

CASTING OUT A "STUTTERING DEVIL"

By HERBERT AUSTIN AIKINS,
WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

JAKE was fourteen; he was Jewish; he had a broad, friendly smile; and he was obviously intelligent. He had stood first in his class in the grades, and now he was in high school trying to win the same place there, while incidentally he peddled more evening papers than any other boy in the district. But he stuttered abominably; and so his teacher sent him to her friend the psychologist, from whose many pages of manuscript this tale is put together.

Stutterers are the victims of emotional habits, which can be corrected like any other habits if one can only trace them to their source and break them up from within. If a child has rushed through a dark lane, scared out of its wits, two things will happen in the future; he will shy away from the lane, especially in the dark; and if something starts him into it he will rush through it in the same headlong way as he did before. A horse would do the same. It is a simple matter of emotional habit which is at the root of all the phenomena that Freudians describe in terms of "unconscious ideas," "buried emotions" and "complexes." And the way to break up the habit is to gain the child's confidence and go through the lane a few times with him, encouraging him to stop and examine each spooky object, until nameless fear gives way to confident knowledge and "the place of dragons, where each one lay" has become such a familiar and commonplace lane that it is quite impossible to rush blindly through it again. This is breaking up the habit from within,—a very different matter from sitting somewhere in the light and telling the child that it is absurd to be afraid. He knows that already.

FIRST AND SECOND INTERVIEWS—MARCH 20 AND 29, 19—

Jake is seated in an easy chair and tells his story:

"I have got to swallow before I can talk. In a crowd I get kind of nervous and can't say the words, and sometimes, too, when I am alone with one person, but I am all right when I am at home like. It began when I was five and a half, about two or three months after I started school. I do not know exactly what happened. It must have been some excitement or something.

All of a sudden one day in school the teacher was surprised to see me stammering. I can remember that day yet.

"About a year ago I found out that all I have to do is to swallow and then I'd start. When I was younger I used to go 'Hiss pffiff' and then I'd start.¹ Some of the children used to laugh at me. I can't remember what the excitement was."

To help find the "excitement" the psychologist asked Jake to lie back comfortably in the easy chair, close his eyes, make no effort whatever to control his thoughts, but notice anything that happened to come into his mind. If something very terrible has happened to a person he tends to shy away from anything connected with it in his thinking no less than in his speech and conduct, and the habit of avoiding That Awful Thing is one of the many influences that determine the direction of his purposeful thinking. But if he can be made to relax enough, the habit of avoidance may disappear for the moment with the other directing forces, and the long-avoided Thing may come spontaneously often in visions startlingly vivid. So Jake closed his eyes and relaxed. But he did not say what came to him until he was asked to; for in cases like this the patient is likely to get lost and absorbed in emotional fixation on the vision before him. So the reader can imagine the psychologist constantly prodding his victim to give utterance to his thoughts and feelings by such oft-repeated questions as "And now?", "Now Jake?", "Jake, what is it?" in varying degrees of encouragement, indifference or insistence. Things do not run along as smoothly as they seem to in the story. "I was thinking of the first day in school that I started stammering. I have been sorry for it ever since. I can see my teacher sitting by the desk with me there right near her. It was after school when she called me up and asked why I stammered. I had not done so the day before. I was kind of surprised myself.—That is about all I saw. It got shut out of my mind then." Repressed memories have a curious way of coming back in vivid visions, and of vanishing again when the present world obtrudes too much. It is part of the clinician's task to help the sufferer to see the buried past in the light of the present (as one teaches the child to see his dark lane in its proper commonplace surroundings). But before the past can be understood it must be brought to light. So again Jake has to close his eyes and relax.

"After that I went home. My mother kind of upbraided me for starting to stammer. Then I went up to the attic.—I had

¹ Stutterers frequently learn to use a "starter" of some sort to work off their embarrassment.

been trying [in the attic] to get over it, but I did not succeed very well and got discouraged. I did not try any more then when I was young. I believe that because my mother upbraided me I got worse. I got excited and nervous."

Eyes closed again. "It is a kind of a blank. The second part got mixed up with it." Again. "That night I went to bed kind of sore. I started to cry and kept on for an hour. At last I fell asleep. I was sore because that was the first day I stammered. I am getting kind of used to stammering.—I have not thought of these events before."

Tries again. "Nothing. Absolutely nothing. A kind of a blank." He gives a start—"Before I went to sleep my sister told me the story of Demosthenes and the pebbles, and the whole family was kind of excited and my eldest sister took me on her lap; and that night I found some pebbles in the yard and went up to the attic and tried to talk with the pebbles in my mouth. At first I nearly succeeded, but one of the pebbles nearly went down my throat, so I quit." (Jake tells this excitedly. Then he is told to close his eyes and relax again.)

"Nothing. Been trying to think of something." That is bad technique. So he is told to merely relax. Suddenly he opens his eyes and speaks.

"The next day I again stammered and my teacher held me after school and told me the same story as my sister. I told her a stone had nearly gone down my throat, and she said that was the only cure she knew. She gave my sister some books to read, but it did not help."—"They come kind of suddenly, these pictures of old scenes."—"Nothing."—"After I went home I tried some other things, but they were of no avail. After that I studied my lessons with the habit of stammering all through the grades."

"There's one other thing. When I was about nine I was playing with my father's revolver, and it had a bullet in it, and the bullet just missed my temple by three or four inches. There is a hole in the wall where it went. That made me kind of excited. After that my brother fell down from the porch, two or three stories high, and cut his head above the eye. After that my mother had an operation on her gallstones. That kind of excited the family. There were lots of troubles in our family when I was young."

Eyes closed; suddenly he speaks. "One Sunday I was out in the woods and was frightened by a snake. It chased me about half a mile. I was about ten. It was a rattle-snake too. It buzzed. We used to live in a country town in western Pennsylvania."—

"It is all a blank. I can't think."—"Just a blank. My eyeballs move around when my mind is a blank." (This was true. It is easy to see eyeballs move beneath closed lids.)

Speaks suddenly. "When I was young I used to get in a lot of scraps with the boys. Three or four of us would go and get green apples; then they wouldn't divide, and we had a free for all scrap. The orchard was near the woods where I had the scare." (His eyes go.) "It's a blank." "When I was about five years old I was chased by a mad dog about two or three days before I started my stammering, and if it wasn't for my father I might have been bitten. He took a club and knocked it on the head. That stunned it. Then three or four more blows killed it. I believe that must have been one of the main causes [of the stuttering]. I ran about as fast as my legs would carry me. I hadn't any place to run to, but it was right near the house. I did not have any chance to go up the stairs because the dog can run faster. So I ran around the house for a while till my father saw the danger and saw the dog and hit it on the head." ["Were you yelling?"²] "I'll say I was! My father heard me. I was coming from a movie show. I was calling for my father and mother. No, I wasn't stuttering then. I did not tell my teacher about the dog. I did not think it would do any good. I dreamed about it for one or two nights after the event, then I forgot about it until now. I never tried to tell anyone the story. I was kind of ashamed of my cowardice. I thought that if I'd tell it my companions would kind of taunt me for the act." The reader may notice how the mad dog incident, the original cause of the trouble, is, quite characteristically, the last "excitement" to be recalled, how Jake mixes past and present tenses in reporting his visions and things they suggest, and how successfully he had repressed this horrid memory.

He closes his eyes again. "Nothing. It is a kind of agitated blank. Every time it is a blank I am agitated and my eyeballs move. I don't believe I can remember anything more." ["What does this agitated blank feel like?"] "I feel as though somebody must be hidden somewhere. I can't get at him. I don't know whether it is a person or an animal. It must be something." ["Do you feel as though you were alone or as though someone were with you?"] "As though I were alone. Also that something is going to happen. Isn't that superstition?" "Nothing. My head gets kind of hot and I feel as if I was going to get a headache."

² The psychologist's questions are in brackets.

To help overcome the influence of ordinary present-day interests and make it easier for old, dissociated thoughts and feelings to return, the psychologist now holds a watch against Jake's ear and tells him to listen to the tick, but still continue to notice anything else that comes to mind.

"Half the time my mind is on the watch and half the time I remember the first day I stammered. I could hear the watch and yet actually see that first day. I could see myself standing before my teacher, and she was asking why I stammered. I said 'I don't know why.' My mother had noticed it in the morning before I went to school. It was about breakfast time when I started to stammer. I could tell by my mother's face that she noticed it. It was when I asked for a slice of bread, and I could notice her surprise when I stammered. I think that was the first time I had ever done it." ["What were you thinking of when you asked for the bread?"] "I just asked for a slice of bread and she handed me the butter with it." Note how detailed this recollection is! That is typical.

"Just a blank." "I was feeling that someone was near that was going to do something. I could feel something in my mind that someone was near. I do not know if it was a person or a thing. It seemed over my right shoulder, in the back at my right ear, about where that corner of the wall is. I can't describe the thing exactly, but it looked to me of a greenish black, a greenish, grayish black, and it had horns. It had a human face though." ["Was it facing you?"] "Yes. It looked as if it was coming towards me, and it had the wings of a bat. I can't say it was an angel." What Jake described was in fact a perfectly correct conventional devil. When he was asked if it was more like a devil, he replied, "Almost like him." "I am thinking that's a kind of superstition." "Unless he had larger eyes than a human person has, and he was looking at me as if he was going to catch me. He was after me. I don't know what you'll think of it, but that's the fact." "Just a blank. I am agitated again. There comes a feeling about something; I don't know what it is. No, I am not afraid. Only I'd like to meet that person face to face if he tries to haunt me like that. I'd like to see if I described him right." "I was grappling with that person and I was choking him. I had him down and I was choking him. I'd like to have killed him before you spoke." "He was trying to get his hands at my face. I had one of my feet on his arm, and his other hand was free and he was trying to get that hand at my face." "He's green now;—and just now he's red." "Just a blank. It seemed

to me, although I did not see it, that he got free of my—got loose of my hold (much stuttering) and that he had a better chance at me than I had at him." ["Were you yelling?"] "No. This was in a lonely place. It seemed to be a barren desert. It was dark, and there didn't seem to be any stars or anything that was dark (sic) or any trees. It was all a barren desert." "I was just on the point of knocking him over again when you stopped me."

Jake is now told that he need not stop seeing things in order to tell about them. He proceeds.

"I have him down, and I had my revolver with me, and I have two of his hands with my one hand, while with my right hand I take out my revolver and shot him right through the heart; and I hope I'll conquer him yet." "I am thinking, it seems to me that this person is this stammering; that it is personified by this person." "Yes, I've got him killed."

That guess of Jake's about the stammering comes near the truth; he has fought the stammering as he fights the demon; the emotions fit. But we shall see that the devil is also the dog—he is mixed up with the pebble that Jake nearly swallowed—he is a boyhood companion—and he is anyone that has ever had to be feared or fought in a bloodcurdling tale. Jake had known him of old, with all appropriate emotion; he had doubtless dreamed of him before he was chased by the dog; and a devil image could always come to fit a lingering fear or tension. For it must be remembered that in dreams and phantasies images are determined by feelings, and not *vice versa*. The emotions are there in their own right; for they have a way of lasting for hours in the background of consciousness and of recurring at slight provocation, and they easily become habitual; and the images they bring with them may become habitual also, like gestures or exclamations.

"Just nothing. The light shined right in my eyes. At first I was kind of in repose, then the light shined on my eyes and I had to open them." "In repose. Just a little before I opened my eyes I was kind of uneasy. I thought it might come back again, that it might come to life again whether I shot it or not. This must be magic. I was just wondering how to get rid of it."

The devil really kept coming back because the fear continued, and the magic was invoked by Jake to account for it. This is what Freud calls secondary elaboration.

["Did you ever see this face before?"] "In my early age, every other day I had a fight with a boy of my size. One day he'd win, and another day I'd win. The face is almost like this boy's, except that the boy didn't have horns. Do you think there is

anything the matter with my head? "I never thought of these things much until you just reminded me of them." "Absolutely nothing. My eyes just twinged naturally." "I thought that thing came back to life and haunted me again." "Who is that person? Or is it anything in the mind?" "Nobody knows exactly how scared I was of the dog. I actually saw it now. It was terrible, I should say." There is another fight. Jake shoots the devil from behind a tree, chokes him while the devil chokes back, and finally "got him for sure by crushing his head with a rock," then sees him lying still, says he is gone, and feels much relieved. "I am just kind of happy now, almost. He's one of three things, the stammering or the boy or the choking."

It should be stated that the summer before Jake's visit he had had an operation on his throat, presumably for adenoids or tonsils or both. Perhaps they contributed to the perpetuation or revival of the sense of being choked.

SECOND CONFERENCE—MARCH 29

Jake reports that on the whole the stuttering is better, and recounts the events of the previous conference. "You told me to lie down and think. I got uneasy. I was chased by a mad dog and by a snake. I shot a pistol right close to my head. At times my mind was a blank. My eyeballs moved and I was agitated. I had a feeling that someone was near. I described that person almost like a devil. I had a combat with him and knocked him unconscious twice, but then he got up again and the third time I knocked him for good." As to his sleep and dreams, "I am restless in my sleep. I knock the covers off the bed and in the morning the cushions are all knocked around, but I do not dream at all. I think there must be another devil or I wouldn't be restless. Somehow my mind is nuts. I have to use slang once in a while to express it."

Jake closes his eyes, the devil reappears, in spite of the fact that he had been so thoroughly killed, and the fight begins again. "Last week I was trying to get that out of my mind and couldn't."

As seen the next time, Jake's enemy "had horns, and, gee! he looked just like a devil. He started shooting at me and I hid behind the tree and started shooting at him." ["Did you hit him?"] "I did not come to that yet. He wounded me right in the neck—in the throat. I'd like to get him though! (No stammering.) I just bled to death there. He was afraid to come near me for fear I'd shoot him. I suppose he did not know I was dead there." ["What does it feel like to be dead?"] "You just sleep

forever, quietly and peacefully. If you are dead you can't worry."

Eyes closed again. "Nothing. Just a blank." "I was uneasy." "I was just kind of dreaming—idling away my time—about nothing. My mind strayed to an unknown corner of the world. I don't know where." (The closed eyes seem peaceful.)

"He must have got the magic juice and put it in my mouth. I drank it, and they took me to the dungeon down below and they tortured me like everything. They put chains on me and beat me with a whip and everything. That is about all." ["Did it hurt?"] "It must have and they told me they were going to put me in the fire."

At this point something is said about the sign of the cross, but Jake thought that would not do, "because I am a Jew"; and as to imitating Luther and throwing a Bible [perhaps it was only an ink bottle] at the devil, that would not do either. It would be "an insult to the Bible. We read the Bible."* Closing his eyes again, Jake goes on as though there had been no interruption.

"They took those chains off me, and a week afterwards, almost to the exact minute, they threw me into that fire and the flames just consumed me. Gee whizz, I wonder what they will do next!"

["What does it feel like to be consumed?"] "It just consumed me right in a second. I couldn't get the feeling of it." "No, sir, I don't like trying this. I am telling you the truth!" Jake spies a hairpin and infers that a girl has been in the room, for he has been reading "Sherlock Holmes"; and then he talks for a while about college and other matters of general interest, until he is asked to close his eyes again. For a while he sees nothing, feels entirely comfortable and breathes heavily. He opens his eyes, which look sleepy, and says, with very little stuttering, "I was knocked around for a while. They opened the coffin." ["What then?"] "I did not come to that yet." Then, stuttering very badly, he proceeds: "I lay quite still for a while in the coffin and they started hunting something right near my head, and they put the juice in again, and I came to life, and two of them held my hands and then told me to go out; and with one hand I just threw one of those imps into the fire, and the rest of them started fighting with me and I took up a couple of bricks and threw them at them, and before Satan could take out his revolver again I vanished. That was some fight with them. I don't know what this will lead to." ["What do you think about

* One reads of cures effected by a clever use of superstition. But the writer never got results by anything but plain truth-telling.

it all?"] "I must be going crazy. To tell the truth I don't like to think about this."

When Jake is asked to explain where he got all these ideas he says his mother used to tell him all kinds of stories of things that used to happen in Russia. There were stories of ghosts and especially of things that happened in the night when she was going home and heard a noise and started running. Once in a while the stories were about the devil. "I heard these stories about the devil in the same place where I was chased by the dog," and the time for telling them was before he went to bed. He had read for himself "The Gold Bug" and "Captain Kidd" and others like them. And he must have read about the devil in the fairy book, which he could read good when he was six; his sister used to teach him at night. Thus the fears and fancies and dreams of a five- or six-year-old still haunt the boy of fourteen, though to be sure he has enriched it all with the fruits of his later reading.

Told to close his eyes once more and see the devil and ask him if he is real. He reports: "He said he is not real. He just wanted to haunt me so that I could stammer. I just told him what I thought of him—that he is a doggone coward. It was in hell that I talked with him. Nobody else was there, just him himself." Asked to see him again Jake says: "He just shrinks. He seems to be getting smaller and smaller until there is hardly anything left of him. He didn't say anything. He was just kind of shivering and just shrunk." Jake gives a low, happy whistle and reports that he feels better. As for the devil, he continued shrinking until he became the size of a small pebble, and then changed himself into a pebble, which Jake picked up and threw into the lake, where it lay peacefully at the bottom. "It must be my imagination, but this pebble must have some relation to the pebbles that I tried to, to—I almost swallowed that pebble."

But the devil is not yet disposed of, for the pebble transforms itself into a fish, and Jake does not tell the fish that it is not real "because it hasn't any ears." But he grabs it by the tail and throws it upon the land. And then it turns back into a pebble. But at last Jake smashes the pebble into bits with the butt of his gun, and feels better. It is clear that Jake is winning his fight, and though in some of his visions he is sometimes "scared a little" he also sometimes laughs. The demon is losing its terrors. After a while Jake is asked "How old are you?" "Fourteen." "Are you sure you are not five?" "I guess I must be." "You know there isn't any devil?" "Yes." "Then why don't you tell that to the thing you see?" With the watch to his ear Jake closes his

eyes and then reports: "I told him he was a sneaking coward; and the devil did not mind it at all. I told him something more, but that isn't fit to repeat."

To get the devil and the fights out of Jake's mind the important thing was to get him used to facing such fancies without fear. And to that end it seemed wise to let him keep on seeing his demon, with more and more accompanying sense of his real surroundings, until the fear wore fully out and he got a proper perspective.

Before Jake goes away he is told to keep repeating "There is no devil; I just dreamed it. And I do not have to stutter." But he thinks he would feel safer if he could really smash up a pebble like the one in his visions. So a few days later he mails the psychologist a little paper of white powder: "Enclosed please find the pebble all smashed up. I feel fine now." And of course the psychologist told all of his friends how he had cast out a devil. But he knew he could not cure the stuttering until he had also cast out the fear of the dog.

THIRD INTERVIEW—APRIL 5

Jake reports that for the first four days of the past week he kept saying his piece and did not stutter; then he was so busy reading "Tom Sawyer" and other books from the library that he forgot to say it, and the stuttering returned. In his dreams sometimes the devil came back to life, and Jake simply does not know what to believe about the existence of such a being. If there really is a devil "he would be tormenting me," and if there isn't Jake does not know how it is all to be explained. As to God, "Sure, I believe in Him; I'm no atheist yet." And Jake believes also that God must be stronger than the devil. But he does not think that God knows about his troubles, and he does not know how to tell Him; for "we don't say our own prayers, we read them from the Bible," and there is no prayer about this in the Bible. But he is glad that the pulverized pebble is in good hands, "and I just hope you will put it into a safe where it will not get out. If I'd know for certain that he can't get away, I'd feel better. You are to write me if he ever gets out. I hope you don't lose him." Jake says he has dreamed twice that the devil came back to life again, and three or four times that he was smashed to pieces and couldn't. But he admits that he has never thought of saying how lucky he was to get away from that dog.

The dog, however, is what the psychologist is after, he thinks that its time has come, and he means to make Jake's terrifying

experience with it a commonplace memory rather than an ever-present, though repressed, reality by forcing the boy to live through it and tell all about it so often that it begins to bore him and "passes as a tale that is told." So Jake has to close his eyes and let himself see the dog chasing him; and he tells the story as he told it before, adding that his father told the mother "and she keeps telling me of—. I forget what she told me. I believe she caressed me too. I didn't cry. I was too scared to cry. I just went to bed and kept thinking of the mad dog chasing me. And then afterwards (stuttering) I fell asleep and I dreamed about the mad dog chasing me again. I don't remember any more. I always kept away from dogs from that period on. But I am not afraid of them now." In his next three attempts Jake sees "nothing—just a blank—a red blanket like over my eyes." Then he tells how he used to shiver every time he looked at the place where his father buried the dog. The next four attempts also yield nothing. He yawns and says "I don't remember anything. I can't see a thing. I just let it come in easy and it don't come in. My mind is away at a distance thinking of nothing." The next time he sees himself looking at the dog's grave, feels uneasy, and stutters when he describes it. When Jake is now told that what he was really afraid of was not the devil but the dog, he replies "Then there isn't any devil?" and then asks "Oughtn't my father to have buried that out in some farther place where I couldn't see it?"

The next time Jake closes his eyes he is told to let himself feel trembly and he says, "The dog came out again and started chasing me. I hit him with a stone and he was killed. Hasn't this some relation to my fight with the devil? The dog and the devil must be one, because I had the same thing happen to me with both. I dreamed of the dog first—dreamed of him the same night after I was chased." ["If you were to say there was not any dog or was not any devil, which would you say?"] "I'd say there wasn't any dog; because I actually saw him in his grave. If I could see the devil being laid down I'd feel certain that there wasn't any devil."

["What was it you saw over your shoulder the first time?"] "I saw the devil." ["But I mean nine years ago."] "It must have been the dog. I believe the dog must have been personified by the devil." ["Suppose you had seen the dog instead of the devil the other day?"] "I would be much more scared than if I saw the devil."

With the watch held against his ear Jake is to see the dog.

"I can see him running after me. I can see and feel his teeth. He's got his mouth open. I can just see him right there. (Much stuttering.) I don't like to see him. He is almost at me. I can see one thing and then another. Sometimes I see the dog chasing me, and then I can see myself looking at the dog's grave. Then, while I was being chased by the dog I was bitten by him and then I got the rabies and was delirious for a while and just thought that I was in hell and the dog bit me again and I was burnt up, and all kinds of foolish stuff." (Eyes open.) "If I had the rabies I would die almost within a day. I don't see how that [stuff] could come. How can I get that feeling out?"

Next come another vision in which the father rescues Jake and kills the dog, but it comes out of its grave and chases Jake again and he kills it himself with stones. Jake agrees that only part of this is real, part imaginary, but, nevertheless, after some conversation and one or two attempted visions in which he sees nothing but the red blanket he goes through it all again. Then he varies it to this: "He comes up again (stuttering), sneaking back of me, and he bites me and I get so sick I die. Then he comes up and kind of licks my cheek and I come into life again and I told him what I thought of him and he shrinks into a pebble. (Eyes open.) It is about the same thing with the pebble and the dog as it was with the pebble and the devil! And I just take that pebble and I crush it."

["How much of that is real?"] "None of it."

["Where is that dog?"] "He isn't any place. There is no dog now. It is all in the form of a crushed pebble."

["But, Jake, where is the dog?"] "He's no place."

["Where is the *real* dog?"] "The real dog is buried."

["How many dogs are there?"] "There's none now. There is one all crushed up and the other one is buried."

["Is there any difference between these two dogs?"] "No sir."

["You keep talking as though that dog were real."] "I can't help it."

["But is it real?"] "No. It was real when I was about five. There's one buried and one got crushed."

["Who saw the one that got crushed?"] "I was the only one there. I crushed it."

["Was it a real dog?"] "No."

["Then do you think you need to worry about it?"] "I might and I might not."

["Is there any use in worrying about a dog that you only imagined?"] "No. But I don't seem to get that out."

The whole story of the fight with the dog and Jake's dreams afterwards is gone over again, and again he agrees that only about half the things he sees are true and half are imagination; and he is made to close his eyes again and again and again to see what comes and to distinguish between the true and the imaginary. After a number of visions and a good many times when the mind is blank but not uneasy, Jake is asked "Where are your devils?"; and he replies "I don't know. They must have come out of my system. I am just about through with them. I just hear the watch." It will be remembered that Jake had been chased around the house by the mad dog, and in a vision not previously mentioned he had seen himself chased around in a ring by the devil. But with his fear diminishing the vision changes: "The dog is after the devil, and they are racing around in a ring, and the devil looks more scared than I was. No, it isn't real, and I wasn't scared when I saw it. I could just see myself laughing at them."

["Well, what do you think about it all?"] Jake stutters dreadfully and replies, "It seems they are both fighting with each other, and I can't give my opinion because I don't exactly know." Another unexpected answer! ["Then which of them do you want to see win?"] "Neither of them because they are both enemies of mine. I know they are not real, and yet there is a feeling about me that they are." When Jake tries to tell them they are not real they vanish (as of course they should); "but they come up again and I told them they were just my dreams, and they crept close to each other and they shrunk into one small pebble and I crushed the pebble into little bits."

Looking again, Jake says, "A little before I crush them I hear a voice from the pebble itself saying that they won't bother me any more. Then I crush the pebble though just to make sure."

The rest of the session is spent in teaching Jake to face the mad dog scenes again and again, and not to shy away from them. He does not like looking at the pictures, and he rather see the devil than the dog. "It is a lot easier and pleasanter."

APRIL 12

Jake reports that he is stuttering and swallowing less, does not dream of anything, and no longer knocks the cushions around in his sleep. He thinks he must be getting cured. The session is spent in going over the visions, and Jake says they are by no

means as real as they were at first. Told to tell the dog that he is not real and he will not fight with him, at first he sees only a blank and feels at ease. At the next attempt Jake says, "He comes out again and I fight with him and I get him down and I just tell him he's a dream and if he comes up again I'll have to knock his head off. I knocked him into his grave again and put large stones over the grave." ["But, what's the use of knocking a dream into his grave?"] "I was just thinking of that. It isn't any use." After a while the creature comes up once more from the grave, and Jake is not sure whether it is the dog or the devil. "It seems to be both."

Throughout the session there are a good many comfortable blanks, and sometimes Jake sees himself sleeping on a pleasant hilltop. His eyes, closed, never move as they did in the first interview. The last time that the dog comes up from his grave and Jake throws him back into his grave the beast looks "just like a shadow." After that, one of the stones that Jake has put on the grave moves slightly; but Jake puts on some more, tells the beast he's dead, and stands there peacefully by the grave. When the session is over he goes home with instructions to say "There is no devil and the dog is dead. I do not have to stutter." And that is all that need be said about the dog and the devil. They soon ceased to function.

From this time on, Jake's problems take a different turn, and the next dozen interviews are concerned with very present matters. He is "sore" because he was sent on an errand and the man kept him late for his appointment, and when he is sore he stutters; for the long-established habit which began with one disagreeable emotion is now aroused by others also. There is a disturbing influence in the home that keeps the whole family tense, and it is arranged that his teacher shall see the mother and have it removed. The news agent that supplies Jake's papers wants him to sell four hundred a day instead of three, "and that is impossible, and he threatens to discharge me. He is always grouchy and fault-finding. When he gets crazy he always punches me, and I'd like to hit him, but need the money, so I can't. And once in a while when I get stuck very badly he gives me a box on the ear." That again means nervousness and stuttering; and it is hard for Jake to keep from thinking of his troubles even when he is studying in school. So he is advised to complain at newspaper headquarters, and the bullying ceases. Then one of his teachers is overworking him, and another "has a spite on him" and gives him low marks when he is working

hard to be valedictorian, and Jake has to be convinced that a lower place in his class with peace of mind is worth more than the first place without it. Moreover, he has a way of being startled into stuttering speechlessness and feeling like an idiot when someone comes upon him suddenly, especially a teacher; he doesn't know why teachers should affect him more than others, "only you feel kind of—I can't explain—in awe of them." So all this has to be dealt with, for stuttering is increased by the habit of embarrassment that it causes; and in a later interview Jake is fortunately able to report that his awe of teachers is disappearing. About this time also, Jake announces a new vocational ambition. He had meant to be an accountant because that does not demand speech; but now he would like to be an interpreter because it does.

So matters rested for the summer. When Jake returned according to appointment in September, he reported continued progress. He stuttered less, slept well, sold three hundred and fifty papers a day, and had cured himself of being startled by taking boxing lessons at the Y. M. C. A. ["And how about the dog?"] For a moment Jake looked puzzled: "Oh, that is dead and gone and buried. I have a little fox terrier at home though." ["And the devil?"] He laughs: "That's buried too. I never think of them and I don't have a fear of anything." But he stutters "most always when one of these special editions" of the paper comes out, and he wants to go down to the office and "crack them one"; for "if I plan to do some important thing and the specials come out I do not get to do that important thing afterwards. I wouldn't have time. And when I've set my mind on doing that certain thing and something comes up to stop it, that's what gets me going." When a person has an obvious weakness (like Jake's stuttering) he is likely to strive desperately to compensate for it by some kind of conspicuous achievement; he gets fixed purposes that he follows desperately, and he cannot adjust himself flexibly to changing conditions that upset his program of self-vindication. So something had to be done to relieve the pressure that led to Jake's outbursts. In November he reported that he was "feeling fine," that he went "easy on everything," was always happy, and had purposely allowed his sale of papers to go down a little. Here the notes say "If Jake becomes a self-possessed gentleman the stuttering would have been worth while."

In December Jake reports again that he is "feeling fine." The stuttering is "done and forgotten almost. I just don't think

about it. I don't get excited. I take it easy. I'll remember that all right. And this last month my marks went away up high, though I was not working so hard as before. No, I wasn't kidding you about that devil. I saw it right there back of me, and those combats were real. In my mind they were."

More than two years later Jake reported again. There are no more dreams of dog or demon. "Once it was banished it was gone." As for the stuttering, "After our last talk I thought with myself: That thing is there, and it is up to me to get rid of it. So I just literally threw it away. Sometimes when I get excited or nervous I get blocked; but when I am calm I can actually rattle off words like a steam engine. Yes, you can put me in print if you wish to."