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Child and Man

CHRISTMAS
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CHILD AND MAN

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CONTENTS

Built upon a Rock	- - - - -	EDITOR
Christmas Song	- - - - -	C. S. D.
The Third King	- - - - -	R.L.
Examinations Examined III	- - - - -	H. GEBERT
Science in the Upper School	- - - - -	HANS GEBERT
Notes and Comments :		
In a Nutshell	- - - - -	R. L.
The Adolescent's Approach to Literature I		H. L. HETHERINGTON
Books :		

CHILD AND MAN is a magazine for the education founded by Rudolf Steiner for children who are able to pursue a normal curriculum. It seeks to form a link with all those who are interested in this education, by giving an up-to-date and authoritative commentary on the development of the work in the member schools of the Rudolf Steiner Schools Fellowship Ltd.

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Built upon a Rock

Child psychologists have a reputation among teachers for saying the obvious in a learned and impressive manner. They can hardly be blamed for this, for their task is careful and painstaking observation, checking and counter-checking, and if their results finally accord with the views held by practising teachers, they are bound to seem obvious. One of these truisms is that the young child needs security. This is immediately obvious as regards the home: a problematical or broken home background gives rise all too often to serious troubles with the children concerned.

But there are often other and less obvious sources of insecurity with children. We know of a child who had two recurring nightmares. One was of an enormous factory, full of menacing machinery, and the other, curiously enough, was of the juxtaposition of the immensely large with the minutely small: the current conceptions of a purely *spatial* universe had here entered into dream and given birth to nightmare. Here the source of a feeling of insecurity was not in the home, but in the much wider environment of technical life and the current views of the universe.

Insecurity, wherever it springs from, can only be countered by creating a warm and lively sense of *home*. In the family circle this task is a familiar one and need not be enlarged upon here, but a home must also be provided in a more spiritual sense. If the universe is presented to the child as a friendless waste, a vast vacuity, through which a few specks of dust float, some glowing, others dark and burnt out, then this is a source of insecurity and fear, all the more potent for its being unrealised by the child. If the technical age is presented with too much emphasis on the wonder and glory of the machine and too little on the human struggle and inventiveness which gave birth to it, then again fears can be present, powerful and unrealised. The sense of homelessness in man created by the picture of the universe presented to him by his scientific understanding, can be borne by the adult, but works devastatingly on the child.

The celebration of the Christmas Festival at home and at School is a powerful counter-force to these fears. For in this festival there is built up during the days of Advent a kind of inward centre, a place of quietness and power, of simplicity and yet irresistible grandeur. All can meet round the Crib, here understanding is of the heart: gathered round this place is the entire universe of stars and cosmic spaces, of earthly elements, of birds and beasts, of Man himself. Here is born, not only the Christ Child, but also the true sense of home, peace and security.

THE EDITOR

Christmas Song

*Darkness will carry the day along :
This is our singing, and this our song.*

How was He born, the shining One,
Flame from the heart of a hidden Sun ?
Veiling His light for an earthly womb -
His birth a dying, His body a tomb.

When was He born, the Word sublime,
Out of eternity into time ?
Born at an hour of infinite need
He ruled the hour, and of time was freed.

Where was He born, the Child divine,
Does yet His star in welcome shine ?
Needless to probe the silent sky,
For close He whispers : "Within am I !"

Why was He born, the loving Son,
What was the Deed that must be done ?
To start His life in man and earth -
A cross for quickening, a tomb for birth.

*This is our song, and this our singing :
Out of the night high noon is springing.*

C. S. D.

The Third King

An Advent Story for Older Children.

IT happened a long time ago that a son was born to a king in the East, and at the time of his birth nobody seemed to take very much notice of the newly-born prince. He was not the oldest son of his father, and at that time nobody yet knew that he would be the last-born, that he would remain the youngest of all his brothers. The wise men did not prophesy any amazing deeds for this prince, only the old women who were present at his birth said with one voice that he was a very bonny babe.

. During the first years of his life he was brought up among the women of his mother's household, but later – at the time when you are starting to go to school – he was put under the charge of an old huntsman who had won great fame in the wars of the king's father. From him the young prince learned how to ride a horse and how to draw a bow, he learned all the secrets of the forest and of the animals in it, and all the tricks of the hunter. In the evenings the prince was often very tired. Then the huntsman chanted to him the ancient songs which told of the history of his people, of the glory of the royal family and of the gods who in times immemorial had ruled his people and who even now – through king and priests – guided their destiny.

Thus the prince grew up and he grew to a strong, upright, courageous boy who was the pride of his father and, perhaps even more, of his teacher, the old huntsman. The time was approaching when he was to be admitted into the ranks of the free men of his country and when he was to join his father's warriors. But before this could happen he had to undergo a trial, and the priests were ready to prepare him for it. In the evening before the trial he was brought to the highest summit of the country and there, facing East, he was to spend the whole night all alone. He would hear whatever animals happened to prowl around him, but he was not to move. He might die from cold, he might be attacked by a mountain lion and torn to pieces, he might be overcome by fear, yet he was not to stir, but learn to penetrate with his eyes the darkness of the night in anticipation

of the coming of his great ancestor, the god of the sun. When finally the sun arose in all his glory he was not to turn at once his glance away from him, for the god wanted to hold converse with his descendant, wanted to look into his face and perhaps might even reveal some of his secrets to the young man. As it happened our prince bore himself with great bravery and for a long time afterwards people told each other the story of the prince's trial : for a few men had been chosen to watch him from afar during that night.

The next few years were very happy ones : the prince joined his father's warriors and was gladly accepted by them. He became particularly happy with another young man, just a few years older than himself, and the two were practically inseparable. The prince felt that his friend held some secret which made him different from the other young people, and this secret exercised a great attraction for him. A few years went by and then a war broke out. The people who lived in the plains by the great and sluggish rivers had become part of a huge empire which continuously tried to widen its boundries. The ensuing campaign culminated in a great battle in which the men of the empire were beaten decisively. The young prince was in no small degree responsible for the victory of his side and his fame became known all over his country. Yet he could find little satisfaction in it, for in the same battle he had lost his friend. He had not returned from the battle nor had his body been found among the slain. So he decided to search for his friend, he chose a handful of men and disguised they rode down into the plain with its great and sluggish rivers.

They were not discovered and reached the outskirts of a large town which was their first goal. They found a milling crowd assembled obviously waiting to see some spectacle. Suddenly, the noise grew louder and wilder, armed soldiers made a gangway through the crowds and a few men were led bound to their execution. Straight-away the prince realised they were his own folk and a moment later he saw that the first of them was his own friend. The people jeered, hissed and whistled, they heaped abuse on the prisoners and threw stones and foul objects at them. Though bleeding they walked upright towards their death.

The prince could not contain himself. He jumped forward through the crowd to free the prisoner, but before he could reach him the soldiers had overborne him and he and his few companions were led in chains into the town. They were taken to a prison, his men were put into one room, but he himself was thrown into a small cell. It was damp and dark, and so small that he could neither lie nor even sit in it. He was wounded, bruised and tired ; he was very thirsty, he had suffered defeat, insult and utter failure. He leant against one wall of the cell and tried to take hold of the situation. But he could not do so, for one impression stood so clearly and indelibly in his mind and puzzled him. It was the moment in which his friend had recognised him, had looked full into his face and said : "Do not fear for me. I am going to join Him, Whom you will see in the flesh".

These few words which he remembered so well completely persuaded the prince of their truth. Calmness returned. But the puzzle remained. What did these words mean? The hours went by. He could think of nothing else, until again exhaustion came over him. He tried to fight it, to keep awake, to find the meaning in the words of his friend. Yet sleep overtook him and in his sleep he had a shattering dream : He saw himself kneeling, he who had never bent his knee. The place in which he found himself in his dream was not so very different from the cell in which he actually was, but it was filled with an unbelievable light. At first he could not see in front of what he was kneeling. He strained his eyes, he tried to penetrate the light which almost blinded him, and he saw – and this was the greatest shock – he saw himself kneeling before a babe on the lap of his mother.

His dream and his sleep had lasted a moment only. As he dreamed his body slumped forward and he fell, head first, against the wall opposite and against the door. He awoke startled and found that the weight of his body had forced open the door which apparently had not been bolted properly. Outside it was night and all was quiet. He groped his way through the corridor, opened the door of the prison where his companions were sleeping and made ready to escape. They met with success. Before dawn they had found a

forest outside the town and there they hid.

There the prince made up his mind that he must find the child which his dream had shown him. Was it perhaps connected also with the last words of his friend? He did not know where to go, he did not even know what exactly he looked for. But his experiences of the previous day and night had given him the conviction that he would not fail. He wandered around a long time and learned much. One day he came to a lonely valley. A small brook watered its green meadows. A few tents had been erected and in front of one of them stood an old man of regal bearing. He advanced to greet the prince and said : "Be welcome. I have expected your coming".

R. L.

* * *

Ample Provision

Class One were acting a fairy story. The scene involved the prince having to obtain his father's permission to go away on a long journey. Only after repeated requests did the king reluctantly give it. The boy who was playing the part of the king, obviously enjoyed his part, and really didn't like having to conclude the scene. So when he did give his permission, he said, "All right, you can go then ;— but don't forget to take some sandwiches with you".

Examinations Examined III

Examinations for University Entrance

H. Gebert

RECENTLY the entrance conditions for the Universities have again been in the news. In July, 1955 the committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom published a report on this subject, compiled by one of its sub-committees, on which headmasters and headmistresses of leading grammar and public schools, together with representatives from the Universities, had been considering the problems involved. The fact that nineteen eminent educationalists were prepared to spend two years discussing the problems is a measure of the importance of the subject, and the fact that the committee could not reach agreement on some of the major points of policy shows the difficulties involved. No satisfactory solution can I think be reached without a fundamental revaluation of the tasks of school and university. If a mere readjustment of present requirements based on the present division of labour in the educational field could solve the problem, surely a committee of the eminence and competence of the one set up would have found the solution.

What is the present position? There are now two fundamentally different sets of minimum entrance requirements. The first applies to all universities except Oxford and Cambridge. Essentially four, five or in some cases six passes in the General Certificate of Education examinations are required, of which at last two must be at the advanced level and the rest at the ordinary level. If only four passes are required there are usually additional conditions, such as that three subjects, of which two are at the advanced level, must be obtained at one sitting or that three subjects must be at the advanced level. Most universities specify the type of subject which must be included, such as English, a foreign language and a science subject. The University of London has now dropped such requirements and Hull only specifies English. It might be added for those readers who are familiar with the old School and Higher Certificates, that an ordinary level pass in the G.C.E. corresponds roughly to a credit in the old School Certificate and an advanced level pass in the G.C.E. corresponds to a pass at the main subject level of the old Higher Certificate.

Oxford and Cambridge require no passes at the advanced level for their university entrance. Five ordinary level passes are sufficient provided that they include certain subjects of which a classical language is one.

These minimum requirements are however really only minimum, and a pupil who has only just attained them will find it very difficult to enter most universities. This is particularly so in the case of

Oxford and Cambridge, where the Colleges control the admission of students. A few Colleges admit on interview only, but they will in general require at least two advanced level passes in the G.C.E. Most Colleges admit those who pass College entrance or scholarship examinations which take place at various times in the year. The former are usually stated to be at the advanced level standard of the G.C.E., but in my experience are rather more difficult in mathematics and physics. The scholarship examinations are of such a standard that some of the successful candidates can proceed directly to the second year courses in the university.

In other universities there are also additional requirements which vary from university to university and from faculty to faculty. Not only will a prospective university candidate usually have to possess at least three advanced level passes but he will also have to choose the advanced level subjects carefully according to the university and the course which he intends to enter.

In fact it is at present difficult to enter a University without the equivalent of the old Higher Certificate. Before the war students had the choice of taking either an intermediate examination at the university at the end of their first year there or the Higher Certificate at school, which exempted them from taking the intermediate examination. Nowadays this first university examination has finally been pushed down into the schools and the post-intermediate degree course have usually been extended from two to three years. Prospective candidates for Oxford and Cambridge have to spend two years reaching the advanced level standard in their subjects and have then to stay for an additional year in which they take college entrance or scholarship examinations. The last two or three years at school are therefore mainly occupied by university work and boys and girls must decide at the age of sixteen at the latest what university courses they want to take. It is of course very difficult to pursue general education side by side with such a course and this fact was the main concern of all the teacher members and of some of the university members of the committee mentioned at the beginning of this article. Universities apparently find that the students they select according to the present procedure are not only often lacking in general education but also in fundamental attainments such as the command of their mother tongue.

It is also doubtful whether many children are at the age of sixteen or younger really in a position to make a wise choice of their future university careers. The insufficient number of science graduates may be partly due to forcing pupils to make such an early choice. In science and mathematics the really interesting modern developments cannot usually be taught to youngsters of fifteen because they are not mature enough. Many a boy or girl who is not particularly inspired by elementary physics as usually taught or who has not at fifteen developed any skill in mathematics, might become interested in these subjects later, if they were given a chance to pursue them

further under an imaginative teacher.

It need hardly be mentioned that the present system with its wide range of differing requirements leads to considerable administrative difficulties in the schools. The claims of the various entrance conditions have always to compete with those of a balanced curriculum and they often make small, uneconomic specialist classes a necessity. It is not surprising therefore that many grammar schools, for their A-streams at least, are organised to meet the demands of the Oxford and Cambridge scholarship requirements only.

From the pedagogical point of view the present system has many disadvantages therefore. To arrive at improvements, which will be satisfactory all round, one must not ignore the legitimate demands of the universities. Especially in the sciences, where the body of knowledge is continuously growing, it is becoming more and more difficult to fit all that should be taught to a degree student into the traditional three year university course. As has already been mentioned the remedy has been sought in pushing the intermediate year into the schools and in extending the degree course proper to occupy all the usual three years. On the other hand, the universities want undergraduates who have a wide general educational background and who are well trained in the fundamentals such as writing good English, elementary mathematics and reading and speaking at least one foreign language. On their own testimony universities do not find a sufficient number of such undergraduates by the present system of selection. The reasons for this seem fairly obvious. Some students will have made the wrong choice at 15 or 16. Many others, in my experience the majority, will not have been mature enough for the work in the Sixth Forms and the teachers will, therefore, have had no option but to train them for passing examinations when the efforts really to educate have not produced the necessary concrete results and the time to the examination is running short. After all, many a pupil can be shown how to collect the 40 marks out of 100, which are necessary for a pass, without really having mastered the subject. Although the present system, therefore, solves one of the problems of the universities at least temporarily, it does not solve the most fundamental problem, namely that of producing undergraduates who can really make the best of what the universities have to offer.

The failure of the present system is, I believe, due to the disregard of what, I think, is a fundamental truth. Specialisation should only take place after the pupils have been introduced to as wide as possible part of our cultural heritage, so that they are at least beginning to see the situation of modern man spiritually and economically in its historical setting. Most of our adolescents are not mature enough to get any sort of perspective in this realm until they are in the last two years of a grammar school. If specialisation is started before about 18, it takes place in a vacuum and there is no system of reference to which the specialised studies can be related. The result is people with blinkers, prejudiced by their own particular speciality ;

in fact, no educated people but at best well trained technicians.

If this is true the school would have fundamentally two tasks ; it would have to impart the cultural background against which specialisation can take place at the university, and it would have to train the fundamental skills mentioned above. While there could be no specialisation in the former task, there might, of course, be some differentiation in the latter. Some pupils might take more foreign languages while others may take their mathematics further, but no pupil who wants to go to a university should be allowed entirely to drop either.

The universities would then, of course, have to be prepared to take back the first university year into their own orbit. This might, of course, at first lead to staffing difficulties and to crowded laboratories, and it would certainly require the extension of the traditional university course to four years. However, if this is the right way to educate the new generation, no administrative difficulties must be allowed for ever to be in the way.

What would the entrance examination to universities be like under such a system? They would be designed primarily to test the fundamental skills and they would therefore be much more uniform. Instead of the one hour English essay on some trivial subject which is now the rule, a number of essays could be set with enough time given for writing them.

These essays would certainly test the command of English and the capacity of the candidate to marshal and present his material. The subjects would differ for candidates for the different faculties and thereby knowledge in these subjects would be tested. Parallel with this, there would be tests in mathematics and in foreign and classical languages which would be designed to test whether the candidate can read and, in the case of modern languages, speak the language.

Such an examination would give the schools the freedom they need to be truly places of education and not merely of instruction and they might then turn out better undergraduates.

I am well aware that these suggestions raise many problems, educational as well as administrative ones and the outline of examination procedure is merely meant to indicate the lines along which reforms might go. The actual examination would have to be evolved slowly and by stages. What seems to me to be fundamental, however, is the change in the objectives which schools are pursuing. Most adolescents seem to need more time and a wider circle of experience to bring their full powers to maturity than they are given at present.

* * *

A teacher was having difficulty with a little boy who just would not join in the poems and verses the others were saying together. After many attempts on the part of the teacher, one of the other children volunteered the advice: "I shouldn't bother; I expect he's saying it in his heart".

Science in the Upper School

Hans Gebert

IN the first article in this series, which appeared in the Midsummer number of *Child and Man*, Dr. Heitler characterised the present position of science most aptly. Since then the meeting of the British Association in Sheffield has shown that some of the problems mentioned by Dr. Heitler are very widely recognised in the scientific world. The demand was there voiced for a science of the sciences which would provide an overall picture of the present position in science, would guide research in established specialist spheres from a wider viewpoint and would indicate new directions of inquiry. This shews that the need is widely felt to transcend the high degree of specialisation customary in science at present.

It seems therefore that schools will do best for all their pupils, including the future scientists, if they insist on a wide scientific education without undue specialisation. Moreover, the science teaching will not have fulfilled its task if it does not acquaint the children, at least in rough outline, with the present position in science and with the historical process which led to it. It is just historical studies which will bring it home to the children that our present science is a stage on the path of human development. They will learn about the modern atomic theories in physics and chemistry and about the genetics theories in biology, but they will appreciate how they developed out of quite different conceptions of the world held by peoples who apprehended nature with different faculties of the mind, and they will therefore expect that the modern theories, too, will give way to new ones as our consciousness expands. Such a course requires a certain maturity in the pupils and cannot be given to boys and girls below the ages of 17 and 18. A course of general science up to 15 or 16 followed by specialisation in two or three directions, as practised in some schools, can therefore not be adequate. Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Geography are therefore taught in every one of the upper classes of a Rudolf Steiner school. The biology syllabus starts with human anatomy in Class IX, goes on to physiology and some anthropology in Class X and continues with botany and zoology in Classes XI and XII. Geography includes a good deal of geology and mineralogy.

One of the aims of the upper school is to lead the pupils to the point where they can take a positive part in present day social life. They must therefore not only have some idea of current scientific thought and possible future developments, but they must also be led to an understanding of the vast technological and industrial applications of scientific knowledge. This need is always borne in mind in the physics and chemistry lessons. The Class XI physics syllabus centres, for instance, around the various heat engines and around the telegraph and telephone, while a large part of the physics curriculum

of Class XI is concerned with such modern achievements as wireless and X-rays.

Rudolf Steiner schools are, however, by no means unique in aiming at such a wide syllabus; much that has been said above would probably be read with approval by many a modern educationalist. Some of the things which will have to be said about the method and content of the science teaching may not receive the same approbation and therefore may need some more justification.

I shall follow Mr. Edward's excellent example in his article on *Science in the Lower School*, which appeared in the last issue of this journal, and try to describe a piece of work which could form part of the physics main lesson in Class XI. It will afterwards be easier to give the reasons for some of the peculiarities of the treatment of the subject. It will then also become apparent that another teacher might approach the same subject from a different point of view and yet do it in the same spirit.

Among other things, one wants to convey a certain understanding of electricity to the children at that age which goes further than the elementary facts which they must have learned in Class IX to understand the telegraph. One might start by taking a number of test tubes and by filling three of them with a solution of a silver salt, three with a solution of copper salt, three with a solution of a tin salt and another three with a solution of zinc salt. One now takes four strips each of copper, zinc and tin and puts one each into a silver salt solution, one each in a copper salt solution and so on. If the school is wealthy enough to have some pure silver available, obviously the experiment should logically be extended to include one solution each with a piece of silver in it. Leaving these test tubes overnight, a deposit of silver will be found in all the test tubes which contained silver solution and the other metals will have to some extent dissolved away. The silver solution in which the copper strip had been will have turned blue, showing that it has become a solution of a copper salt. Similarly, the zinc will have driven out the tin and copper from their solutions and have replaced them. The tin will have driven out the copper and copper will only have reacted in the silver solution. We shall then tell the pupils that all the metals can be arranged in a series so that each one tends to drive out all the metals following it in the series from the solutions of their salts.

Next, we can remind the class that they learned in Class IX how the simplest electric cell works. They will remember that they put a zinc plate and a copper plate into a solution of sulphuric acid. The zinc dissolved and the copper did not and when the two plates were connected by a metal wire outside the solution, an electric current flowed in the wire. The zinc plate became charged with negative electricity and the copper with positive electricity through the chemical action of the sulphuric acid. In the next experiment we would show the class that a similar effect, only weaker, can be obtained by putting zinc and copper plates into a solution of a copper salt

in which the zinc dissolves driving out the copper. Again the zinc becomes negatively charged and the copper positively charged. Finally we could tell the pupils that a cell might be made up of two copper plates one surrounded by a weaker solution of a copper salt than the other. There would now be a slight tendency of the copper to dissolve into the weaker solution and to come out of the stronger solution and the plate in the weaker solution would again become charged and vice versa.

Thus it becomes apparent that the production of electricity in cells depends on the dissolving or the depositing tendencies of metals in solution. The negative electricity always appears where there is the stronger dissolving action.

Now we might ask what happens if we put charged metal plates into a solution of a metal salt. So as not to mask the effect, the plates should be made of a metal which does not react with the solution of its own accord; platinum is best for this purpose. If one platinum plate each is connected to the positive and negative poles of a battery and the plates are then immersed in a solution of, let us say, a copper salt, copper will be deposited on the negative plate. If this experiment is allowed to run for a while and the plates are then reversed so that the copper coated plate is made positive and the uncoated plate is made negative, the copper on the coated plate will dissolve and the previously uncoated plate will be coated.

The negative electricity which in the cell is produced by a dissolving action, therefore causes deposition, and vice versa for the positive electricity. Once that has been realised one can certainly not yet say what electricity is, but one can get an idea how it behaves and acts in one realm of nature. It can establish balance because it opposes the activity which calls it into play. If we have a simple zinc - copper - sulphuric acid cell in which the ingredients are absolutely pure, the zinc will not start dissolving to any extent until the cell gives an electric current, until the two plates are connected an electric conductor. This can now easily be explained from the phenomena without recourse to any theory. One can picture the chemical activity producing electricity which opposes the chemical action and therefore the two keep each other in balance. An electrical conductor tends to remove the electric charges from the plates and therefore upsets the balance so that the chemical forces have now a chance to act.

From this starting point one can make connections with other realms of nature and one can for instance draw attention to the difference between the chemical action taking place between metals, acids, bases and salts in the mineral world and the chemical activity in digestion. If electricity were allowed to play the same part in the latter as it does in the former, digestion would stop, with fatal results to the organism.

I am well aware that the above phenomena can also be explained by the ionic theories of modern science. There are further develop-

ments of the atomic theory assuming that atoms consist of electrically charged particles. In effect these theories try to explain all chemical action in terms of electricity. Indeed, in the historical treatment of the subject, which will go side by side with the lessons described above, the children will be introduced to these ideas too.

Why then bother to give the above rather complicated treatment? Why not teach straight away the explanations current at present? What indeed is your justification in suggesting other possibilities than those accepted now-a-days by the overwhelming majority of scientists? Those are questions which scientific readers are almost bound to ask.

One justification I think is this. As long as one keeps to the phenomena one remains free to form one's own opinions, to make one's own deductions. Anyone who has had the above presented to him might, for instance, ask the question whether it is possible to explain electricity in terms of chemistry just as it is possible to explain chemistry in terms of electricity. This naturally leads to further quite fundamental questions of a philosophical nature. If one confines oneself to teaching accepted theories more or less dogmatically, the pupil is robbed of his freedom and will find it very difficult to break new ground later on. It is good that the boys and girls should enter life with questions rather than with ready made answers. Such answers tend to dull the interest, and wonder which should be aroused by the manifold and often very complicated connections in nature and in near relationship to her: Interest and wonder are the most potent driving forces in the search for knowledge. I am convinced that the methods illustrated by this single example will not only produce better educated people but also better scientists, much more open to new possibilities and developments than the strictly academic courses followed in many schools.

Such academic courses leading to ordinary or advanced level examinations in the G.C.E. are essentially the first steps in the training of a professional scientist. At Rudolf Steiner schools we are concerned to develop faculties in the pupils and to give them the background knowledge on which future professional training can be based and not that training itself. What are these faculties? I think Dr. Heitler is right when he indicates that it might be necessary to bring into conscious use some of the capacities of the human soul which are so far subconscious or semi-conscious. So far the feelings of man, the verdicts of the heart, have been excluded as scientific evidence as being unreliable and subjective. On first sight this is certainly true, but the question is really whether they can be trained to become reliable just as man had to train himself in the process of evolution to detach his own wishes and predilections sufficiently from his sense impressions to make them reliable evidence. The more contemplative approach to nature, for which examples have been given in this and the previous article, is also designed to be a first step in this direction. It may be expected that a further

evolution in this direction will also make our scientific knowledge again into a guide for moral action. This is essential if science is to be a positive factor in social life and it must certainly be the main task of any school to help young people to establish in their further development a responsible, moral attitude to their fellow men and to their natural surroundings.

* * *

Teachers Training Course at Michael Hall

Under the auspices of the Rudolf Steiner Schools Fellowship.

The next Teachers' Course is planned to open in the Autumn of 1957. It will again be a one-year course with the possibility of extension to a second year for specialised training. Mr. L. F. Edmunds who is in charge of the Course will be returning from America at the beginning of April, 1957 and will then be glad to interview prospective students. Letters will be forwarded to him. For further information please write to:—

**The Secretary,
Teachers' Training Course,
Michael Hall, Forest Row, Sussex.**

* * *

Wynstones School Hostel

After twelve years of devoted work Mr. and Mrs. Lewers have decided to relinquish their task of directing and caring for the hostel with its 50 to 60 children. We should be very glad to hear of anyone, preferably husband and wife, who would be interested to carry on this work in conjunction with Miss Wharton, who is responsible, amongst other things, for the sick nursing.

Communications should be addressed to the Chairman of the College of Teachers, Wynstones School, Whaddon, Gloucester.

Notes and Comments

By Our Special Correspondent

School Buildings

THE Rudolf Steiner Educational Movement is still young enough to be faced with the ever recurring problem of accommodation and the erection of new buildings. In Germany the enormous expansion of the educational movement since the war has faced those responsible for the general direction and co-ordination of the work with great problems. Not least among these is the provision of adequate classrooms and a well designed school block. The surroundings in which children spend their schooldays matter enormously and can create harmony or discord in the developing individuality. Recently there has been a meeting of those architects in Germany who are seeking to create a new style of architecture in accordance with the impulse of the Goetheanum at Dornach (Switzerland). Their discussion on this occasion was confined to the building of schools.

Although much was indecisive, one fact emerged. It was this. However the final layout of school buildings might be conceived, there must be a central hall or foyer, through which *all* children pass on their way to their classrooms, and this central place should be as artistically and harmoniously conceived as possible, with perhaps an arresting work of art placed there. As the children enter the main doors of the building, they should feel a change in atmosphere, a heightening of their awareness — they should feel that they are being received by their school.

Parents-Teachers Associations

Most schools nowadays have formed Parents-Teachers Associations and most schools no doubt have appreciated the strength and support that such organisations can bring to a school. But let it not be denied that there are difficulties also. Parents have quite naturally a large number of questions, problems and anxieties even, some of which can fruitfully be voiced at meetings of the association, but others, and these are in the majority, are best handled in a more intimate discussion with individual teachers. The collection and sorting out of these questions present a major task to the committee and call upon the exercise of a nice discrimination.

Another difficulty lies in the asking of questions and voicing of opinions arising out of a talk by a teacher or the presentation of future policy at a meeting. One has often come away with the feeling that some minor aspect has been given undue prominence, while a host of important queries has been left unvoiced and unanswered. What has in fact taken place does not properly reflect what is actually concerning the majority of parents.

Perhaps these difficulties can be met partly by an alert and perspicacious chairman and partly by a greater measure of courage on the

part of parents, whose natural modesty often prevents their putting their questions.

The Rudolf Steiner School in Paris

L'Ecole Rudolf Steiner de Paris has been in existence for one year. This is a matter of no small importance in a country where the deplorable effects of a fierce intellectual "instruction" are now obvious to specialist and parent alike. Everywhere one meets pale, slight, nervous young children whose inner activity is drained by hours of arid homework; in class what counts is the place attained at the end of the week, or in the examinations; neurosis in adolescence is taken as a matter of course, and by the time the teenagers sit for the dreaded "baccalaureat" or entrance examination to the university (and unfortunately to many a job today) they have lost much "joie de vivre" and a sour cynical attitude has become deeply ingrained, perhaps for life.

This is rapidly becoming common knowledge and daily the press exposes the harmful effects of the rigid "Instruction Publique" but the remedy is still sought mainly in improved outer conditions rather than in a thorough review of the syllabus. The French long to alter their educational system but seem to be at a loss as to where to turn for inspiration. Neither the traditional methods of intellectual cramming nor the highly psycho-analytic approach to child development are able to ensure the healthy development of the child so that as an adult he can take his place in society.

When the Mr. Querido, of Michael Hall, spoke at the Musée Pédagogique in Paris on the methods applied in a Rudolf Steiner School, he was most heartened to find that the Chief Inspector of Education for Paris (who chaired the meeting) concluded by saying "Your methods may well revolutionise our system of education; we certainly need a change". The lecture was delivered publically to more than two hundred people on a Sunday afternoon! This shows that the man in the street begins to take Education, and especially its ill effects, seriously.

In this setting the Ecole Rudolf Steiner opened its doors in Paris in the autumn of 1955. To start such a venture not knowing whether the teachers could be paid at the end of the month, or where the money would come from to meet the mortgage on the house, showed a considerable act of faith. After only one year grateful friends and parents who have witnessed the change in their children, have come forward with sufficient funds to enable the purchase of larger premises in the autumn of 1957. The present building can hardly accommodate the first five classes totalling seventy-five children. Trained teachers, at great personal sacrifice, have joined the young, vigorous staff, eager that this Rudolf Steiner School - the first in France - may play its part in healing and guiding the younger generation. For it is on the young that the threatened future will depend.

In a Nutshell . . .

(This is the third article in a series, the purpose of which was outlined in the Midsummer number of Child and Man. ED.)

OF course, I cannot tell you in a nutshell in which way Rudolf Steiner's way of educating children differs from all other forms of education, past and present, but like the other two people whom you asked the same question before me I shall attempt an answer. I shall pick out one particular point which to my way of thinking is fundamental to our approach to the child, but want you to understand that this is only one point among many. If, however, you care to connect what I want to say to what you know already from Mr. Howard you will, I am sure, know something about the essence of a Rudolf Steiner school.

Have you ever watched a child at play? I am sure you noticed its intense concentration, eagerness, seriousness of purpose. You also noticed how the *whole* child was engaged, his mobile organisation, his imagination, head, heart and hand. His movements were smooth purposeful, his blood flowed freely through the body, and at the end of his playing there was a sense of satisfaction and achievement. To put it in a nutshell: we endeavour in school to call on the same forces which are engaged in the child at play.

If we succeed in doing this we shall have at school no pale school-boys and girls with awkward movements and drawn faces who will develop into bored grown-ups with no sense of direction and little incentive to live. Instead we shall take pride in the healthy appearance of our children, even in mid-term, their joyous, lively faces, and we shall expect them to grow up into people with a zest for life, with initiative and imagination, ready to take responsibility, able to enjoy themselves, but considerate of other people.

"Well", you are likely to say, "I seem to have heard all this before. Play at school, self-expression, do-what-you-like. And when is the child to learn to work? When will he realise the serious side of life? When will he learn to do things he does not like?" Let me make my meaning clearer. I never suggested that we play at school, but rather that we use the same forces which the child uses at play. Of course, we could continue playing at school, and thus we might achieve for example some very fine specimens of what today is called Children's Art. But we should find, I am afraid, that when puberty approaches those play-forces are getting used up and the child at 14, 15 is disappointed, uncreative, prematurely spent as it were.

No, with the help of the intimate and penetrating insight into human nature which is so rich a gift of Rudolf Steiner's to any teacher, we learn to use, metamorphose and direct into proper channels the creative forces of the child, and the teacher's art consists in taking cognisance of the nature and the needs of each succeeding age of

childhood and youth, and of the virtues and requirements of each individual child. This is a delicate activity which we cannot discuss, unless there is some classroom experience or plenty of time to go into detail. But there are two points which I still should like to make as they seem essential to my argument.

One important characteristic of the child at play is his complete immersion into what he is doing. While he plays his every-day world and all its relations is left behind and completely forgotten, and instead he is steeped in his world of make-believe. You will have noticed that the adult has the same experience in the presence of a great work of art. The same total immersion ought to be achieved by the successful teacher. Suppose we want to teach a class of thirteen-year-old children something about Africa. Then the classroom must, as if by magic, cease to be the well-known room and assume the very atmosphere of Africa.

Now, if you remember what Miss Woolls told you, you will realise that we do not attempt to bring off this miracle of transformation by means of a huge apparatus. No African trophies decorate the wall, no lantern slides show the most instructive and impressive views. Psychologically, this would be completely wrong. The pupil would straightaway become a spectator, put a distance between himself and the seen object, remain outside it. The study of such objects can legitimately be undertaken only after the 'miracle of transformation' has been achieved, after the pupil has tasted of the essence of Africa. This can be reached only through the magic of the living word which the teacher wields in intimate communication with his class.

You see here the tremendous importance of the class teacher in a Rudolf Steiner school. He is expected everyday to go to his class with all the detailed knowledge necessary for his job - no textbook, no work of reference at his disposal in class - and then transform his knowledge into an integrated whole which is to become a rich and real experience of his class. Just because this is almost impossible to achieve day by day, only teachers with a sense of vocation and great enthusiasm will be ready to undertake it.

My other point concerns the question of work. All too often the attitude towards it is something like this: Well, life is disagreeable enough. You cannot pick and choose what you like. The sooner a boy gets used to this idea and understands that certain jobs just have to be done, the better for him. Again, this is the attitude of the outsider. Compare with it the child at play. Anything, when undertaken in the spirit of playing, and parenthetically in the spirit of art, is joyful. Not because the work is not taken seriously. Rather, because the child at play intuitively realises the importance of his activity, and indeed in his phantasy enhances it; further, because practically any activity is enjoyable as an activity in itself, a bodily movement well controlled, and any activity well done is a source of pleasure and pride. I think, that when you have

looked at the exercise books of our children, at their drawings, paintings and craftwork you will agree with me that in this matter we can claim a certain measure of success. Only children who know how to concentrate and take pride in a job well done can produce such work. They learn in their daily practice at school that any job can be enjoyable, if only it is done with devotion. And there are few things of which we stand more in need to-day than people who, once more, take pride in their work.

These are a few aspects, but only a few, of our endeavour to 'play' at school. This in itself is, however, only one aspect, though an essential one, of the reality of a Rudolf Steiner school.

R. L.

* * *

Out of the mouths of babes

At the end of one of the Intelligence Tests commonly used in schools nowadays is a blank page with the following instructions at the top: Now that you have finished the tests (not before), if you have not yet been told to stop, write a short account of what you think of this examination.

One child wrote:

I think that the first questions are all right but the last ones take such a long time to work out that your time is soon up. I think these exams spoil your nature and make you bad-tempered; they also spoil people's good character. When I came to school this morning I felt fresh and ready for a good day's work, but now I feel like ripping this paper up and going home.

The Adolescent's Approach to Literature I

(This is the first of three articles. ED.)

H. L. Hetherington

The young child delights in poetry and rhythmical language, because here is something that can be recited with vigour and bravado, accompanied by rhythmical gesture and sometimes by stepping across the classroom floor; something also which calls forth an inward music stirring in the blood by the mysterious repetition of sounds in rhyme and alliteration. This lilt of the metre and musical recurrence of the rhyme hold something still of an older magic for the little child; he is stirred and held by a force, which spoke compellingly to earlier peoples in the mysterious formulae of the priestly incantation, in the steady ebb and flow of the bardic epic metres. Whether the poem can be understood or not is only of secondary importance: a nonsense rhyme or jingle, provided the rhythm and sounds are compelling, is completely satisfying.

Fee, fo, fi, fum,
I smell the blood of an Englishman

is probably very ancient, but is related surely to the delicate refrain of an Elizabethan folk lyric:

The bailey beareth the bell away,
The lily, the lily, the rose I lay

in that in both cases the effect depends upon *sounds*, and the sense is only secondary.

The adolescent's experience of poetry is different. No longer can language speak so directly and compellingly, as it does to the little child. The old *enchantment* (here the word is used exactly) has lost its power and a new relationship has taken its place. This new relationship to language has been necessitated by the fact that in adolescence the world of feeling becomes increasingly independent of outer events; this world begins to assume a separate, private existence, much more personal and subjective than ever it was before. The discovery of this separate world can be a mixed blessing for the adolescent. On the one hand it can be a support to his sense of individuality, a new power and solace, a promise of new adventure in experience, on the other hand it can also be a cause of loneliness and frustration and create a gulf between the growing individuality and his surroundings. In boys especially a new shyness can develop, which may even become a kind of furtive secrecy, which is hard for the adult to understand or penetrate.

It is this new separation of outer and inner experience which is one of the hallmarks of adolescence. It is of vital importance that this development is properly met in the classroom and that the

subjects taught can be presented in a way that will help. At this time in a Rudolf Steiner school the subjects are designed to appeal to this growing division of experience, to help to establish it healthily and to lay the foundations upon which a true bridge between the inner and outer worlds can be built. The subjects taught in the upper school can be divided broadly into three groups. *History* portrays the development of the spirit of man through the ages, and how this spirit has impressed itself on the world, *science* presents and describes the world which surrounds man, and *literature* since the renaissance expresses in language the conversation between the inner and outer worlds, between the spirit of man and his surroundings, and communicates that conversation to others.

It is clear from what has been said that a deeper understanding of literature is possible only in adolescence; before that a naive delight in language for its own sake and a steady training in the forms of thought presented by language are of course possible and indeed vital, but since the essence of literature in our age is an expression of the relationship between two worlds, only after adolescence can this essential nature be understood. The first discovery of this key to the world of literature can be a very precious thing to the adolescent; it can also be a very private matter, the reading of poetry is often kept secret and is not lightly discussed with others. Out of this moment, if it can be handled with tact and understanding by the adult and above all by the teacher of literature, can grow a love for literature that will never die.

It is important, then, to understand the nature and quality of the change in approach to literature which takes place in adolescence. If it can be properly met in the classroom, if the unspoken question is sensed and answered, then the inheritance of literature is bequeathed worthily. A description of the two main lessons dealing with language and literature given in Class 10 to children, who celebrate their sixteenth birthday during the year, will show to some extent how this change is understood and catered for in a Rudolf Steiner school. It should be emphasized at this point, however, that the utmost freedom is given within the framework of the curriculum as to how a particular main lesson is carried out. It is the teacher's task to discover what is the essential experience which has to be brought to the child at this particular age, and once this is understood, the way of bringing this experience is left entirely to the teacher concerned. How the matter is tackled depends upon the personality, enthusiasms and abilities of the teacher as well as the composition of the class in question; no rigid direction is either possible or desirable.

The curriculum allows for two main lessons in Class 10 dealing with language and literature. One forms part of the series of regular literature lessons in the Upper School, which deal mainly with the literature of the mother tongue, although not necessarily exclusively, especially later. The other lesson forms part of the series of aesthetics

lessons in the Upper School. This second series deserves an article in itself, here it must suffice to say that in Class 9 the aesthetics lesson has its main emphasis on painting and sculpture, in Class 10 the emphasis is laid more especially on language and literature, in Class 11 music is dealt with primarily and in Class 12, architecture. The four aesthetics main lessons are designed as a whole and should, ideally, be taken by the same person, but this has rarely been possible.

It is our task, however, to show the relationship between the work done in the literature and aesthetics lessons of Class 10, and how these lessons meet the delicate and subtle moment of the adolescent's awakening to literature, rather than to deal with the aesthetics lessons on their own. The theme of the literature lesson in Class 10 could well be entitled: "The Birth of Literature out of Mythology". It is a matter of increasing joy to the writer to realise how well placed these lessons are. This particular lesson could not be given before Class 10, nor could it be given any later. For in Class 10 the young people themselves have made the step out of mythology firmly into the world of literature, in Class 9 that step by and large had not been completed, (one has to speak generally, of course, in dealing with a class of 30—40 children) or not sufficiently established to have allowed of a conscious contemplation and understanding of it.

In Class 10 the children see how in ancient literature the inner and the outer worlds were not experienced as separate at all, in Homer one observes the marvellous identity of the two: the world of the senses is so suffused with divinity and so irradiated with the glory of the creative gods, that the latter can descend from Olympus and walk the earth quite naturally. What is more, they do not appear with all the trappings of their supernal nature, but rather as glorious men and women. A pedestrian understanding indeed might complain that the gods were too like men: it would be truer to say that the Greeks sensed divinity so intensely in the human form, that it was natural enough to imagine the gods as humans, indeed impossible to conceive of them in any other way.

This identity of the two worlds is most obvious in the Greek epic, nowhere else do we find the exact balance so beautifully expressed. In medieval literature the distinction is still not made, we are never sure in reading a story from the life of a saint or in following an incident in an Arthurian romance whether the author is describing an outer or an inner experience. Only with the renaissance is the distinction made clearly and regularly. In a later article this will be described in greater detail, here we can only indicate one of the main themes of the lesson. For the adolescent the importance of the study lies in the fact that just as he himself experiences the emergence of his own independent inner life, he can trace this development also in the history of literature. In subsequent literature lessons in Classes 11 and 12 he will be able to observe how the glory of literature since the renaissance arises from the fact that the division is recognised and then bridged.

In a passage from a fragment intended to form part of *The Recluse*, a poem Wordsworth unhappily never finished, the poet expresses most beautifully his faith in the absolute correspondence of the inner and outer worlds and in so doing speaks for all literature of our age:

and, by words

Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
 Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
 Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
 To noble raptures; while my voice proclaims
 How exquisitely the individual Mind
 (And the progressive powers perhaps no less
 Of the whole species) to the external World
 Is fitted:—and how exquisitely, too,
 Theme this but little heard of among Men,
 The external world is fitted to the Mind
 And the creation (by no lower name
 Can it be called) which they with blended might
 Accomplish:—this is our high argument.

The aesthetics lesson in Class 10 deals with language as an art. It is the necessary corollary to the literature lesson of the year. For in the literature lesson the children learn to understand the history which underlies the experiences which they have undergone during the previous year or two: experiences which led to the emergence of an independent inner life side by side with the growing power of an objective investigation of a material world. In the aesthetics-lesson of the year they learn to appreciate more consciously the powers inherent in language, powers which are capable of bridging the gulf between men who have become independent individuals, powers which are capable also of expressing with the greatest subtlety the experience of communion between self and the world, and proclaiming as Wordsworth proclaimed, that one can become the mirror image of the other. Again we do not intend in this article to describe the lesson in any detail, this will be reserved also for a later occasion, we only wish to indicate the general direction of the lesson and its place in the literary work of Class 10, the turning point in the development of the adolescent.

To sum up: the literature lesson presents the essential characteristics and the real achievements of the literature of our age, the aesthetics lesson considers the marvel of language itself and how this instrument, absolutely central to the activity of the spirit of man, has been and can be used in the service of those new achievements. These two studies are brought to the adolescent just when he has reached the stage of being able to assimilate them and form a sure basis to all the literature lessons to follow.

The two lessons referred to will be dealt with in greater detail, then, in two subsequent articles.

Books

THE LANGUAGE OF SHAPES; by M. Kline, B.Sc., and A. W. Crown, F.R.G.S.; E. J. Arnold and Son Ltd.; Books 1 and 2, 5/6d. each, Books 3 and 4, 7/6d. each.

These four text books arise out of an attempt by two Leeds teachers to answer the question which arises in the teaching of Geometry: What use is it? As a result they are throughout strongly directed to showing its practical application in everyday life; and they cover a field which extends from straightlines and curves to the principles and application of Trigonometry. The authors have spared no pains to make the text as simple and direct as possible, and to explain in the most straightforward and practical way the terms and processes employed. The diagrams are clear and well-drawn, and are interspersed with numerous illustrations which help to elaborate points of everyday application in modern techniques, and their origin in ancient times. The books are 'alive' with all sorts of imaginative ways in which fundamental geometrical principles may be put before the child; and any teacher of this subject in any school will not only find all the material he needs within the scope covered, but an inspiring source of fresh ideas and methods of presentation. The books are beautifully 'got up', and a real stroke of insight gives them and their subject that most appropriate title—The Language of Shapes.

LUCINDA AND THE PAINTED BELL; a story for children by Rosalie K. Fry; J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 9/6d.

'Lucinda and the Painted Bell' is a most delightful and charmingly illustrated little book. It tells of a child's visit to a 'fairyland' village in the mountains of Austria. Fantasy and reality interweave as she meets the old woodcarver and helps the family to save its pet calf. The book would make a delightful present for any little girl of 9 or 10.

GRIFF AND TOMMY; a story for children by John Griffiths; J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 10/6d.

A story of children in a mining village in South Wales. The characters and situations seem at first rather ordinary, but gradually a vivid picture emerges of the various members of the family, and of the day to day anxieties, joys and sorrows—even comedies. The activities of the children, which are not at all beyond the bounds of possibility, lead up to a most dramatic climax. A well-knit mixture of realism and adventure, it should prove interesting particularly to children who know nothing of the mining areas.

THE BOOKSHOP ON THE QUAY; a story for children by Patricia Lynch; J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd.; 11/6d.

Here is another of Patricia Lynch's fascinating stories of Irish life. The children are children as we know them, but the grown-ups have the warm heartedness, the unpredictability and the rich language which we associate with Ireland. A runaway from the country is taken into the family living at the bookshop, and we share all the excitement and thrill of his life in Dublin. The story is beautifully written. Children who love reading will appreciate it most, but there is action and incident enough to satisfy any child.

DAS RATSEL-ECHO; 66 neue Ratsel von Gerbert Grohmann; Verlag Freies Geistesleben.

Dr. Grohmann is well-known to teachers in Rudolf Steiner schools for his books on plants and animals, and the way in which the world of Nature can be presented to children at the appropriate time. This little book of rhyming riddles about plants and animals encourages a closer observation of the things of Nature, in order to identify them from the characterisations given—and thus solve the riddle.

SELMA PUBLICATIONS announce the appearance of another little book by Novalis: *Sacred Songs*. The English translation is by Eileen Hutchins, with the German text, and illustrated by the Camphill Press. Copies may be obtained from the Camphill Bookshop, Murtle House, Bieldside, Aberdeen.

* * *

Do they also Keep the Books?

In a bi-monthly magazine called "Junior Reviewers", published in the United States, children, even very young children, have an opportunity of giving their verdict on books that are intended for children of their age, subject to the written approval of their parents and teachers. The children are "paid" at the rate of 25 cents for an adequate review, 35 cents for a good review, and 50 cents for an excellent one.

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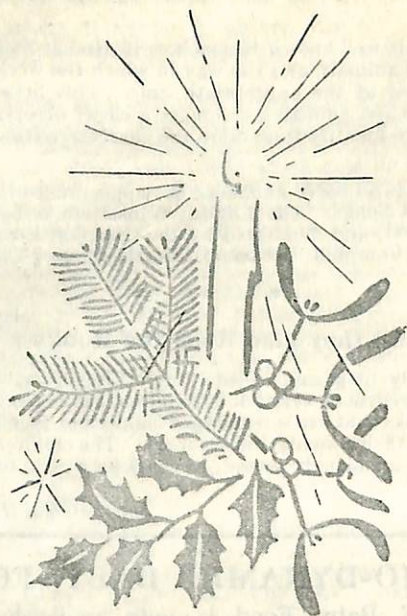
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