

the moment when he was most truly himself, and when he showed most clearly all the treasures of devotion and tenderness which his heart contained. He was fifty-two years old. Already, as his friend Stapfer, minister of arts and sciences, said, "he was fighting against the approach of old age." And at an age when some of our teachers already think of taking their pension, he undertook the direction of a school of children, aged from six to ten, under most unfavourable conditions. There was, indeed, nothing tempting in the task. It has been said, and not without reason, that in choosing Pestalozzi, the Swiss Directorate made a blunder. The upbringing of orphans in a devastated country, laid waste by the civil war, was to be undertaken, and it was a representative of the victorious party, it was a democrat and heretic, who was sent to the vanquished people in their exasperation. Pestalozzi came to preach peace and humanity in a region, the Nildwalden, where, on the very eve of his arrival, the French army, joined to the Swiss army, had waged a cruel war. Nearly four hundred men, women, and children had been killed; as many houses had been burned; priests had been massacred at the altars; Stans had been half destroyed by fire. Moreover, it was a Protestant who was sent as educator to a devout Catholic population, made

fanatical by the preaching of the Capuchins, to make trial of lay education in a transformed convent.

Pestalozzi knew what obstacles he would encounter. Anybody else would have been afraid, but he had no hesitation. He had so long been pining away "in rage and despair" at his inaction. He issued from a species of moral death throee. The mission offered him at Stans was for him a resurrection. He was at last to be able to apply the ideas which he had set forth in *Léonard et Gertrude*. "I am effacing the shame of my life," said he, in a triumphant shout. . . . "I feel myself become a man again." He perceived no better possible employment for his activity than to struggle against stupidity, coarseness, ignorance, and vice. The government had thought of intrusting him with the control of a normal school. He preferred to go to the infants, feeling strongly that elementary education was his true vocation. "To realize my life's dream I would have agreed to go and make my attempt on the highest summits of the Alps, without fire or water. . . ."

There have been Swiss historians who have blamed Pestalozzi for taking part in the work of the Swiss Revolution, and treating with the French army which fought for it. We know of nothing, on the contrary, which does more honour to Pestalozzi

than his having resolutely joined with those of his compatriots who were friends of progress, and consequently having sided with France and the Revolution. At this period he was at heart a Frenchman. It was not without a measure of patriotic pride that we saw, in the Pestalozzianum at Zurich, one of his manuscripts, an *Appel aux habitants des bords du Lac*, signed: "Pestalozzi, citizen of Zurich and citizen of France." So long as the Revolution aimed only at serving the cause of emancipation of the people, Pestalozzi remained faithful to it. In the *Helvetisches Volkblatt*, a newspaper in which he wrote before settling at Stans, he addressed eloquent discourses to his fellow-citizens, at the time when France asked Switzerland to furnish her with a contingent of eighteen thousand armed auxiliaries: "O my native land, rejoice! France, the great nation, takes thee by the hand in a passion of brotherly love. . . . It is no small honour to go and learn the profession of arms beside the legions of Bonaparte, Jourdan, and Moreau, and to train yourselves for the service of your fatherland in the heroic army of the French. . . ." It was not till later that Pestalozzi's affections turned from France when he saw its generous aspirations followed by the bloody dashes across Europe and the ambitious follies of Napoleon's despotism.

The material settlement at Stans was of the most miserable kind. Pestalozzi was assisted only by a charwoman: "I myself was governor, accountant, man-servant, and almost maid-servant, in a wreck of a house." The workmen were engaged in putting the refuge to rights, with the orphans already in possession. Pestalozzi had to attend to a thousand material cares, to busy himself with the food and clothing of all this little company of eighty children, of whom the majority were lodged in the school. He slept in their midst; he cared for and nursed them with a mother's tenderness. He surrounded them with his love: "It was necessary," said he, that from morn till night, these poor forsaken ones should feel that my heart was with them, and that their happiness was mine." By the constant influence of his presence and the radiance of his sympathy he took possession of these little souls. "I laughed and cried with them. . . ." With them he was ill, in a refuge which was less a school than a children's hospital: "We all coughed," said he, "within the damp walls of a newly reconstructed house, and in a particularly severe winter."

In a long, affecting letter addressed to his Zurich friend, the bookseller Gessner, son of the author of *Idylles*, Pestalozzi recounted the means which he employed to begin the intellectual and moral edu-