thumb nail," and "with the thumb bent" (lifting the middle finger.)

Next, also watch the tips of fingers holding the bow (the bow is to hold with the finger tips only). Show the picture well to students. Many students hold the bow at the second joint of the fingers; please correct them. When you hold the bow deeply, the fingers don't move. Hold the bow "at the finger tips" further out toward the tip from the first joint. Only the forefinger touches the bow at the first joint.

[Piano School]

**If You Strengthen Finger Power in this Way
Your Tone Will Become Finer**

Led by the fact that, in the case of violin, the tone



Photo 4



Photo 5

becomes much finer when the left hand fingers are trained to press the strings with power, I thought about finding a skillful way to create the same finger power for the piano. Following is a new idea born out of that thought. Please try it at once as an important new approach.

In many cases when children's sound on the piano is very weak, isn't it because they are so young that there is no strength yet in their fingers? Even though good instruction is given in playing with the arms, the sound will still be weak if the fingers are weak.

As in pictures 4 to 7, the companion for creating the



Photo 6



Photo 7

left hand finger power is the right hand thumb. Put the right hand little finger lightly as in the photo on the thumb of the left hand, and practise powerfully pushing the thumb down with the little finger and the arm together. At the tempo of the Twinkle theme, maybe two measures at a time, push the thumb with your finger and arm, beating the rhythm with your finger.

Next, the ring finger, then the middle finger, then the forefinger. As the finger, with the right arm, pushes the left hand thumb (put strength in the thumb from below to the beat, too), you can foster power gradually. While the thumb pushes from underneath as a companion, naturally power increases in both thumbs, so all five fingers in each hand become stronger.

When you try this first, have the student first play a piece, then instruct him in this finger strengthening exercise using all the fingers in both hands, then let him play the same piece once more in a test for observing how the sound changes. I am sure it changes. Again, as a way to test a young student's finger power, it will be necessary to let your student push against your thumb with his little and other fingers while

telling him to push "harder." Try letting students enjoy this to the rhythm of Twinkle.

I think this is very effective, for it not only strengthens the fingers but the arm learns to play together. Why not do this finger power exercise at home; I think the sound will gradually improve. It may be good to have students do it in class while waiting for their turns.

Anyway, as in violin, when you train the student in creating finger power, the sound greatly changes to the bigger and the finer.

Talent Education, no. 62

"Man is a child of the environment."

*"Sound breathes life —
Without form it lives."*

*"Strings are mindless
They only sing forth the heart
Of those who ring them out."*

— *Shin'ichi Suzuki*

ON ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTION BY THE SUZUKI METHOD

Haruko Kataoka

Part III

9. Finger Shape
10. What Is Tonalization?
11. How Much Reviewing?
12. Play at the Record Tempo
13. No Etudes

Finger Shape

Q: What about finger shape? Do you instruct it from the beginning?

Kataoka: In the same way as the previous topic, I don't say too much to little children about what shape to make, etc. Instead, I try to play with as good tone as possible when I play sitting next to a student. The child spontaneously comes to do as the person next to him does, rather than doing what he is told to do. When you say this and that, he can't move. Unlike the violin, the piano is always the same whether you are three or four, so we are asking too much to begin with. If there were a size just right for the student as in violin, he would be able to do it even if we ask a little too much, but . . . Mr. Suzuki always says, "Produce good tone; if the teacher does that, the student will also produce good tone." I do that; my students do that. Isn't this best?

Q: Approximately when is it that the child can play a new piece from the music, especially the left hand?

Another thing: would we be able to manage using this method in the case of a child whose parents run a family store, for example, so that neither can spend much time with the child?

Kataoka: We have such students in our class, too. It's the worst when the mother is busy. But some parents say it's fine if we are slow, and have their children study despite that handicap. Mr. Suzuki says, "Stick to it for ten years without a word; complain after you have tried it ten years." Even such children come to play fairly well in ten years. However, their progress is slower than children who study at home with parents seven days a week. When the child is small, I ask the parent to watch him practise at night or whenever. If not, it won't work: a pre-school child practises by himself - this is impossible.

Q: Then about reading. Suppose a child is big enough to go to school and advanced enough to play sonatinas - I should think it is too much to expect him to learn a piece just from listening to the record.

Kataoka: You are asking when the child will begin to play from the music? Generally speaking, the child won't be able to play from the music on his own accord until he is in the second, third, or fourth grade.

Q: If by then you have him study reading separately from about the beginning of Book 2, does he spontaneously come to be able to play looking at the notes from around sonatinas?

Kataoka: Sonatinas of what level?

Q: I have the end of Book 2 in mind.

Kataoka: There is absolutely no chance that he can read such a thing. Why, he has just started practising reading when he entered Book 2. If he then reads that sonatina at the end of Book 2, isn't he something like a genius?

The problem is that we are now thinking in abstract terms. Let's consider this as a practical question. Take Beethoven's Sonatina at the end of Book 2. Learn the first two measures or so of the first movement securely. Fine to take time. The mother, too, can read it if it is as simple as that; and the child, if he is

not too young, can understand it a little. Fine to take a day; fine to take two days. Memorize those two measures. Then, on the third day, on the spot he can easily play the first four measures. So the student should study this way. The problem is that you think of playing the whole thing through without a focus. You really must learn little by little. Pieces in Books 2 and 3 are simple, aren't they? Since the structure is simple, once you grasp a part securely, you can play some other sections with no effort. Therefore, to be able to play without the music is nothing. So, though I repeat myself again, it won't do unless you teach how to study from Twinkle on. The teacher has to emphasize that to parents. Don't just tell them: "learn the piece;" teach mothers who might not understand as plainly as possible how to learn a piece.

I didn't study piano by talent education; I started around the first grade. I was a third grader or so when I consciously thought, "so this is what written music is." I saw the music every day and at lesson, and the teacher pointed out my mistakes pointing at the notes. Even so I was a third grader or so before I began to clearly understand and thought, "I see, so this is how to read the music." I remember it well. I have a feeling that a child's mind becomes clear only at about that point.

Q: This is about when switching methods in the middle. Suppose I let the student start over from Twinkle, is it better to have him learn from the ear without giving him the music at all? And is it better to use no music even if the child can already read a lot?

Kataoka: After all, elementary or junior high school children can read. So, we ask their mothers: at least play the record since our method is such and such. It is all right to look at the music, but, I say to the student, since it is such an easy piece you should not use it once you have memorized it. Also, when the student comes to the lesson, I never let him see the music at all, so eventually it becomes a habit. By the time the student learns difficult pieces, he always uses the music.

What Is Tonalization?

Q: We come across the word tonalization in books. What does it mean?

Kataoka: Singers have the word vocalization: Mr. Suzuki made the word tonalization from that. It means producing good tone. At Book I level, as I have just said, I don't single out tonalization practice as such, but try inducing the student to produce good tone within the scope of Twinkle.

Q: When I try to let a small child produce a big and firm sound, it is unavoidable, with his thin fingers and bones, and with his fingers still all flat, for him to put strength in his arms or his shoulders. Is it all right if his volume is small like the small child he is? Or must I try to have him produce a sound with power in his tummy?

Kataoka: A good point. At first I try not to demand too big a sound from a small child. Even so, everybody somehow raises his shoulders without trying to. No matter how we look at it, there is some difficulty and it shows. When the student comes to play advanced pieces, after all we wish for big sound. So the teacher says unnecessary things. Then the child tries to meet the demand by doing what is too much for him, and the shoulders end up rising.

Q: Concerning the high shoulders that you just mentioned, really it happens to everyone. I am worried as to whether it is all right to leave it alone.

Kataoka: Indeed. I wish to ask how the shoulders can come down myself.

Q: Especially, more than half go wrong as they gradually begin to play big pieces.

Kataoka: The question of high shoulders does not have one answer; there are individual differences, too, and it's hard to say exactly where the problem lies. In some cases, the mother is too scary. Although the teacher instructs just once a week, the mother is there six days. If she is a strict type who gives a terrible lot of commands, the child gets scared just by the commands; so in such a case the mother is the cause.

not the teacher. Yet there are cases in which the teacher is responsible. Since the cause differs according to each student, the teacher has to diagnose it individually. There is one scary mother in my class. Three siblings are taking lessons. The youngest one came to the lesson, and his elbows didn't move. "Did anything happen?" I asked the mother, and she answered, "To tell you the truth I yelled at him yesterday." Yesterday, mind you: after a whole day the child hadn't recovered from the shock. If the teacher always pays attention to that kind of thing, children, I think, will develop.

The way the shoulders rise differs between an already familiar piece and a still new piece. So, if you let the student practice a lot with familiar pieces, the shoulders will gradually go down. If you have him play only difficult pieces, the high shoulders will gradually become a bad habit. Talent education means "let's always study the former pieces well;" if we give kind lessons on former pieces all the time, I imagine the shoulders will come down. What do you think?

How Much Reviewing?

Q: How much reviewing would it be good to do?

Kataoka: If the student plays former pieces always before the daily lesson, he comes to be able to play them at any time. At student recitals and what not both child and parent tend to want to play the present piece. But let him play a former piece. Since he is competent there, he can learn through that experience. So his ability rises. Since unison playing is possible in violin, violin students constantly play earlier pieces, which is very nice. In piano, the teacher does not have the time to listen to earlier pieces much. But if we don't listen to at least one or two pieces, neither the parent nor the child will ever work on earlier pieces. Review at home - telling them this alone never works.

Q: We are expected to hold children's recitals - would you comment on that?

Kataoka: Yes, right. I learned the value of this in the

States, and spoke repeatedly about it there. It seems they do it in Canada. Suppose the student finishes Book 2 and goes on to Book 3. From what I hear, he has to give a Book 2 graduation recital. Not all the pieces: the teacher and the student consult and pick three pieces or so. Over there in some cases instructors are teaching Suzuki in college, so there is a place on the campus for doing this, and they now give a Book 2 recital, now a Book 3 recital, etc. When I hear the tapes they are not so good, but anyway they work on former pieces, children, parents, and teachers together. You need a little device like this.

Play at the Record Tempo

Q: At first, children can't play at a tempo comparable to the record's. What would you suggest that I do?

Kataoka: When the child plays the piece for the first time, he can't. So, it is all right to let him play slowly at first. However, it is better to let him play Book 1 at the record's tempo.

The smaller the child is, the more painful it is to play slowly, so he will end in hating it. As far as Book 1 is concerned, it is dangerous, as Mr. Suzuki says, to let him play slowly. Even if it's a little messy, just close your eyes for Book 1. It's no good if it is too messy, however. Commonsense of the past education included "Slowly at first." Mr. Suzuki told us this surprised: when he went to the States once, there was a class in which children were made to play extremely slowly. When you do that, children will be bored to death. With small children, therefore, they'll be more pleased if you let them play to the tempo.

No Etudes

Q: What about practice in etudes?

Kataoka: We give them no etudes whatsoever. We do give them reading, but if you give it to them as etudes, the children will hate it even more. Aren't etudes something adults, whose fingers don't move are

supposed to do?

Q: In Twinkle, the fingering is from 1 to 4, but do small children use 1 to 5?

Kataoka: It ends in 1, 1. Since we've been doing it many years from the start, we just end up doing it that way, although we try to do it the way the book says.

Q: Can a three year old do it?

Kataoka: Yes, children who walk and talk can usually do it.

[Note] This discussion was held during the Piano Workshop at Yamaha Hall in 1977.

Piano Instruction by the Suzuki Method, Talent Education Piano Center, no. 4 (November 1977)



EDUCATION IS IN THE HANDS OF PARENTS

Shin'ichi Suzuki
From *Talent Education
for Young Children*

II. ON EARLY EDUCATION

Education Is in the Hands of Parents

Every parent wishes to raise his or her child as a worthy human being who will contribute to society in future.

The important stage in preparing the foundation for this starts on the day the baby is born.

The most important period is from birth to age six when the child first goes to school: upbringing, character, and ability are all determined during this stage.

Commonsense in the past has treated a child differently when his ability was fostered skillfully: "He is a born genius."

In fact such a view only reflects lack of knowledge on the part of parents who hold it; they must, instead, consider how they would be able to foster their children's ability well. It is indeed unfortunate for children that, out of insufficient recognition of children's nature and out of laziness, people merely look at results and give up.

It is the same as leaving a plant alone without fertilizing or watering it, when it could grow.

As I have already stated, "All children who can talk in a normal way having no deficiency from brain diseases have potential for developing superior ability each in his own way."

This is a fact that I was able to prove through

instructing children for many years.

In fact the children all demonstrated amazing ability. One of my small disciples, Kōji Toyoda, played Dvořák's Humoresque at two years and five months and this was reported in the Asahi newspaper as though he was a genius. However, I know well that Kōji did not suddenly display such native ability. Kōji's father, also a student of mine, was playing the violin every day. Kōji grew in that environment and learned to play violin from his father: he was what he was due to his father's effort.

By now almost all talent education children can play this piece at age four or five. When almost a thousand children play it, you can no longer treat them as geniuses.

As long as proper instruction is given, I would like you to understand that children, depending upon parental effort, can demonstrate such ability from early childhood.

The reason that most children become average grownups having been given no chance to develop superior inborn ability is, to speak plainly, that parents fail to notice their heaven endowed natural propensities and fail to foster them from early days. Precious buds of talent dry out, seedlings are left to become slender and weak, and the result is irrevocable.

In order to let large chrysanthemums bloom, superior gardeners first make careful efforts to foster the seedlings. They are well versed in the law of nature: they plant seedlings in the sun, water them, and fertilize them at proper times. Once the seedlings have thinned away, they can do nothing about them.

This is a rigorous law of nature.

There is no exception to this in the process of a child's growth.

In brief, we must seriously think about our children instead of being misled by such superficial words as genius or prodigy. If all mothers start small children's talent education by a proper method and with sufficient knowledge about fostering their own children's ability, in a short span of time society will demonstrate its

outstanding ability.

It is not too late now to start children's education. What is important is that you awaken to this.

Children's education will be perfect in a family in which both husband and wife are interested. Even when the mother is alone, she should fight the many difficulties to foster children well with love. This will brighten her life, and bring hope and light in her future.

Many people, though wanting to give education to their children, seem to depend on kindergarten and school on all accounts. With such a dependent attitude, the result is always undesirable.

Only when the parent's enthusiasm is reflected in the child, and when the parent makes efforts together with the child, is the result good. Although I say effort, I do not mean anything difficult here: the thing is to repeat, if only a little at a time, every day. Strict adherence to training hours grow into a big strength when accumulated. Without this effort, the child's ability does not develop.

The Parent's Sense of Education

Although I don't know who coined the derogatory word "education mama," I think it is natural that mama educates. Those to blame are irresponsible parents who give birth to children but completely depend upon others, now kindergarten, now school, when they are of age, paying no attention to whether their field for human cultivation turned into a wasteland or a mountain.

I wish all mothers in the world to be education mamas. However, it should not reflect ambition about placing their children in prestigious schools or education for self-centered purposes. Children who are forced to study to satisfy parental vanity will suffer; and what ability will grow in them as a result? You don't have to look at today's student unrest before you begin to question whether education is all right as it is. I think it is time that we deeply reflected on ourselves.

Many parents are apt to become teachers with no sense of education toward their children. Parents are often too peremptory to children, or too impatiently try to force them to obey parental will. This is due to parental illusion: they forget the changes in growing children, believing that it's still the same as when they were babies.

Parent and child may have physical ties; yet it is necessary to try to consider that they are separate existences in body and mind until death, like strangers to each other.

Therefore, once you become aware that something called ego is growing in the child's heart, your relationship must change: it cannot be the same as when he was a baby. The moment the child's heart starts to grow, a sense of education becomes necessary on the part of the parent.

The Knack of Instruction

Children's violin playing posture is often poor, the scroll of the violin always drooping. Their mothers try to help them at home at practice time, repeatedly telling them to "raise your violin," but this has no expected effect. That is because children don't yet have the awareness which makes them say, "I want to play with a proper posture." Therefore, they raise the violin when told, but while playing, it soon goes down again.

One day I gathered five and six year olds whose scroll drooped, and let them play a piece they could easily play: "How many of you can play the whole piece without tilting the violin down? Who can play with a good posture all the way through?"

Unexpectedly, the eight children with the habitual problem of low scrolls without exception played the piece right through the end with fine posture, the violins held high.

"This is wonderful. Nobody's violin went down. Well done. But I wonder if any of you can play every day with the same posture Raise your hand if you

think you can," I said. All eight children immediately raised their hands. Children are always great just like this.

"Thank you. I am happy that you did so well today. When you go home today, try playing with this posture. See if you can play with the same posture again tomorrow. Lest you forget, ask your mother to watch you well. Whether or not you can continue to keep this posture every day until the end of a piece till your next lesson - this is your only homework.

"When you finish your piece, it's all right to tilt your violin down. Now, practise tilting your violin down: lower it as far as you can," I made the children laugh, letting them lower their violins till they almost reached their knees. They giggled happily.

In short, the important point is with what words and in what way we should help the child to develop a desire to play in a good posture on his own accord.

Those who are clumsy always try to directly make the child do what they want him to do. In other words, they command. What a gauche way it is compared with trying to make him feel like trying?

Whenever we face children, we must always first think about sensible words and approach. This is what is called a sense of child raising or sense of education. With just a little thinking on the part of the parent, the child can change in any way.

Parent's Self-Reflection Is the First Step

Home education happens every day: the wisest way is for the parent to grasp the child's psychology well and cleverly help him spontaneously learn while enjoying himself.

When the parent, out of excessive enthusiasm, scolds the child too much ignoring his psychology, it ends in failure by dulling his incentive and cooling his interest. On the other hand, if you humor the child too much, he will develop such a willful personality that you don't

know what to do. The knack of handling this depends upon how the parent uses his head.

"One's own child is the hardest to educate," people often say. In a sense this is convincing. This is because the parent becomes greedy when it comes to the matter of her own child. The same thing may work smoothly without a hitch if with another child. The parent can't be happy unless everything goes as she thinks. This is parental egoism. In general parents regard their children as their possessions. Therefore they refuse to be satisfied unless they can subordinate their children to their will. This tendency is especially strong in mothers. When the child was a baby, the mother picked up his legs, changed his diaper, pinned the new one, pulled his legs straight, turned him over, etc., handling him every day as she willed. This habit still remains somewhere in her heart even though the child is big now. She says something; the child doesn't do it. She gets irritated when it doesn't work as she wishes. In other words, she has educated herself to be that way. It's no problem if she can think of it with a clear mind: then was then, and now is now, with child and parent facing each other as individuals, in a one to one human relationship. However, where she can't is a parental mistake.

Another's child has a one to one relationship with her from the beginning, because she didn't give birth to him. If she can't stand maintaining the same relationship with her own child because he is a continuation of the baby diapers, I think this is parental egoism.

I consider everything that grows to be ability. In correspondence with the frequency of repetition, ability develops. When the mother repeatedly scolds the child every day, her ability to scold grows rapidly. Then her scolding becomes stronger and more pungent. On the other hand, talent to be scolded also grows in the child, and being scolded begins to mean nothing to him. In other words, resistance grows. The parent becomes all the more emotional, her voice gradually becomes higher, and, as she finds the mouth no longer sufficient,

the hand comes out though she doesn't mean it. From the principle that ability grows where there is strong stimulation, the child's ability to be obstinate develops with greater force, and in the end he turns into an impossibly stubborn child.

And the child causes the parent to grieve: "This child was born obstinate" - what is she saying, I really wonder, after bringing him up this way herself? To begin with, the mother's ego is the cause here. Things will completely change if she clearly recognizes that the child is fundamentally a separate individual even though she gave birth to him, and faces him with love that dictates that she try to foster him in the best possible way. When she must scold the child, she should reason with him using cool judgment; there should be no need to yell at him.

The child absorbs, through life's activities, everything that the parent radiates, and thus his personality forms.

In other words, he assimilates everything as ability by adapting to the environment, therefore you must know that the parent's language and acts are his models. Even though the parent might think that he is too small to understand such a thing, he cleverly sees through this. Young children's sharp sensitivity is more than adults can imagine. For example, the mother shuts the door with a bang. The father opens another with his foot. The child who watches it copies it right away. Then he is scolded by his mother. They do it themselves, and yell at the child. What can be more unreasonable? Children copy what parents do. This is the same as educating him.

When we think about these things, it is obvious that parents' reflection on their lives is of prime importance.

If the Parent Changes, the Child Also Changes

Here's a story.

This was one day several years ago. Since I was tired when I arrived at a hotel in Tokyo, I asked for a masseuse. Soon a woman of thirty-five or six came over.

While giving me a massage, she spoke as follows:

"Children are gifts from heaven which determine parents' luck and misfortune. Some parents are given very good children; others are given difficult children who are just impossible. There are such things after all. I am an unlucky parent. My boy who is in the first year of junior high never listens to anything I say. When child and mother just face each other, fight is in the air already. I have given it up thinking that this is my fate, but . . ."

This won't do, I thought, and told her various things about my thoughts on talent education. Then she shed tears, stopping her hands. "Why are you crying?" I asked. "While listening to what you said," she replied, "I thought what a terrible parent I have been and I couldn't help crying, feeling sorry for my child. I have really been a bad mother." Then I said, "You are a good mother. I am happy that you are a mother who cries for what she realizes. Try living from today simply with the same heart with which you cry and feel sorry right now, saying nothing to your child." "Yes, thank you," she said and went home.

A month later, when the national concert was held in Tokyo, I stayed at the usual hotel. And when I asked for a masseuse, the same woman happened to come. The moment she saw me, she said, "Sir, thank you very much for last time. I was thinking I wanted to see you once more and give thanks. I am sure I was led here by a divine hand." She continued, "How strange it was. Since hearing what you had to say, I always faced my child the way you told me, thinking, 'I was wrong, what a foolish parent I was.' He gradually changed: recently he has come to say, 'Mother, I'll help you,' coming to my side when I am doing something." "That's very good. Please continue to live with prayers so that your child will become a good person who will be happy all his life," I said.

She Entered the Storehouse with her Child

This occurred in K-town, Aichi prefecture. I stayed

overnight at Mr. K's after giving a lecture on talent education. I enjoyed Mr. and Mrs. K's warm hospitality that evening. It was the following morning. When we were having breakfast, Mrs. K said,

"Mr. Suzuki, your talk yesterday really penetrated me. Indeed I heartily agreed with you. 'Your child is what you have raised' - your words gave me a chance for reflection.

"But then last night my child was impossibly willful as usual, so I got mad and dragged him crying to the storehouse. When I opened the door and was about to shove him in there, your voice revived in my heart: 'your child is what you have raised.' I came to my senses with a start.

"I held my crying child, and the two of us went in, closing the door behind us.

"Today, mother is getting in the storehouse, too, I said and sat with my child. Probably frightened by the darkness there, he clung to me. I said to my child:

" 'I am sad because you are too willful to listen to your mother. But I am responsible for making you such a willful child. So I am to blame, too, and that's why I have come into the storehouse with you. Today, mother is apologizing to you. I am sorry. I will become a better mother from now on, so please forgive me.

"Then my child said, clinging to me, 'Mother, I was to blame; I'll be a better child from now on.'

"So last night, he and I cried all night. Then this morning, his attitude is completely different from before. He understood my sorrow in his child's heart."

"You have done a really good thing," I said, "how wonderful that you could switch your thought that way. I am happy, too. Those who only blame others are those who do not know that they are harming others and at the same time harming themselves. The parent who fosters a child while grieving for him has a noble heart. I am glad that you became aware of that, Mrs. K." It was with deep emotion that I listened to her story.

[To be continued.]

MEMO OF AN INFERIOR STUDENT

Hiromu Yasuda
Instructor, Kantō District

Unlike talent education students, I held a violin for the first time in the fall of the first year in junior high school. My motive was seeing Haruko Wanibuchi performing in a movie on television. So it came to pass that a teacher came to my house for lessons. My study began, with Hohmann and Kayser, the scales, and the Suzuki literature as teaching materials. However, in junior high, I played outside until dark, came home exhausted, and felt sleepy the moment I finished supper. Since every day was a continuation of this, I did not easily progress in violin. I did practise Hohmann and Kayser, but did not find them too interesting.

About two years passed this way, and I was a first year student in high school (tenth grade) when I started my study with Hachirō Hirose. Then for the first time I came to know talent education. I remember being startled to see small students play skillfully without the music.

Then for four years Mr. Hirose taught me Books I to 10, and I was able to submit a worn out graduation tape for the Post-Advanced Level. Most probably Mr. Hirose was continually irritated during my lessons.

This poorest student in the Hirose class participated in the summer school and met Mr. Suzuki for the first time when twenty. This was the summer when the opening ceremony of the Talent Education Hall took place; I think it was also the last year when the summer school was held at Hongō Elementary School (in Asama Hot Springs). Then, three months later, it was decided that I would go to Matsumoto as a Music

School student. At first I had meant it to be only half a year, but . . .

There were, I think, less than twenty teacher trainees then. As for men, we were only three, Miki Ōsawa, Hiroyuki Aoki, and myself. The rest, including three foreigners, were all women (but they weren't interested in me, alas - or in the other two).

At Mr. Suzuki's individual lessons, during the first half year or so I did not understand what he really meant, and all I did was smile naively when he praised me. However, as time passed, I began to feel that his seemingly simple and easy instructions contained very grave messages. As for his sarcasm, since he spoke laughingly as though in jest, I always laughed with others, only to realize its acerbity a little later. As I look back now, I think he never once really praised me. I also now recall that, when he assigned me one thing and I could not accomplish it, he never gave me the next assignment for months.

Mr. Suzuki said to us, "Teachers write me in a poor hand; so why don't you learn calligraphy now while you are in training." So calligraphy lessons were added. Under the name of Monday concert, student solo performances also increased: every week we each played a piece from Book 3 on in order with accompaniment by piano school teacher trainees.

In the audience were Mr. Suzuki and us teacher trainees - that was almost all (occasionally several others were listening: instructors from different areas or guests). Yet I became nervous (lack of practice often being the reason). If a performance wasn't up to a certain standard, the piece had to be repeated the following week. Once Mr. Suzuki said, "Why don't you play under the stage" (when I get *up* on stage, my blood goes *up* from stage fright), leaving me crest-fallen. In Matsumoto as in the Hirose class in Tokyo, I demonstrated the true nature of an inferior student.

This was when I had grown fairly used to trainee life. We were given some *gyūhi* cakes. When I said, "I can eat about ten," Aoki responded, "All right, if you eat ten supper's on me." I gobbled them up until the fifth

or sixth. However, from about the seventh, even if I pulled a small piece out of it, it didn't pass through my throat. Feeling sick, I think half way through the eighth cake, I lost the bet for supper. Moreover, while I was eating, it was time for Prof. Kenkō Aoki's music appreciation class; but my friend Hiroyuki Aoki said, "You can continue eating because I asked the teacher's permission," I kept on eating while listening to the records (in fact I was so uncomfortable that I was hardly listening). When I recently told this to Mr. Aoki, his response was: "I don't recall allowing any such thing." So after all it had been Aoki's trick . . .

One morning, the matron of the boarding house woke me calling, "Yasuda-san, *denwa dajii*" (Shinshu dialect meaning "phone for you"). As I was still slumbering in bed, I got up answering "Ye-e-sh," and taking the receiver, said, "Hello" (thinking who the hell is calling so early in the morning). Then, "This is Shin'ichi." "Yes!?" "This is Suzuki." "Oh, good morning, sir." "Would you come over to pick persimmons at my house today?" (A sigh of relief on this end of the line.) This was how I went to Mr. Suzuki's house for help a few times during my Matsumoto days, and each time I went, I was treated to victuals. After returning to Tokyo, too, telephone calls starting with "This is Suzuki" or "This is Shin'ichi" often took me by surprise, and in a flash of a second I found myself going round and round thinking of many things all at once.

During my stay in Matsumoto, the members changed with several students coming or leaving (for example Ōsawa returned to Nagoya to become a teacher), and at one point I was the only male student. However, in the last half, male members increased including Tomikawa, Kamizato, and Katsutoshi Nakamura who had just returned from study in Paris. From about that time, ping-pong became the fashion among some of us. Since Mr. Suzuki said, "In view of bowing, ping-pong is good as it requires agile movements of the arm," I asked him, "Sir, wouldn't it be even better if there were a table in the Hall? Would you please buy one?" "That will be fine, if you can cleverly think of where to put

it." So right away I went, I think with Nakamura and a female student, to a sport shop, and ordered the second most expensive table meeting the international standard. (My action on such occasions is so swift it is amazing even to myself.) The reason that I didn't pick the highest class one is that I had modesty enough to think "Asking him a little too much?" Several months later, interested students and Yōji Kimura, instructor from Kanazawa (who had come for lessons) got together to hold a ping pong tournament. I think Mr. Suzuki played a little too when we were practising before the actual event, but at the meet he was responsible for judging and providing prizes. I hear that he *was very good* when young. According to what I recall, the result of the meet was: Nakamura, first place, myself second place, and Mr. Kimura, third place.

The first game I learned in Matsumoto was *pachinko*, or Japanese pinball. My teacher was Ōsawa. His teacher was Aoki, I hear. I became quite addicted: off to *pachinko* the moment classes and individual practice were over. There were times when the cafeteria had already closed when we left (around 9:30 at night) and we went in search of a restaurant still open. Some female students criticized us saying, "Entering such a place as a *pachinko* parlor with the instruments . . ." which didn't bother us, for we were, we claimed, engaged in "thumb practice."

As I passed my days with this and that, two and a half years went by quickly in Matsumoto. There weren't enough teachers in Tokyo was why I was to give a graduation recital (although I



The author's Music School graduation recital, March, 1972

wished to enjoy my Matsumoto youth longer). When I asked Mr. Suzuki, "May I play with the accompaniment of the strings?" he answered, "It may be quite interesting." I planned Bach's concerto no. 1, the assigned piece, for a performance with strings. I asked Nakamura and Ōsawa as first violins, Miki and Tomikawa as seconds, Aoki as viola, Nakajima as cello - all friends I had made during my Matsumoto days. They gathered from Nagoya and Tokyo to play in the first graduation performance with string accompaniment. Mr. Suzuki seemed pleased when he commented after the recital, "It's nice to do a graduation recital with string ensemble." It seems that

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recent graduation performances are in this form (perhaps my only contribution to later generations, might I say?).

The three headquarters staff men who forced their way in when we were on night duty at the Hall and had fun with us all night; the Yōji Gakuen (Talent Education Kingergarten) athletic meets which Mr. Suzuki, Matsumoto instructors, and we teacher trainees all joined (Mr. Suzuki never came in last in running; the office lady always waited for him before she docked) . . .

. . . My memories cannot be exhausted.

Last, as to the violin, I was hardly able to write about it, being the essence of inferior studentship. Even now, I am simply keeping loyal to Mr. Suzuki's words: "If the student doesn't surpass the teacher, he is a half baked student."

Y.S.



PARENTS' NOTES

How I Brought Up My Child (No. 4)

This is from a collection of parents' notes included in a recent Talent Education survey.

[From the Violin School]

Mother of Toshiki Ōsumi, 11

When fostering a child by the law of ability, he comes to play, study, and work really well: this is what I have learned during these five years. Not limiting to violin and piano practice, my children have come to surpass their mother in house work, math calculation, and writing, while I praise them a little and have them repeat whatever they are doing. If I ask the children, they polish the room until it is glossy clean whether it is the bathroom or the kitchen. If I have complicated calculations to do, I depend on the swiftness of their minds. This leaves me now as the laziest in the family.

And as for me, I play the piano and violin in secret when the children are not around because I am embarrassed. My excuse for not progressing much is that no one is there to praise me. The children say, "You'll improve a little if you make efforts without giving it up." I realize the beauty of talent education in their gentle expression when they tell me this.

Mother of Mahito Yamagoe, 13

We parents had absolutely no musical background, and our home therefore had nothing to do with its study. However, encouraged by Mr. Suzuki's words, "Every child grows; everything depends on how we raise them" and "No rush, no rest," it's been eight years since our child started on entering nursery school. When he finished recording his graduation tape for the Advanced Level, both parents and child experienced great joy and emotion all the more for that reason.

By now the family shares an atmosphere to heartily enjoy classical music, our eyes having opened toward the beauty of music through the child's violin.

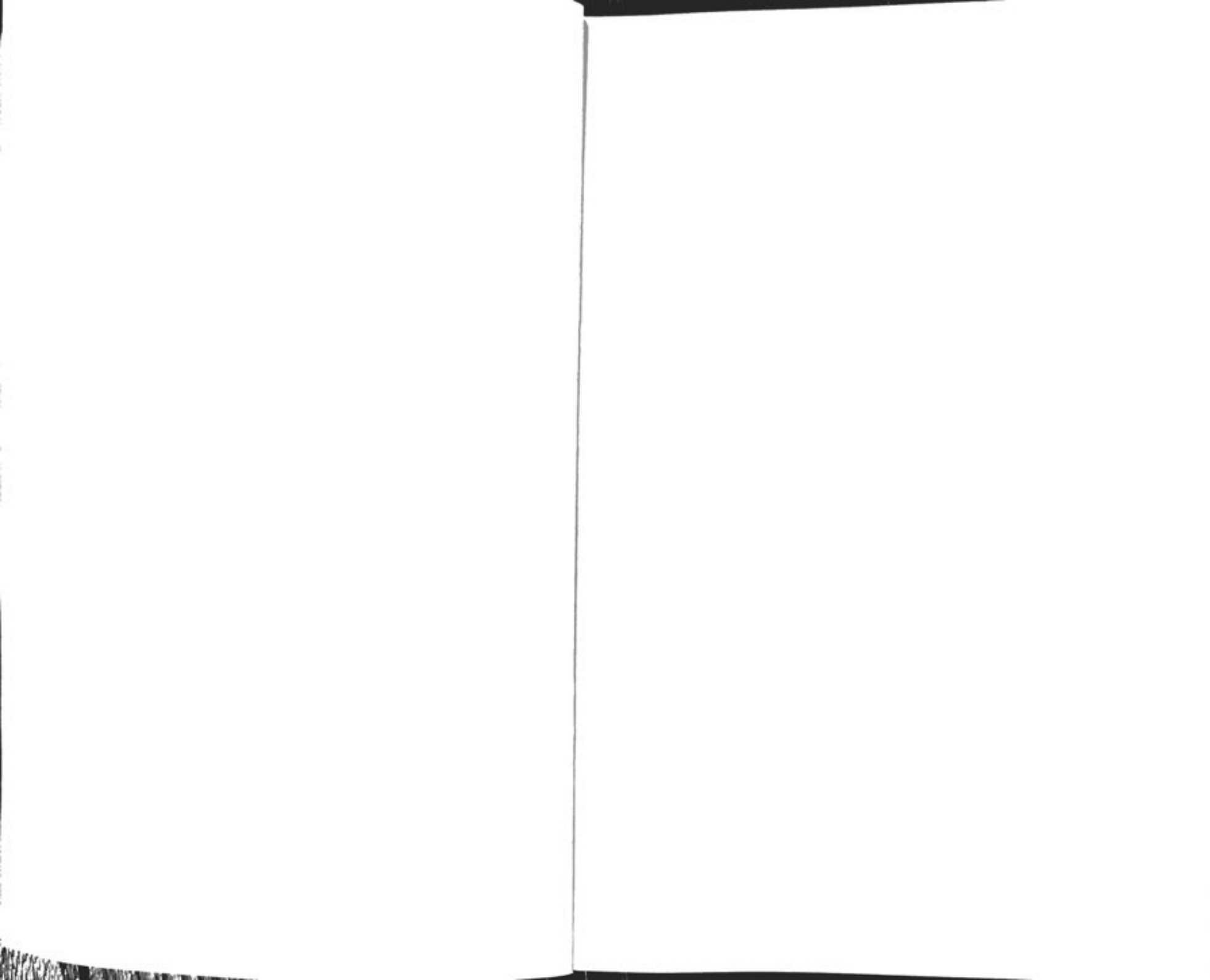
It gave spiritual support to my child's upbringing which at first had no clear direction. I am full of gratitude toward Mr. Suzuki and Mr. Yamamura.

Mother of Tomoki Komiya, 10

On looking back, I feel that we have spent these five years in repetition of trial and error. Now, the child herself knows how to do the daily practice emphasizing important points, but when she was small, each time we faced a wall, we bumped this way and that, mother and child together, while barely managing to overcome it. I am impressed that she has kept at it until today. To continue one thing with patience was a big job, far beyond anything I had imagined before starting violin. However, as we progressed gradually, fun and joy, too, proved indeed beyond imagination, and music has become an inseparable part of our life.

Five years since starting violin, she has never yet skipped a lesson. She says she can take pride in this more than anything else. Whenever confronting a difficulty in something else, she has depended upon these words: "I have continued violin without skipping a single lesson; this is nothing compared to that." She has a long way ahead, and she will experience many things. I hope she will continue to enjoy music without forgetting her initial aspiration and always keeping in close contact with her teacher.

[To be continued.]





M.S.

