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Editorial

YOU may be surprised to have another number of CHILD AND MAN in your hands only two months or so after the previous one. I am making every effort to catch up time lost by the late appearance of previous numbers and hope, by publishing every two months instead of three for the rest of the year, to bring out No. 10 by December, when it is actually due.

We have several articles this time by contributors whose names have not so far appeared on these pages, and therefore need some introduction. Miss Fox was one of the five original founder-teachers of Michael Hall and knew Doctor Steiner personally. She has run a hostel for many years and, because of her very great experience in this work, we are most glad to print her article. Miss Bennell was one of the founders of Wynstones School and is now warden of Hawkwood College, Stroud, which has been established especially for young people. Her article on a very important subject will, I hope, be the first of a series by several writers. Theodora Veenhof is a teacher at the famous Vrije School at the Hague and deals delightfully with the first beginnings of nature study with the little children. The other contributors need no introduction, as articles by them both have appeared in previous numbers.

H. L. HETHERINGTON.

The Training of the Will in Childhood

IN a previous number of *CHILD AND MAN* A. C. Harwood briefly described the threefold human being as regards his two poles of thought and will, with feeling as mediator between the two. The conscious pole, thinking, finds physical expression in the brain and nervous system, the unconscious will in the metabolic and limb system, and between them lies the sub-conscious feeling life, which lives in the rhythmic system. One cannot, of course, make such a clear-cut division between these three soul faculties, but must notice, rather, how in keen sense observation and thought there lies an element of will, while many will impulses come to light as a thought of the deed about to be done.

It is this latter fact which has led to a widespread misunderstanding of the will, to the oft-repeated picture of the post office in the brain, receiving and sending out messages which bring about movement and activity. With such a conception an educator can do nothing to train the will of a child, but must leave its development to the play upon him of chance happenings and the child's often chaotic impulses.

This problem of the will is perhaps one of the most mysterious which confronts us when we desire to come to a deeper understanding of human life, and we owe it to Rudolf Steiner that we can develop some capacity for unravelling the problems which belong to this important chapter of psychology. On the one hand lies the ideal, the high resolve, which is cherished by many a man as that which makes life worth while—and this can only come to expression in the world when he struggles to give shape to the recalcitrant stuff of life, the very substance of the earth itself. He comes to realise that the material world is given him (as a sculptor provides himself with clay, wood or marble out of which to fashion his work of art), so that his will may wrestle with this hard and yet malleable medium and thus bring his ideals into actuality. But it is startling to become aware that will lives in the earth not as a dead, inert mass offering resistance to anyone who would mould and shape it, but rather as a power which, if it remains unchecked and untransformed in man, works as an element destructive to his true humanity.

It is this interplay between the ego and the blind forces of will that constitutes one of the most important aspects of life—life which a man leads either in unconscious bondage to them or in ever-repeated effort to use all his faculties consciously in the service of his ego.

Since the will is unconscious it cannot be directly trained in childhood, nor can the teacher work fruitfully unless he knows in what way the three soul faculties gradually awaken in the growing boy or girl throughout the different stages of life. In the tiny child, up to the change of teeth, it is the will which is the predominant characteristic of his make-up. Everyone knows how a baby can rule the whole house, and it is obvious he is not open to persuasion by intellectual arguments! Thinking has not yet awakened. Between the change of teeth and puberty the child will be swayed chiefly by his feelings which are at first strongly interpenetrated with will, and only later, say from twelve years on, by his awakening powers of thought and judgment. After puberty the faculty of abstract thought

develops. A new human being, often unrecognised as such, stands before the teacher or parent. Very much depends at this time on the training which the will has received in the earlier years of life.

It is important to realise the different ways in which these three soul faculties awaken in a child, otherwise we may be in danger of regarding, for instance, that child as stupid who lives chiefly in his will life. Intelligence tests may indicate that a certain child is backward, even unfit to share in the education of "normal" children, whereas the teacher will realise that the child is exceptionally gifted as regards his power of will. He knows that he can bring home a few things to such a child, always with the aid of movement, activity and rhythm and by this means gradually awaken his sleeping powers of thinking. Other children are especially rich in their feeling life and can only learn when knowledge approaches them in the guise of colour, music and drama. Through these channels we can bring the outer world to such children and so rouse the faculties of thinking and will. Others again, classed as highly intelligent, may be singularly lacking in will, in relating thought to activity. For instance, a little boy who was brilliant at arithmetic repeatedly failed to count correctly the number of steps as he walked down the school staircase. Nor could he step rhythmically in the eurhythm lesson. It took a long time in the case of this child to build a channel, as it were, from head to limbs—from thinking to activity.

In considering the problem of the training of the will in childhood we have to realise that by the time the child comes to school very much has already been done for good or ill, consciously or unconsciously, by those who have surrounded the child. The tiny child is a being in whom body, soul and spirit are interwoven—his whole physical body is a sense organ which receives every soul and spirit influence in its environment. These are taken up by the forces which are forming and shaping his physical body. During these early years the child is building his organs and into these organs, literally into their very being, are built the courage or cowardice, the truth or falsehood, the wisdom or folly of the adults who surround him. He needs, too, to live in an atmosphere of love, for love is like the sunshine, helping to upbuild a strong physical organism, just as the sun's rays woo the flowers into healthy growth.

The little child must be able to use his limbs vigorously, often not contributing thereby to the comfort of the grown-ups in his environment! But it is obvious that, since metabolism and limbs are the physical expression of the life of will, a child's will can only unfold vigorously and harmoniously when in the first years of life a strong and healthy body has been developed—a vehicle which will present as few hindrances as possible to the working of his soul and spirit.

It is above all important that the little child should live in an atmosphere which breathes gratitude, love and devotion. It is a natural element to one who has so lately descended from the spiritual world—only too soon vitiated by the apathy and cynicism of those who surround him. It would carry us too far to discuss why it is that such an attitude leads the student through knowledge to truth. But it must here be emphasised that a child's capacity to enter with his will into knowledge and into life is enormously enhanced by an innate feeling of gratitude for what life has to offer, and of loving devotion to the world of nature and of man.

By a process of metamorphosis, phantasy in a child is transformed into creative thinking and active will in later life. Too often the child's wonderful gift of phantasy is maimed or killed in his early years by unsuitable toys—the doll which is an elaborate imitation of a person, rectangular unimaginative building bricks, even mechanical toys. How much happier is the child who is allowed to create his own playthings out of a few simple objects which leave plenty of scope for his imagination to work, or the one who is taken for a walk in the woods and allowed to romp, and run hither and thither, accompanied by a grown-up who draws his attention to the things which surround him, and welcomes with delighted interest any sign of the child's own creative activity.

The child will like best of all to spend his time imitating the grown-ups round him—cooking like mummy, gardening like daddy, and in these activities his will finds right and harmonious expression.

And even in these very early years it is of the greatest help to a child to do eurhythmy, to learn to step and move joyfully and rhythmically. Rhythm is essential in the development of the will life of a child.

At length the time comes for him to go to school—and this is a very crucial moment of his life. He should not learn intellectually before the time of the change of teeth, for until then all his forces are, or should be, engaged in building a strong and healthy body. But after that time, these forces are ready to be used in activities of mind and soul. Just as, in the earliest years, *will* was the faculty which dominated the child, so now, between the change of teeth and puberty, it is the *feeling* life which is predominant: feeling, which finds physical expression in the rhythmic system—in breathing and blood circulation. This means that the child will be open to all that lives in rhythm, in colour, music and drama, in beauty and all artistic activity. Only later will the child's power of abstract thought awaken, and the feeling life is the bridge between thinking and will. It is above all important that no gap should exist between these two polarities, so that in adult life it would become difficult for the thinking to find connexion with the will or the will with the thinking.

When the child first comes to school he should learn reading and writing in the artistic way which was so well described in a previous number of *CHILD AND MAN*. Too often he is straightway presented with intellectual abstractions, black marks on a page—with which he has no possible connexion. If he is taught by means of pictures and stories, allowed to run the forms of the letters and to paint and draw them, his will activity will be rightly led over into the world of school. Through the first seven years of school life, from seven to fourteen, the teacher must be an artist and must recognise the child as an artist, being livingly aware that the powers which formerly worked as formative forces in the physical body are now metamorphosed into powers of the soul, artistic powers by means of which he will come to know the world. The teacher needs not only to know, but to live with the knowledge of such a transformation—and that other, of equal importance, when these artistic powers become active in the spirit at the time of puberty and emerge as creative thinking. But this only comes about to the full in those fortunate people whose education up to that time has taken account of their real being and its natural growth and development. The teacher must

be aware that thinking becomes emaciated, shadowlike and powerless when it does not go through these metamorphoses via the strong, artistic feeling life during the middle years of childhood.

During these years the physical rhythm of pulse- and heart-beat becomes established and a great strength is built into the child's whole organism when rhythm plays an important part in his whole life. His day should be ordered according to rhythm—and this will be very satisfying to the child himself. Everyone knows how intensely a child dislikes any interference with a well-established order of things. In school, he should learn tables and poems, not by calling on an intellectual memory, but through rhythmic activity. Eurhythmy will be of untold value in strengthening his sense of rhythmic movement.

The child of weak will may be given a little task, such as watering a plant, which he has to remember to carry out at a certain time every day. Not only in a child, but in any adult who feels the need of such a discipline, this will be found to have an almost magical effect in strengthening the will!

Again, a child needs to develop attentiveness to what he sees and hears. This calls delicate powers of will into his senses and develops interest and love, which, as we have said, form the best basis for learning to know the world. On the other hand, the will is weakened and made flaccid when a child is called upon to learn intellectually facts and subjects for which his mind is not yet ripe. The teacher must bring to the child knowledge which is attuned to his development—for instance, the child will not be ready to learn mechanics until the age of twelve when his own skeleton becomes hardened and he experiences the laws of mechanics in his own body. He should not learn algebra until his capacity for abstract thought has begun to awaken—and so on. This whole question forms a very interesting and important chapter in the art of education of Rudolf Steiner.

The child who learns to love knowledge and to love nature is thus rightly prepared for puberty and will be spared, to a great extent, the chaotic awakening to passions and appetites which often besets the child who has only learned with the intellect and thus has not engaged his feeling life. Such prematurely awakened passions enfeeble the will.

If the child is to stand later as a strong independent adult, he needs to be under authority during the first years of school life—the authority of one whom he respects and loves. A teacher worthy of such love and respect will try to remove as many hindrances as possible from the child's soul life and thus provide his spirit with a fit instrument by means of which it can work in life. But while directing the life of the child, he will reverently leave his spirit untouched, and thus aid, and not impair, his freedom.

Perhaps the deepest concern of the true teacher is that the young being who is in his care shall go out into the world bearing within him a strong moral impulse that will make him a power for good in whatever social relationships he may afterwards find himself. And it is just here that the most devoted and high-minded teacher can make the greatest mistakes. His natural impulse is, perhaps, to give ethical teaching, to make sure the child knows right from wrong. It is just in this sphere of morality that Dr. Steiner has thrown great light upon the training of the will. To go fully into his wonderfully rich psychology would carry us too far

—perhaps future articles in *CHILD AND MAN* will be devoted to this subject. Here, therefore, we will accept the statement that man's inner life plays between the two poles of sympathy and antipathy—and that thinking can only arise on the ground of antipathy. A little child merges himself with his surroundings, but a man must deliberately separate himself from that about which he wishes to form objective thoughts. This antipathy remains unconscious, but is very real. Through this fact we can understand that "if we give a child morality in the form of concepts antipathy arises, even a slight disgust. Man's organism opposes moral precepts and this plays an important part in modern social life."

How, then, shall we train the child in morality? Let us try to awaken his feeling judgment by means of imaginative pictures. In his early years, fairy tales, fables and myths will convey to him in picture form the great spiritual truths out of which morality arises. A little later the child will delight in stories of heroes and great men and women—his mind may be stored with pictures of high and noble actions, with the beauty of sacrifice in pursuit of an ideal, of selfless courage and devotion. But such stories must remain simply as pictures, although the inner meaning and truth must be aflame in the mind of the teller. The child is very sensitive to the slightest flavour of "preaching," and will react adversely accordingly. But if in the years before puberty there has gradually grown within him a feeling of sympathy for what lies along man's true path of development and of antipathy for what lies in other directions, he may safely be left later to shape his own course in life. We rob him of one of his most important experiences as a young adult if we do not allow him to awaken his *own* moral judgment and make his own discoveries in this field. If we have prepared him in his early years by training the will in the many ways I have tried to indicate, he will find himself in possession of a powerful instrument which his own ego will direct and control. We have helped him to forge the tools with which he can work upon his own development, but we have left him spiritually free.

Most of us have to some extent been fettered and maimed by early inhibitions, by intellectuality, or by a poverty-stricken artistic life. Perhaps those who stood to us as authorities during our earlier years did not realise the boundary beyond which authority impinges upon the spirit of another individual, making him unfree. We may have spent our lives in an effort to lessen or eliminate the ill effects of this early training and grow towards the full stature of what we were meant to become. It would be beautiful if we could turn these adverse life-experiences into instruments which help us to become more sensitive to the ways in which we can help our children to stand in the modern world as free and strong human beings.

MARGARET BENNELL.

Education in Hostel Life

AT the opening of Michael Hall (then "The New School") twenty-four years ago, two of the seven children were received as boarders into the school. Since that time the number of boarders has steadily increased and now stands at 160. As one hostel after another has been started, those of us concerned with this work have become increasingly aware of the important and positive part it can play in a Rudolf Steiner education. In this article an attempt will be made to show what some of our aims are, in this sphere of work.

There are some who think that boarding for children is wholly good, others that it is wholly bad, and the views of most parents probably lie somewhere between these two extremes. This question does not, however, concern us at the moment. The boarders have come to us, and a variety of circumstances has brought them here. Distance from the school is the most obvious one. Many mothers, too, have work of their own for financial or other reasons, and there are, alas, also the homes where lack of harmony or actual separation of the parents makes boarding-school life desirable or essential for the children. Modern children, moreover, especially those born during the war years, are often in need of special educational care which the parents do not always feel able to give. And we must remember that the old tradition of boarding-schools for children is deeply rooted in the British people, for better or worse.

But tradition no longer has the hold that it did have, even in educational life, and it is clear to any unprejudiced observer that old bonds, old ties are loosening; the relationship between master and man, employer and employed, even parent and child is changing, and in some cases changing very rapidly. In the urge to form unions, leagues, new communities and the like we see how men are seeking new bonds with each other. But Rudolf Steiner has shown us how these bonds can only be truly forged out of a knowledge of the spiritual nature of man. Now when children, out of the circumstances of their lives, become boarders in a school, they are brought to live together with many other human beings, and we must ask ourselves: How can we make this circumstance a fruitful one for these children? How can they learn something, through this experience, which will help them in later life to understand that the spirit within themselves dwells also in their fellow human beings, and that it is the same spirit which lives within the whole great world of nature? We believe the answer to be that if we ourselves are continually striving to learn more and more of Rudolf Steiner's teaching about man, we can gradually build up a life for our children which will strengthen them for their future tasks, through individual and common experiences. Hostel life provides many opportunities for such work, as I shall try to show.

It is by no means our purpose that life in a hostel shall prepare the children for a "community" life, as such, later on, but rather that what they can learn from each other, from the experiences shared and from the ordering of the whole life of the day and the year, shall lay the foundations for a truer relationship between man and man.

It is, I believe, a mistake to try to build up a hostel life as like as possible to

the home life. This may be misunderstood, for it is of course vital to provide such features of home life as, for instance, a sense of security and protection, care of the health, freedom, gaiety, loving interest in the child's pursuits, surroundings as beautiful as may be, and many other obvious attributes of home life. But one must never forget that the child has also his own home and family, in the background. Indeed, with some children who live very intensely in the present, one has sometimes even to keep fresh for them the memory of home. This can be done by the weekly letter-writing, helping children to make gifts for their parents and in other ways. But the relationship between hostel workers and children is bound to be quite a different one from that between parents and children, and the hostel life very different also from the life in a family. We have no blood ties with the children, nor they with each other. We have no direct knowledge or memory of their babyhood and early childhood, and the children themselves are often many of one age together and come from different homes, upbringing, perhaps even nationality or race. So we have to find our way to them, and they to us and to each other, and from these new bonds, new blessings can arise for us all.

On the other hand, hostel life presents new problems. When many children live together in one house, certain of their powers are lessened. There is a kind of excitement in living together. They do not always so easily remember their little tasks and responsibilities, they get wild "crazes" for things, and when some prank or naughtiness is suggested by one child, where are the consciences of the others? Flown away, or at best dimmed and often ineffectual. Rudolf Steiner once said that one of the chief aims of education was to help the child to "stand upright within the crowd"—how different life on the earth would be if every man had attained this inward security. Such thoughts must constantly be in the minds of those who have the care of children. If you can guide these strong social feelings in a right direction, you will find your children can themselves be the builders of a unified group, which in turn will give strength to each member of it.

The arrangement of the everyday life of the hostel can form a framework of unity, within which there must of course always be scope for the freedom of the individual. We begin our day by saying together Rudolf Steiner's morning verse: "See I in the Sun, I think the Spirit of God." For this we stand in a circle, and even this detail of form can help the children to feel that each one of them belongs to the whole household. With faces towards each other we can, as it were, for one brief moment of solemnity, shut away the outer doings, and say words which can give the children an image for their souls, to be borne, albeit unconsciously, into the actions of the day. At night the evening verse is said, but this time in the small groups of each bedroom.

Another opportunity for all to meet together is provided by the meal-times. The taking of food, the receiving of the gifts of nature for our very life, as a shared experience, is a deed of significance. One should not speak to the children in this way, of course, but if we are conscious of these things ourselves, then the meals can be times, not of silence and repression, but of a certain quietness and leisure in the busy life of the day. The prevailing mood at a meal should be one of lightness, gaiety and humour, but there can also be times when most interesting and profound discussions can arise, even among these younger children. One day the

conversation started by a ten-year-old child saying: "Does the King know about Michael Hall?", and before we knew where we were off on the founding of the Waldorf School, the differences between us and other schools, my own personal memories of Rudolf Steiner and so on. Thick and fast came the eager questions, and their warm and spontaneous appreciation of their school was expressed in no uncertain terms.

On Sundays and on winter evenings the children meet in larger or smaller groups for stories, which again bind them together, especially if the story has been made up for a particular group of children. However poor the content of the story may seem to be, such a one is always received with great eagerness. Somewhere in his being the child surely knows that one has worked (often struggled and wrestled) to create this gift for him, and this striving is in itself the better part of the gift. Once, after the telling of a story, of which the inventor herself had a very poor opinion, this conversation was overheard: "Did she make it up?"—"No, she didn't"—"Yes, she did." And the final conclusion—"She *can't* have done, it was *much* too good"! A doubtful compliment!

Then there are special occasions during the course of the year which bring us very near together. All birthdays, for example, are celebrated by the singing of the Birthday Song ("Many the stars that stand over the earth . . ."), a decorated place at the table and friends to tea. A grown-up birthday is a great event. There is much ado beforehand (with that "half-secrecy" so dear to the heart of a child), either in the making of gifts or preparing of an entertainment, and during the day the birthday person is treated with the utmost possible reverence and consideration. Indeed, the little children are still so near to that first great day when they entered into earthly life that they cannot but recognise the celebration of this day as the significant event which it truly is.

Sometimes we do a play in the hostel, either a comic one at a farewell party perhaps for someone who is leaving, or else a more serious one with parts to learn and proper costumes. At different times we have acted a King Arthur Play, *Roland and Charlemagne* or *The Christmas Carol*. It may be of interest to note that these plays differ very much from the class plays done at school in that children of varying ages take part. The older ones carry out the bigger parts with a grave sense of responsibility, and the little ones are more than proud to be in it at all. In the summer we have an all-day outing to the sea, when all the helpers in kitchen, house and garden are invited, and the children are the hosts.

Even more important than these last-named activities is the celebration of the festivals of the year. Rudolf Steiner has shown us how in earlier times, in dimmer consciousness and out of instinctive feeling, man experienced in his soul what was going on in the world of nature during the course of the year, and how this brought to him the knowledge that the same spirit was working in his own soul and in the world about him. As man's consciousness grew clearer and his independent power of thinking developed, this knowledge was lost, and it is a tragedy of our times that man can live his life, especially in the great cities, without any knowledge of his intimate connection with nature. A city man adapts his clothing according to the weather and regulates his day by the clock, but a fine feeling for the difference of mood of morning and evening, summer and winter, stillness

and storm, is rarely to be found. But now man has the task to re-form his relationship to the world of the plants, the animals, the stones, to sun, moon and stars, no longer in instinctive feeling as of yore, but in the light of clear, conscious knowledge. The children, especially the children under fourteen, have not yet attained the power of independent thinking, and should not yet attain it, but by celebrating the festivals of the year rightly, guided by anthroposophical knowledge, we can give the children pictures which will sink deeply into their souls and remain with them all their lives.

The most important of all festivals is of course Advent and Christmas: the crown of the year, the centre and the goal of all our work. How eagerly the children look forward to the First Advent Sunday when they know that the wreath of fir will be hanging in the sitting-room with its four candles, one more to be lit each Advent week, and they know there will be an illuminated Advent picture in the corner with little covered stars all round it, waiting to be opened. We meet together in the evening and speak to the children about Advent or tell them a little story, and then one child opens the first star window, and we begin our carols. Every day till the end of the term we meet to sing, and every child opens a star. On December 6th we celebrate the birthday of St. Nicholas. He suddenly appears thundering on the door while we are singing, and he speaks to the children and has a word of admonition or encouragement for one or another. How wonderful that he knows who has been good and who has not! He brings a sack of nuts and apples and also a birch rod which (up to now) he has always decided to be unnecessary. The coming of St. Nicholas helps to prepare for Christmas, and the children would not feel Advent to be complete without it. Finally, at the end of the term, we have our Christmas tree and crib, and one can truly feel how the warm light of the Christmas candles shines down into the children's hearts and finds its image there. We have often noticed how the children change during Advent. Sharp words lose their edge, grudges are forgotten, the mischief-seekers are absorbed in new interests, and with hands and voices the children are eager to express the warmth which has awakened in their hearts. They want to learn more and ever more carols, in two or three parts, in different languages and with varied instrumental accompaniment. And with their hands they make many lovely gifts for their parents or for other children, or something for the crib, an angel or a candlestick, or little clay sheep or a donkey.

* * *

It is very interesting to notice the effect of children on each other within the group. Close friendships are often formed, and they can learn many a poignant truth by coming up against each other's difficulties and failings. The older can help the younger, not only in practical ways with homework or handwork, or helping to put them to bed, but also by showing what they themselves can do, how they can be, at their age. This is something for the little ones to look up to (or sometimes of course to eschew), and thus each child can come to see what their own part is in the whole and to respect what the others have to bring. I have often been amazed how seldom the children quarrel, how rarely "cliques" are formed, and what forbearance and patience is shown with any child who has

perhaps a physical disability or an annoying habit or even a flagrant moral fault. And if such a child improves, how pleased and proud the others are, as though they themselves had brought about this change, as indeed they often have to an amazing degree.

An important part of our hostel life is the sharing out of various tasks such as setting tables, clearing away, washing up, running errands and so on, and we consider these to be of educational value apart from the actual assistance given. This will be enlarged upon in a later article, but here the social aspect may be mentioned. The children can come to understand, out of actual experience, how much work has to be done to keep them fed and clothed and their house clean, warm and comfortable. They often also give voluntary help in an emergency or in case of illness. When we have children in bed (unless they are seriously ill or have an infectious disease) we encourage our children to help a little with the nursing, and they love to do it. They can learn how to prepare a dainty meal for a convalescent, how to make a medical tea or inhalant, they can make the bed, air the room and carry up the meal. Here again, through their own willing deeds, they can discover how many and varied are the ways of service.

During the war, when Michael Hall was evacuated to Minehead, we were faced with a dearth of helpers, and there were occasional days when one adult had to look after a group of twenty to twenty-five children, single handed. This proved to be a very interesting experience. We had tried to build up an ordered, regular life which was in a certain sense complete in itself. This made it perfectly possible to be alone in charge, as the life of the children seemed to carry itself along in an almost miraculous manner. The task of the one grown-up on such days was completely different from usual. If there are two or three in charge you can do all kinds of things with the children. One can be putting to bed, another can be reading a story or playing with the children in the garden, a third supervising the jobs or homework or giving a hand with practising. If you are alone these activities are impossible, so you have to *do* much less and *be* much more. Every minute you have to remember to be a steady, unfailing centre of all the activity—the hub round which the wheel of hostel life must smoothly turn. This is of course not a practice to be encouraged, but it serves to show that if there is a strong sense of unity in the group an emergency need bring no chaos.

These, then, are some of the ways in which we are striving to fulfil our tasks as hostel keepers. For many children attending our Schools life has determined that they shall be deprived of a continuous family life. Thereby they lose something which we can never restore to them. But through the guidance and teaching of Rudolf Steiner we can strive to give them something in its place, and we may hope that when they go forth into the world, to bear the new responsibilities of the future, their common experiences in hostel life may have helped them to find the spirit which shines in the heart of every man, and which alone can bind men together in a true way.

HELEN FOX.

(Note.—What is said in this article is based almost entirely on experience with children from seven to fourteen years of age.)

Discipline in a Rudolf Steiner School

ONE of the favourite accusations against a Rudolf Steiner School is that there is no discipline, and one of the greatest difficulties for a new teacher is to establish orderly habits of behaviour in his class.

It is natural that in any work where the old conventions are laid aside, the new forms of life take some while to develop. Yet everyone will agree that some kind of law and order is desirable. We cannot approve if children destroy beautiful materials, or if they are cruel to those weaker than themselves. We can hardly allow deliberate disobedience or pass unchallenged rude and disrespectful behaviour. Punishment in itself, however, rarely improves anyone, and it is well known that the child who is always being punished is bound to be always in mischief. We can condemn misbehaviour, but can we inspire the culprit to do better?

In the end we can only attain the kind of conduct we desire by helping the children in our care to unfold harmoniously. This is a long and strenuous task and sometimes we need to bear with present shortcomings or lapses so as not to lose our distant ideal. For this is the only real solution: the culprit has to become a changed being.

In a Rudolf Steiner School the teacher has two strong aids to his task. The first is the content of his lessons; for the curriculum is carefully planned so that the subjects introduced meet with the inner needs of the child. For the new teacher this does not always appear to work at once. Children to-day are so restless and unconcentrated that the magical subject matter may not seem to appeal. The teacher has to think again and again in his preparation how to bring it in a way to meet their needs. But his love and enthusiasm for his subject have in them the power to succeed.

The second aid is the teacher's bond of fellowship with the children in his care. He may have some who present special difficulties or show marked antipathy, but if he concerns himself with them sufficiently, if out of lesson hours he lives with them in his heart, little by little he will gain the required authority; and then the child who began by hating will learn to love and trust.

Both of these aids are long-term measures and the new teacher may be faced here and now with a naughty and disobedient class. What can he do? The first essential is the confidence that he will succeed in the end. Doubt is the greatest enemy. It is only too easy for one who approaches his task in all humility to feel, "The children are wiser than I. What right have I to assert my authority?" Then the children will do just as they please to the misery of themselves as well as everyone else, for they frankly acknowledge that they really like a strict teacher. Our thoughts before entering the class-room should rather be, "The children are no doubt greater personalities than I, but I am here because I have a certain content to bring them. To offer this content worthily I need to win their attention and for that I will patiently strive." The teacher who accepts his task as a weighty responsibility will win his discipline.

One of the most important lessons for the teacher to learn is how to create

the right mood in his class. It is not enough to enter the class-room in the morning thinking that hearty goodwill and the enjoyment of one's subject will carry one through the day. We need to be able to play upon our class like an orchestra. Sometimes the mood should be grave, sometimes gay, but just as in an orchestra the different instruments have to play together, so in a class the different characters and temperaments have to feel one another's presence. This unity is won in many ways. One of the most important arts to develop with a class is the art of conversation, particularly where the children are led to be thoughtful. Any special occasion can give the opportunity: in the younger classes, a birthday or the death of a friend, a public event or a festival such as Christmas or Easter. The teacher can perhaps speak to the children of how years ago they were not on the earth at all, and years hence they will again have to leave the earth; and when they came they had no possessions, they were tiny and naked, and when they leave they will have to part from all they own. But after all did they really bring nothing to earth, and will they really take nothing with them when they go? And then the children will become attentive and give beautiful answers of which the teacher himself would never think. The common interest in the theme binds them all together.

Another art is that of helping each child to appreciate the others. The teacher needs to handle children differently according to their temperament, and this is so favourite a theme that I will not develop it here; but a fact that is not always recognised is that children should also come to understand one another's gifts and shortcomings. There is often a Cinderella in the class and the teacher may sometimes overhear such remarks as, "Oh, don't take any notice of Alice, she is cracked." Then he must watch his opportunity to praise Alice. He can perhaps say, "Sometimes people laugh at Alice, but you see she is the only one who thought of bringing flowers for the class-room. It would be good if all of you were so thoughtful."

Perhaps, too, there is a very fidgety boy and there is a task to be done of fetching and carrying for which everyone is anxious to be chosen. Then the teacher says, "Shall we let John do it to-day. You see, all of you know how to sit still, but it is so difficult for John he can't quite do it yet; so I think we must keep him busy and then he will not worry you all." If children can be led to a sympathetic interest in one another's weaknesses and a desire to help and put these right, the teacher will find them powerful allies. Every class teacher knows how helpful a brotherly-sisterly relationship can be in a class.

Now although we always aim at working with the positive qualities rather than punishing the negative, children's conduct does sometimes need drastic treatment. Just as the Jews of the Old Testament needed to experience their God as a jealous God who, when they erred, revealed himself to them in wrath, so the children between seven and ten sometimes need to experience righteous indignation. It is far the most effective punishment if little boys are cruel, for their teacher to show anger. It is essential during the class-teacher period that children should learn to obey. Generally if a teacher is sufficiently patient and firm even those who oppose at first will obey in the end, but in cases of deliberate disobedience punishment may be justifiable.

It is very often the children who come late into our schools who give rise to the criticism of rude and unruly behaviour among our pupils. Those who have suffered elsewhere from the strain of competition and the punishments meted out to the dull and inept, generally feel at first a sense of great relief. They begin to gain confidence and become brighter and more friendly; then comes a kind of rebound. They start to take advantage of the good-natured people who are too easy-going to punish them. With such children I think strictness and suitable punishments are necessary as long as the teacher continues at the same time to feel goodwill and to build up a more positive relationship.

With children in their very early teens it is often possible to get into a kind of permanent state of war. Antagonisms at this age are very violent, and teachers are rightly careful not to commit some action which the pupil may regard as unforgivable. I have known many girls who have nurtured real or imaginary wrongs, which they have never overcome. Here the problem is answered by the attitude of mind which the teacher adopts. If he can refrain from all personal pride and feelings of indignation that he has not been treated respectfully, if he can again and again view the misconduct in an entirely objective way so that the punishment can fit the deed and not be an act of personal pique, than he will find that the situation begins to change and the pupil, who opposed him, makes a real connexion out of her interest in her lessons.

So far I have written of the individual teacher's task, but there is also the task of collaboration in building up an orderly school life. It is easier to remain a brilliant individualist than it is to agree with one's colleagues about a common policy. Yet for the sake of new teachers it is important that good habits and good traditions should be established. Just as certain courtesies in social life are helpful in our intercourse together, so certain regular habits of conduct are desirable in a school, and these are not difficult to attain if the staff are single in purpose. In our own school, each class waits outside the class-room until the teacher arrives and the lesson cannot begin until the children have entered, stood quietly behind their desks, and said "Good morning" or "Good afternoon" as the case may be. At the end of the lesson they again stand behind their desks before being dismissed. If they know that the teacher is determined not to start until they are all quiet, they soon grow used to this as a habit, and it is easier for all new teachers when such habits have been acquired.

Of course other methods may be equally effective in other schools, but it is a pity if each teacher follows his own individual line, for then in the classes of the more casual members of the staff, disorder will reign. The class teacher himself may be able to cope with it, but it is a terrible experience for a newcomer to go to a class-room where the children are shouting and chasing one another and where he has to clap or stamp until they choose to attend. Yet this too is only a habit; they behave in a way which has always been allowed. The more orderly the arrangements we make for break-time and dinner-hour, for the traffic in the corridors and the use of the cloak rooms, the more smoothly the daily life of the school will run. It is worth while to make the effort.

The teachers also need to collaborate in keeping the school beautiful. Children are very ready to take pride both in their class-rooms and their books, and when

their teachers are strict that litter should be cleared away or that untidy messy writing should be done again, they accept this as just and right. They also take pleasure in the personal appearance of their teachers and it is an aid to discipline to be attractively dressed and well groomed. Every common deed has its particular beauty. The cleaning and the washing up, the tidying of the dining room and the preparing of vegetables are all too readily regarded as menial and unworthy, but we have failed with the older children if we cannot set an example which makes them glad to share in these tasks.

The most vital work which the teachers can do together is the studying and sharing of their ideals of education. Often when the annoyances of everyday drive one to petty dealings and misunderstandings, the thoughts awakened by anthroposophy with regard to the true nature of man, raise all judgments to a higher level. When difficult children have been discussed in this light even though no action is taken, they seem to feel themselves better understood and to respond accordingly.

The problem of discipline cannot be answered once and for all; it has to be met every day anew, and each teacher out of his own nature and attainments will deal differently. Some will never have disorder in their classes and will always command prompt obedience. Others will be surrounded by noise and movement, yet the children will learn and make progress. The martinet is a great help in keeping law and order in the general routine of life, but he may be too impatient with those who are sensitive and delicate. The artist may give the most beautiful lessons, but he may be incompetent in dealing with large groups of children. As a staff we need to recognise that each teacher has a valuable gift to bring and each has some shortcoming that needs to be made good. Every virtue has its shadow. Hence appreciation of one another's qualities is an essential foundation of our work, and only through an active collaboration are we able to form an orderly school life in which the children can unfold their individual gifts and find their appointed tasks.

EILEEN HUTCHINS

Preparing Children for a Knowledge of their Native Land

(Reprinted from *Vrije Opvoedkunst* for August 1948, by kind permission)

ALL teaching in the lower classes appeals to the inner riches the children bring with them and the education tries to build a bridge between the golden land of wisdom from which the children come, and the earth, where they have to learn to live. The very young child is still one with his surroundings, he feels that he is on the same level with the plants and animals, with everything that is alive, and even with the lifeless things like stones and pebbles.

One only has to watch a child playing out of doors, to be convinced of the truth of this.

During the first years at school, the great process of isolation starts. But in the beginning, the world is still so near to little children, so much their own, that for them it is governed by the same laws as they are. All creatures talk to each other and joy and sorrow appear to them as they do to the children themselves. But now the time has come to make the children more conscious of the great wisdom in nature, in such a way that this process of becoming conscious is a joyful one. Again and again one experiences how they recognise and accept the truths given to them in story form. This is done in many ways and to make it clearer to you I would like to tell you something about the teaching of nature as it was done in a second class at the "Vrije School" in The Hague.

I began this period one February morning when spring was in the air. I asked the children whether they remembered the story I had told them in the autumn, about the tree that had given all its golden leaves to the wind. Generously and full of joy it had parted with all the leaves that had dressed it in a cloak of gold and fire. Little by little we recalled the story and then I began to tell them what had happened to all the sun-gold, which the tree had collected in its leaves, and which had fallen on to the earth after its dance with the wild winds of autumn. It was more a description than a story. I talked about the darkness of the earth into which the gold descended. Down there, in that darkness, were the gnomes who received the sun's riches gratefully and guarded them full of reverence. Under the earth it was not cold and dead as it appears on the surface in winter time, when the trees are bare and the ground is frozen. No, down there, where the sun's treasures are guarded, an intense expectation prevails. This lasts till Christmastime. Then a message comes to the earth. The gnomes who have watched the gold receive a sign, the Message of Light comes to them. And they quickly start their work to prepare for the new life of spring on the earth. It was not necessary for me to talk further at this point. The children eagerly told me their stories of the gnomes who helped the plants to grow, and how one could see the beginnings of the different plants, each sprouting in its own peculiar way. The little snowdrop, the crocus, and the aconite were the first, that dared to start the great journey up to the surface of the earth. They had only to wait for the message of the sun. Mother earth would release them as soon as the sun called them. It is difficult for me to convey to you the right picture of what occurred in the class during this lesson. The intense mood, the eagerness, the blossoming and flowering of the children themselves, all were part of the story. The attention of the children did not swerve for a minute. Hardly ever have I experienced the deep breathing in and out of a whole class in such a way as on that morning. After the story we went for a walk. The pale golden alder catkins I had seen on my way to school had given me the courage to start the morning. Now they were to help us further.

The early morning sun was lovely and mild, the air smelt of the spring and there was great joy at this unexpected outing. I had said to the children that now they must look and see whether they could discover some of the marvels we had been talking about, and I led them past the places where I suspected they could be found. Suddenly they discovered the catkins in all their grace and beauty on

the alder trees beside the water. I heard one of the children say, "Look at that gold, the gnomes have brought it there." We saw some snowdrops and admired them. They stood quietly and courageously dangling their little bells. We discovered buds on the trees and shrubs. There was not very much to see as yet, but the few things we did see impressed the children deeply and made this walk a very important one for the lesson. Shortly after, it started to freeze again and the children admired all the more the courage some of the little snowdrops showed in remaining above ground even during the frost.

After that, more of the story developed: how every plant receives its share of the golden treasure on its upward journey and how the gnomes whisper to each the special mission it has to fulfil. The little snowdrop keeps her treasure hidden in her calyx and surrenders with bowed head to the task of guarding the gold till it had ripened and she can give it back to the earth. The crocus is bolder and holds her calyx up. One day it opens and looks straight into the face of the sun, who gives light and love and lets it stream deep down into the heart of the little flower. In this way we talked about many flowers, daisies, dandelions, sunflowers and so on, which show so clearly the radiance of their golden treasure.

Now I wanted to put what the children had experienced into writing. In this way a little poem was born—a verse at a time—and every part of it, as it was finished, was received with great enthusiasm by the class. They worked hard at it and very well, and they made many illustrations. Just before Easter it was ready and I proposed to act it. It was not written as a play, but the possibility of acting it suddenly occurred to me. The class knew it by heart by this time. Now they spoke it in parts and I realised how deeply the children had experienced it. It was a lively performance. The children did not act, they *were* the gnomes, the flowers and the animals.

Here is the poem:

SUN GOLD

Mother Earth receives with love
Gold of Sun in leaves and flowers.
Falling on the fields and paths
Driven by the autumn showers.

Hidden deep down in the darkness
Where the gnomes live in the earth
Where they share their work together
Golds now waits for spring and birth.

Gnomes prepare and guard the seeds
Make them ready for new life
On the earth, when spring has come
Yes, the gnomes they work and strive.

Look, that small and slender snowdrop
See! she is the first to go
From the dwarf a golden treasure
She receives, yes did you know?

"Oh be careful little flower,
Here is sungold e'er you part."
And the snowdrop hid her treasure
Deep, deep in her flower heart.

But the crocus free and bold
Said: "I make the world so bright,
I can lift my little face
Straight into the Sun's great Light."

Who has brought that heavy load
High up in the alder tree—
Catkins full of light and gold
Swaying, peaceful, light and free.

After this verse, all the children who had had no special parts up till then were taken into the play. One was a bird, another a flower or a rabbit. Many birds were whistling and singing and the gnomes said:

Seedlings sprout and buds are bursting
Birds so joyful, whistle, sing
Flowers blossom, bees are buzzing,
Little rabbits leap and spring.

All:

Sun of Easter, Golden Light
Yes you make the whole world bright!

We acted this simple little play over and over again and the children never seemed to get tired of it.

I can only give some slight indication of how this subject might be taught in a Rudolf Steiner School. Each teacher, of course, will do it in his own way. But I hope I have made it clear to you how the children are brought to a realisation of the golden thread that weaves in all life through the seasons of the year. And we can also say that in every child a treasure is hidden, a treasure that, if it is guarded well, may radiate when the time comes to bring more warmth and joy on to earth.

THEODORA VEENHOF.

A German Fairy Tale Play for Children about Ten Years Old

At the end of the fourth class my children were able to learn and perform in German a simple dramatic version of the old fairy tale of "Goldener" the poor lonely boy with golden hair, who dreams under a lime tree a prophetic dream of his destiny and future. A fairy appears to him spinning a golden thread and singing of a white finch, a golden rose, and a king's crown

on the bottom of the sea. On waking he sets out to find his place and work in life and takes service with a bird-catcher in the woods. But when he catches the wondrous snow-white bird, his master has no understanding and takes it to be a work of the devil. He fares no better with the gardener, when the golden bloom unfolds on the rose-tree. Alas! Poor Goldener! His heart is greatly troubled, when in his boat on the wild waves he casts his net in company with the other fishermen and brings a golden crown to light. He assures his master of his innocence. There is no need for pleading. The old fisherman has wisdom and remembers how of old the last king, who had no son and heir, submerged his crown in the deep waters. There it had to rest till one came who would raise it and rule. Great is the rejoicing of all the people as they welcome Goldener, who, pure of heart, has come to be their new king.

There is enough depth and mood in this story to reach the children's soul and so provide one of the fundamental conditions for the language teaching at that stage, especially in the oral work: namely a feeling-understanding, with which the children can follow and directly enter the foreign phrasing and expression.

Also the variety of characters could satisfy a whole class and in the interchange of chorus work with individual speeches, children of different ability found scope.

There was enough repetition to make it easy to learn, enough variation to keep it interesting all the time. Flowers, birds and fishermen could move on the stage in different ways and with varied movements which revealed their own qualities.

To complete the play a fellow-teacher wrote some suitable music, which helped immensely to carry the mood and to shape an artistic whole.

GOLDENER

CHORUS

Goldener unter dem Lindenbaum
Goldener träumt einen lichten Traum.

(The Fairy appears singing from behind the lime tree.)

FAIRY

Der weisse Fink, die goldne Ros'
Die Königskron' im Meeresschoss

Fairy's song



GOLDENER Welch ein Traum hat mir geträumet- . . .
(The song is heard again.)
 Doch nun weiter, nicht geträumet!

CHORUS Goldener wandert durch die Welt
 Wandert über Wies' und Feld
 Kommt in einen grünen Wald
 Wo heller Vogelsang erschallt.

GOLDENER Lieber Vogelsteller mein
 Lass du mich dein Geselle sein!

BIRDCATCHER Ei gut, du kommst mir grade recht,
 Mit Hilfe steht es bei mir schlecht.
*(He goes off leaving Goldener to spread the nets.
 The birds appear flying and singing. At the
 end the white finch is left in the middle.)*

BIRDS Fliegen bunte Vögelein,
 Singen laut und singen fein,
 Dass es schallt,
 Dass es hallt,
 In dem dunkelgrünen Wald.

Bird's song



GOLDENER Ein edler Fink
 Schneeweiss und rein!
 Kommt und seht o Meister mein!

BIRDCATCHER Pack dich fort noch diese Stund'
 Stehst mit dem Bösen wohl im Bund!

CHORUS Goldener wandert durch die Welt
 Wandert über Wies' und Feld
 Kommt an einen schönen Garten
 Wo viele bunte Blumen warten.

GOLDENER Gärtner, lieber Gärtner mein
 Lass du mich dein Geselle sein?

GÄRDERER Ei gut, du kommst mir grade recht
 Mit Hilfe steht es bei mir schlecht.

*(He leaves GOLDENER alone to tend the flowers,
 which gradually unfold as they sing, the
 golden rose in the middle.)*

FLOWERS Es blüten die Blumen
 Wie Sterne so licht,
 Wie lachende Augen
 Im Erdengesicht.

Flower song



GOLDENER Welch schöne Rose
 Mit goldenem Schein!
 Kommt und seht
 O Meister mein!

GÄRDERER Pack dich fort!
 Noch diese Stund'
 Stehst mit dem Bösen wohl im Bund.

CHORUS Goldener wandert durch die Welt
 Wandert über Wies' und Feld,
 Kommt zuletzt ans weite Meer,
 Fischerboote um ihn her.

GOLDENER

Fischer, lieber Fischer mein
Lass du mich dein Geselle sein--

THE OLD FISHERMAN

Ei gut, du kommst mir grade recht
Mit Hilfe steht es bei mir schlecht!

*(With GOLDENER he joins the other fishermen,
who appear rowing over the sea, singing:)*

FISHERMEN

In den hellen
Wasserwellen
Wo die flinken
Fischlein schnellen
Wirf die Netz' tief zum Grund
Wirf sie weit zur guten Stund'!

Fisherman's song

The musical score is written for two voices, likely representing the fishermen. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has two staves, each with a treble and bass clef, and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and rhythmic, with lyrics written below the notes. The second system also has two staves with the same clefs and key signature, continuing the melody and lyrics. The lyrics are in German and describe the fishermen's actions and wishes.

In den hel - len Was - ser - wel - len Wo die flin - ken Fisch - lein schnel - len

Wirf die Net - ze tief zum Grund Wirf sie weit zur gu - ten Stund!

GOLDENER

Meister o Meister
Weh o Weh!
Eine goldene Krone
Bracht' ich zur Höh!
Ihr sagtet es sei zur guten Stund'
Ich steh' mit dem Bösen nicht im Bund!

ALL THE FISHERMEN

Goldener, Goldener Heil und Glück,
Brachtest die Krone uns zurück!

THE OLD FISHERMAN

Als der alte König kam zum Sterben
Hatte er keinen Thronserben
Da warf er die Krone ins tiefe Meer
Und sprach:
Ein neuer König ersteh euch nicht
Als bis die Krone kommt ans Licht.
Doch wer sie ans Licht bringt, die Königskron'
Er sei mein Erbe,
Er sei mein Sohn!

ALL THE FISHERMEN

Heil dir Goldener, Glück und Heil
Eine Krone ward dein Teil
Reinen Herzen immerdar
Alte Träume werden wahr.

ALL JOIN IN THE SONG

Der weisse Fink,
Die gold'ne Ros'
Die Königskron'
Im Meeresschoss.

[Music as for first Song.]

BRONJA HÜTTNER

Music by Elizabeth Jacobs

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