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Child and Man

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CHILD AND MAN

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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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Editor :

H. L. HETHERINGTON, B.A.

Michael Hall, Forest Row, Sussex.

Business Editor :

ALAN HOWARD

Michael House, Ilkeston, Derbys.

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Ideas Are Important

IF man does not think for himself, the devil will think for him. This is a hard saying, but its truth is borne out by experience. Our age is profuse in technical achievement, but desperately poor in ideas. Each new discovery leads to greater power over both the physical world and the inner world of the human psyche. But greater power does not of itself bring forth greater wisdom. We thus find ourselves swept along at an ever-increasing pace we know not whither, and our conceptions of life and human destiny are far more rudimentary and childish than they were in the middle ages.

Consequently we are faced with great decisions and do not take them, but allow events to decide for us. Who has made an adequate statement about artificial insemination, tranquillisers, subliminal advertising, the methods of the so-called "soul engineers," brainwashing and excessive watching of television especially by children? Who *can* speak adequately about these things without considerably further insight into the nature, origin and destiny of man, than is usual nowadays?

Two articles in this number of *Child and Man* touch on this question. One would be in despair, were it not possible to work powerfully in the sphere of education, so that young men and women can step into life, free themselves and watchful to maintain the ideal of freedom of the human spirit. This still exists in the west, but rests all too often on a merely emotional basis. What is lacking is a clearly formulated body of ideas that can convince, that reach beyond birth and death and take the wide realms of the spirit into account. We who work in the Rudolf Steiner Education believe that we possess these ideas and work in the light of them.

THE EDITOR.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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CHILD AND MAN

With the publication of the Michaelmas (1958) number of *CHILD AND MAN*, the magazine will cease to appear in its present form. An announcement will be made in the Summer number about the changes that are to take place, and information regarding unexpired subscriptions to the present series will be given.

Swedish Waldorf School

Art and Science in Balance

(Reprinted from the *Times Educational Supplement* of 13th December, 1957 by kind permission)

THE Kristoffer School in Stockholm, a co-educational day school, is the only one of its kind in Sweden run on Rudolf Steiner educational principles. It has markedly a character of its own. At present it is housed in a picturesque eighteenth-century building in the centre of Stockholm, originally built and used as a private school for boys. Plans now exist for constructing a modern building, as soon as funds become available.

Having had a hard struggle for its very existence in the early stages, the school has established a unique co-operation between parents, teachers and children. Not only do the parents take an intelligent and sympathetic interest in the work of the teachers, with whom they have constant useful meetings and consultations, but a tradition has grown up that certain parents with special qualifications undertake, on a voluntary basis, the whole administrative work of the school.

In the first instance parents arranged the lease of the building and made themselves personally responsible for adapting it for its purpose, doing a considerable part of the work with their own hands. And every year parents and teachers join forces for the yearly cleaning down and redecoration of the school. This harmonious working side by side of parents and teachers has, of course, the happiest influence on the children.

LONGING TO RETURN

It is interesting to hear what the children themselves have to say about their school. A little nine-year-old writes: "It is difficult to say why I love my school so much, for there are so many reasons. But I think it is most of all because everyone is so kind. And when I am ill I simply long to get back to it."

This is the more reasoned verdict of a 16-year-old-girl: "It is a wonderful experience to be at the Kristoffer School. . . . Thanks to the three weeks' continuous study of one subject the knowledge sinks in. Beginning English and German in the first form is an immense advantage. Most of all I appreciated having no homework for the first three years and that the teacher never forced us above our comprehension and never expected us to remember all he told us. As a matter of fact we remembered quite a lot because of the vivid way in which the knowledge was imparted."

The school is planned for a 12-year education with a 13th year added for those wishing to prepare for a university career. The fees for tuition are £45 for a school year of nine months. Earlier this year when the school for the first time applied for a Government grant, an official from the Board of Education was sent to inspect the school (this was of course outside the routine annual inspection).

After several days of detailed inspection he was so much impressed by the general efficiency of the teaching and the delightful spirit shown by both children and teaching staff, that in his report he advocated an exceptionally large yearly grant. But according to the latest information the school is not likely to be allowed more than about £1,500 a year.

The general ideas of Rudolf Steiner education are too well known to need dwelling on. In view of the fact that most Swedes of both sexes have from early years exceptional skill of hand, the manual side of such education comes very naturally to them. But to use one's hands, eyes and mind all at once for acquiring knowledge in the intellectual sense is a new experience for the children.

From the beginning the children are encouraged to give pictorial form to everything they learn. This early preoccupation with pictorial rendering endows the hand and the eye with extraordinary cunning and a swift judgment in regard to spacing. The children in the first form have the capital letters one by one fixed in their minds, first by painting a little scene — a swan on the water, perhaps — and this swan is magically transformed into a capital "S." And so on through the alphabet.

The teaching follows a gentle and slow rhythm in the early stages and hardly ever is a child left behind. Fairy tales are the point of departure for all subjects at this earliest stage. Even numbers are taught pictorially. And from the beginning the children illustrate every point of new knowledge they acquire.

This, of course, leads to a marked technical skill at an early age and may in some measure explain the remarkable artistic individuality of such a large number of the notebooks produced by all ages of children. These notebooks become the textbooks that the children use at the different stages of their development. No printed books at all are used until the third class and then only for exercises in reading aloud and at a much later stage for the study of grammar and advanced foreign languages.

Both English and German are begun in the first class when the power of imitation is still strong. The children learn through games, little songs, and conversations with the teacher, and their progress is astonishing. They are as usual encouraged to make pictorial notes and a little later to print some simple words in the foreign language taken down from the blackboard as a text to their pictorial notes.

In the lower school, on watching a whole class working together one is impressed with the happy expression of the children's faces, their freedom of movement, their concentration, and their friendly looking up to the teacher which makes discipline into a kind of good humoured arrangement between the two parties.

In the upper school where all the teachers are specialists in their own subjects the relation between pupils and teachers becomes rather different. Questions and discussions are encouraged. Hard work and an independent judgment become a necessity. The fine balance between the humanities and science is a noted feature of the school.

The child who will ultimately take up science as a career is not to be starved of the humanities at any stage. Art goes on playing a big role in the later stages, as it has done in the earlier stages, the end and aim of the education being a full development of all sides of the personality. The older children are encouraged to take an interest in scientific processes, industrial development, and modern business management and to learn the techniques of different trades.

At the weekly meetings of the teaching staff, the school doctor is always present. A great deal of attention is paid to the mental and physical health of the children.

In conclusion, a certain amount of material difficulties seems to have created an unusual and interesting combination of effort where happiness in your work, whether you be teacher or pupil seems to be the rock on which the whole structure rests.

You Too Would Confess

Alan Howard

THE title of this article is the same as that of the first chapter of *Mental Seduction and Menticide* by Joost A. M. Meerloo (*Jonathan Cape 21/-*). In this book the author examines what happens in so-called "brainwashing" and forced confessions, and suggests ways in which this modern evil may be met.

When American soldiers returned home from Korean prisoner-of-war camps, many of them were called before disciplinary courts for investigation into their collaboration with the enemy by "confessing" and giving information. One such case was that of Col. Frank H. Schwable who "after months of intense psychological pressure and physical degradation signed a well-documented "confession" that the United States was carrying on bacteriological warfare against the enemy. . . . When, during the military inquiry into the Schwable case, I was called upon to testify as an expert on menticide, I told the court of my deep conviction that nearly anybody subjected to the treatment meted out to Col. Schwable could be forced to write and sign a similar confession.

"'Anyone in the room, for instance?' the Colonel's attorney asked me, looking in turn at each of the officers sitting in judgment on the new and difficult case.

"And in good conscience I could reply, firmly: 'Anyone in this room.'"

In this way the writer puts before us one of the ugliest features of modern times, and although it "doesn't happen here" it challenges everyone to ask himself, "What should I do in a similar situation?" The title of the author's first chapter gives an answer which few dare contradict: You too would confess.

What then can one do? Am I, the reader might well ask himself, living in a fool's paradise of a so-called civilised world, believing myself to be a respectable person who upholds certain moral principles, when in effect any day some totalitarian dictator might take over control of things, and force me by indignity, humiliation and cruelty to deny any scrap of decency I ever held, and — worse — even join with those who delight in forcing others to do the same?

One might easily feel utterly despondent, were it not that one realizes that just this despair in the face of evil is already one of the first triumphs of evil. Those who practise evil in order to obtain power know that the more horrible and loathsome it is the more likely are they to immobilize thousands, nay, with modern means of communication, millions of respectable people who otherwise might be urged to resist. It has happened; and is even now happening in many parts of the world.

What then can be done?

The author makes it quite clear what can and must be done. The first thing is to know the methods by which such people work. "Those who are in danger of being brain-washed can be helped simply by

making them familiar with the facts." Then one must understand something of the inner confusion in which we all live; and finally — what is perhaps most important — one must understand and resist the various ways in which we are all being "got at" in our modern civilisation.

"All knowledge can be used either for good or evil," says the author; and just because our knowledge today is so vast, particularly our psychological and scientific knowledge, is it possible for unscrupulous seekers after power to use it for their own ends, and for the rest of us to submit to overwhelming expert opinion and propaganda. We must be vigilantly aware of this, and do everything in our power now, while "the evil days come not" to resist any attempt which is made to encroach on individual human freedom and integrity. It is extremely refreshing to find a modern writer speaking of freedom as a concrete reality, not arguing it away in psychopathic concepts, but characterizing it quite clearly as a man's right to hold his own views and to declare them as his conscience deems necessary. This of itself is stimulating; and we could afford to wait while clever people discuss the finer points of freedom, as long as we could hold on to that. For if we lose that — and there are those in the world who are trying to rob us of it — then we shall not even be free to discuss what freedom is.

The author found that on the whole those people who had a simple firm faith tended to withstand the brainwashing better than others. Unfortunately, one just can't rush out and get oneself a simple firm faith just like that. It is part of us; it is not just stuck on. It is simple, not because it is necessarily easy to understand, but because it is as natural as one's face. It is these things "stuck on," these formalities of religious, political and philosophic dogma, these catch-words of hearsay and convention in all of us, that the "brain-washer" can play havoc with, thereby reducing his victim to utter confusion and moulding him entirely to his will. "What then do I really believe; so believe it that I would give my life for it?" is a question we might all very well put to ourselves. For if we can really peel off all that we hold lip service to, and come to those fundamental things that remain and rebuild our life on that, all the efforts of all the brain-washers in the world are doomed to failure. And if in the process we find we believe in nothing, then — let us believe wholeheartedly in *that*; for strangely enough, a second kind of people who were found better able to resist the "brain-washers" were those who were "agin" things, the born rebels against authority.

By far the most searching part of the book is that in which the author points to those influences in our midst which condition all of us, and are conditioning us all the time. We are the victims of intentionally created mass-fear and mass-hysteria today, what with H-bombs and cold wars, and newspapers and radios which broadcast it; so that, whereas "Classical psychology often spoke of the fear of death and the great unknown as the cause of many anxieties . . . modern psychological studies have shown us that the fear of living

is a much greater, deeper and more frightening one."

To help people to live creatively, joyously and bravely becomes the most important task of modern times, and to be able to do so demands a strong awareness of one's Ego and a vigorous sense of freedom. But it is just these latter that our modern civilisation seems to be in a conspiracy to destroy. Meerloo arraigns in turn modern education, propaganda, sleeping tablets and other "harmless" drugs, and technology. Of Education he says: "I must repeat that all those who are educated under rules of too strict obedience and conformity break down more easily under pressure . . . every teaching is an emotional relation, a matter of loving your students. It is a moving among them and taking part in their doubts in order to share together the adventure of common exploration of the unknown."

But it is on the influences of technology that he has some of the most searching things to say, particularly in reference to children: "It is the very subservience to technology that contributes an attack on thinking. The child who is confronted from early youth with all modern devices and gadgets of technology — the radio, the motor, the television set, the film — is *unwittingly* conditioned to millions of associations, sounds, pictures, movements, in which he takes no part. He has no need to think about them . . . Technology lures him on, dropping him into its wheels and movements."

Again: ". . . we have to be aware of the hypnotising, seductive action of any all-penetrating form of communication. People become fascinated even when they do not want to look on. We must keep in mind that every step in personal growth needs isolation, needs inner conversation and deliberation and a reviewing with the self. Television hampers this process and prepares the mind more easily for collectivisation and cliché thinking . . . The machine is the denial that progress has to grow within us before it can be realized outside ourselves . . . Our education has to learn to present simple, natural challenges and needs to the child in order to immunize him against the paralysing and lazy-making tendencies of our technicized epoch."

Turn where one will the book is an indictment of a kind of open conspiracy in the world today to rob mankind of the heritage of his individuality. What happens in totalitarian countries is only an extreme form, a logical development of what is happening everywhere. And this is not a book by a rabid reformer, nor by an anthroposophist who has been crying in the wilderness for years about these things. This is a book by a modern expert, a psychiatrist whose work has led him to investigate the psychological disturbances of thousands of cases.

He sees clearly, too, what must be done if we are to overcome this creeping cancer in our midst. Of education I have already spoken, but in the section of the book entitled *In Search Of Defences*, he adds this: ". . . today we unwittingly tend to mould minds into a pre-fabricated pattern and to give our students the illusion that they know or have to know all the answers . . . our examination mania forces students into mental pathways of automatic thinking . . .

Different children must be trained and educated differently. Each one has his own internal time table; each one will have his own life adjustments . . . Our current educational practice stimulates ambition in a few children, but stifles it in others. Instead of promoting cheating by our rigid examination rules, why do we not allow children to help one another in the solution of common problems."

He calls for a new courage which is of the mind and spirit, a courage which is a "consciousness and alert awareness . . . a lonely exploration and a confrontation of values. Such courage dares to break through old traditions, taboos, prejudices and dares to doubt dogma . . . This courage is like remaining awake when others want to soothe themselves with sleep and oblivion . . . Such courage accepts the great fear behind all the mysteries of life and dares to live with it."

This is not something one can go out into the market place and shout about. It is not something around which one makes a cult and goes out to seek converts. This is something which has to seed itself and grow in the minds and hearts of individuals; and it may be that the world as a whole has to witness much apparent set-back before a society of free men begins to emerge. But the seeds are already there and beginning to grow. This too is the conviction of the author, who in the midst of all our societies and conventions and parties reminds us that "only when people have learned to accept individual responsibility can the world be helped by the combined efforts of many individuals" for "Moral culture begins and ends with the individual . . . Moral evaluation starts with the individual and not with the state."

This book will depress many. They will be obliged to admit the facts, but will not so easily be able to reshape them. We are all conditioned by our times. We have tolerated a lot of debunking of "simple faiths," "strong Egos" and "a sense of freedom." Now we want and need them, we do not know where to find them. We have touched pitch and been defiled.

At the risk of seeming to attach to what should be an objective statement a partisan view, I must add that for me personally, the result of reading this book was to see one man of this century standing out all the more clearly as perhaps the only one who can help us out of the confusion into which we have all stumbled: Rudolf Steiner. Joost Meerloo has written a penetrating diagnosis of the disease of our time. Rudolf Steiner had already prescribed the remedy sixty years ago when he brought out his *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*. One can only face the future, one can only find the courage to live, as Meerloo has pointed out, by finding a strong sense of ego and freedom; Steiner has already shown where and how that may be found in that book which is not just another philosophy, but a guide book to the reality of the human spirit. He who has used that book on the path of his own researches will know that this is so; he who has found it to be so will see in Meerloo's book one of the most important warning messages to modern man.

Conditioning and Human Freedom

H. L. Hetherington

EVER since Pavlov experimented with his dogs and demonstrated the possibility of conditioning the automatic reflexes of a living organism, the possibility of a monstrous tyranny over the human spirit has been evident. Is it possible, men have asked, to condition the human spirit also? Can thoughts and ideas, impulses, moral initiative be made to conform to a set pattern? A little reflection provided sufficient prima facie evidence for these questions to be asked with urgency.

Just over a quarter of a century ago Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* was published. It contains a bitingly sarcastic and ironical picture of human society, as it might well develop, if certain trends were to become dominant in western society. The question of conditioning is central to the argument of the book. The reader will not easily forget the description of the sleep-teaching of children. Night after night a soft voice relayed to a loud-speaker under each little pillow whispers its slogans and catch-phrases, its lessons on human conduct. Night after night for years on end, "words without reason," but words which suggested an attitude, were repeated, until the child, and later the grown up, thought them and repeated them in conversation, without knowing why.

Not so much like drops of water, though water, it is true can wear holes in the hardest granite: rather, drops of liquid sealing-wax, drops that adhere, incrust, incorporate themselves with what they fall on, till finally the rock is all one scarlet blob.

"Till at last the child's mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the suggestions is the child's mind. And not the child's mind only. The adult's mind too — all his life long. The mind that judges and desires and decides — made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are *our* suggestions!"

This process, hypnopædia Huxley calls it, whereby material is conveyed to the mind of a sleeping child by subconscious means, has recently been tried out with some success in France. Not in this case to impart modes of conduct, but knowledge and factual information. In some respects then, Huxley's "tomorrow is already here."

"Tomorrow is already here" is the English title of Robert Jungk's book describing the recent startling technological advances in America. In one of its chapters the growing power and influence of the industrial psychologist in America is described and his attempts, logical enough in the environment in which they are made, to streamline the factory and office worker to fit into the large organisation he belongs to. This is a significant step in the direction of fitting men psychologically to fill the role allotted to them by the state, in the direction of the ant heap, swarming with conditioned workers.

Such facts could be paralleled from almost every quarter; in aggregate they are alarming enough to prompt us to consider the field widely and to ask ourselves what is involved. The onward rush

of events and developments can easily catch us unawares, and yet a generalised protest without further consideration is a sign of fear.

What do we mean by conditioning? The word implies that we make of another human being (immature or adult) what we intend him to be, without his knowledge or consent. Our efforts are directed to every part of him, spiritual as well as physical. The other human being cannot react freely to the influence, his own individuality is deliberately allowed no free play.

A good example of this is the recent experiment in America with the so-called subliminal advertising. Here images were flashed on to the cinema screen during a performance, at regular intervals but so quickly that the audience were not aware that the words had appeared. The images were words suggesting that an ice cream would be delicious in the interval. When the interval came sales rose very appreciably.

Now it is obvious that to a certain extent conditioning has always taken place. The inculcation of certain national prejudices during the last hundred years or so is conditioning in a mild form. The Englishman of the last half of the nineteenth century and the first decade or so of the twentieth was convinced of the divine mission of the British Empire, just as the Japanese of the same period believed in the divinity of his Emperor. They did so as a result of conditioning: they were always being told so, and disbelievers were regarded as moral outcasts.

What has not happened before, so it would seem at least in the west, is the deliberate and conscious use of the methods of conditioning for specified ends. Does this new development threaten the freedom of education and can the teacher do anything to strengthen the young person against the dangers which threaten us from the future?

In the young child three factors are at work. Firstly his heredity, mainly physical, but certainly operative in the more rudimentary psychological traits; secondly environment, an extremely important and formative influence, upon which all education depends; thirdly the individuality of the child himself, which reacts in its own way to the first and the second.

Unlike the animal, which thanks to its imperious instincts can be reared quite satisfactorily away from its kind, the human child must be brought up by human beings or he will become an idiot. The so-called wolf-children, brought up by animals after having been abandoned by their human parents, are invariably idiots and no measures yet devised can remedy the damage done to them. Education is essential.

The questions can then be asked with some justification: Is not education just another word then for conditioning? Are we not deluding ourselves when we become so indignant at the possibility of the conditioning of the human spirit? Is not this what we do, day in and day out, in the classroom? And are not the only realists in the realm of education the communists, who recognise this fact and act upon it?

The answer is that if the *only* factors at work in the child develop-

ment are heredity and environment then it is perfectly true that education and conditioning are synonymous terms. Only when the third factor, the individuality of the child is reckoned with, do the terms then become widely different. For then education in its true sense *never loses sight of the incarnating individuality*, but knows what is inviolable and what must be striven for to allow the inviolable spirit to incarnate properly. Education is concerned with the proper weaving of the physical and psychological garments which the naked spirit wears, with the proper forging of the tools which that spirit will wield as an adult, but the spiritual individuality himself is left free.

Conditioning on the other hand, fearing the consequences of free action in a society of individuals, seeks so to form those garments and weapons that they can only be used in a certain way. Thus behaviour becomes predictable and men amenable. The state can be sure of its slave workers.

While there is abundant evidence in the west *at present* that men wish above all to leave the individual free to unfold his own powers and make his own contribution to society, there is not such a clear understanding of the foundations upon which such a faith must rest. If the individual is the product only of heredity and environment, then there is no good reason why we should not make that environment as definitive and formative as it lies within our power to do. If on the other hand there is a third factor — the incarnating individuality, then conditioning is put in an utterly different light. Without a clear recognition of this third factor protest against conditioning can only be made on the basis of feeling — it is a cry of the heart, but not a clear and reasoned objection based on observed fact. Once the presence of an incarnating individuality is recognised in every child, then the full implications of any attempt to tamper with it can be plainly seen, and demonstrated in thought.

These implications are not fully realised if one thinks that the individuality is created at birth and gradually formed during life. If one thinks this, then one is not able to resist the thought that as the individuality is being formed during childhood we have a real part to play in that forming. The gates are still open for practices which smack of conditioning. We are able to understand and counter the dangers of conditioning fully only when we can recognise that the individuality of the child is spiritually adult, but, because of a different relationship it has to its body in childhood, the expression of its powers in earthly life is different during the first eighteen to twenty-one years of its existence. This conception, which is fundamental to the Rudolf Steiner education is the only one capable of making a complete stand against all forms of conditioning as defined in this article. Even the orthodox Christian view, which denies pre-earthly existence, except possibly in a rudimentary angelic state, will not in the end be able to stand firm against the invidious arguments for conditioning which are advanced from so many quarters. For if the human individuality did not exist before birth, then it must find its main formative influences here on earth. We provide those influences,

we to some extent are co-creators with God of the human individuality. We not only have the *right*, but it would seem also the *duty* to form and shape the growing individual.

Once, however, we can see that the human individuality existed fully formed before birth and furthermore brings into life a large number of tasks and impulses from the spirit, resolves formed and a destiny to fulfil, then we can understand what must be regarded as inviolable. All we can and must do is to make the entry into life as harmonious and as fruitful as possible; what the individual is and what he has to do is entirely his affair. Indeed the world would be in a very desperate position if men were not continually bringing into life spiritual impulses and spiritual resolves formed before birth. These are the hopes of the future. A mistaken view of the truth of incarnation could lead to a stultification and nullification of those spiritual impulses which stream into life from pre-earthly existence. The danger is great, only a clear insight into the factors and choices involved, will counter it.

A Background to Nature Study in Class Four (ten-year-olds) Theo Gumbel

PERFECT Nature grows around us. The stones and plants are not conscious beings. The bodies of animals as well as man's own body are in a sleeping state. Into this unconscious world man is born. In his mature state he will ultimately become a being of consciousness. On this physical plane he will be the carrier of thinking which is not found elsewhere. Growing he awakes and desires to understand nature in order to use it for his work. He uses stone, plant and animal to serve him. In all this man is expected to act selflessly as a moral being.

In man arise two main powers through which he can comprehend the world. Love which streams from his heart is one. The other is the intellect, which awakens in his head. Both, the understanding with the heart and with the head must be taken into consideration whilst a child grows up.

It is obvious that we cannot expect a small child to reason. Nor can a child understand with his intellect many of the things with which it meets daily. Yet how much do we want to communicate to the child at that early age! And there is the power to do so. We know well how a little child imitates constantly what is done by grown ups. It can be quite devastating if we act thoughtlessly in the presence of a child.

There is a doll on the kitchen floor. We have both hands full, in a great hurry we give it a little kick, so as not to fall over it when we return from the oven with a hot dish. A day or two later we find the child kicking his doll round and round the room. We are shocked. We may even say: "Don't do that to poor dolly!" However, this remark will have no effect on the child. We acted and the child copied.

What I want to illustrate is the approach to the world which the small child grasps. The love and devotion with which we bend down, pick up dolly, stroke its rough hair and hand it carefully to the child can have such a strong effect on the little soul that it will begin to handle everything with that care which it copies from its adults. In this way we start teaching through the understanding of the heart. When we approach Nature in such a mood the child will understand what we could not explain to him in any other way. With this attitude we open the world to the growing child.

In the first school years we still continue very strongly in this spirit of love and wonder. Wonder will grow in the child and become a very strong capacity. Devotion and reverence grow as the child goes up through the school. They are important qualities which the adult must never underestimate. With such a foundation we can, in Class IV, begin to awaken in the child the understanding with the

head, the intellect. This will, at that stage enable the child to detach himself from the outside world with which he hitherto felt himself one.

We begin this period of Nature Study in drawing the child's attention to the three main parts which compose man's physical body: the head, the chest and the metabolic-limb system. Our head in its roundness is a small image of the great firmament. The head is a spectator, it sits on our shoulders and looks, listens, tastes, smells, speaks and thinks. To our chest belongs not only what we can see, but also the air which we breathe is very much part of ourselves. At one moment we breathe in air which in the next is exhaled into our immediate surroundings. Within our chest is the heart and lung: both are organs of rhythm. In this sphere lives our feeling. In our limbs and our digestive system the will is most strongly expressed. Our hands do the work our head has thought to be right and our heart felt to be good. Our feet carry us to meet other people. Of the constant activity in our stomach and intestines we are not at all aware. There food undergoes great changes so that it may become agreeable to us.

When we have seen man's body in such an outline, we turn to the animal kingdom. What is harmoniously balanced in the human being we find in many beasts greatly exaggerated in one or the other direction. The cuttlefish is mainly head. Curiously enough it also likes to be carried about like our head. It is content to wait for the current of the sea to take it from place to place and provide it with food. In danger it does not suddenly flee but squirts out an inklike fluid in which it hides itself from its enemy. In this fashion we can find in nature a great number of animals which have the one or other system much enlarged. The lion is a chest being, his heart and lungs are most strongly developed. The cow has often been called a digestive system: with four stomachs, and intestines of twenty-two times its own body length we could hardly find a better representative of the metabolic system.

Whilst in the observation of all this we call more and more on the child's intellectual forces, we also show how all things work hand in hand. Where man has taken earth, plant and beast into his service he must care for them with devotion and love. This 'give and take' is the great principle of the relationship and must be understood with the head forces, felt with the heart, and thus implanted into the child as a sense of responsibility.

The wonder which prevailed in the small child's soul has to find its way through devotion to reverence towards all that man takes from nature. Such an approach at the time when we train our intellect is vital in order to maintain a healthy balance and a true picture of nature. One of the many ways of bringing devotion to the child can be the careful illustration of the subject matter. There is also an opportunity of letting the child bring beauty and art into his work. To find later that his best artistic work is only a poor image of nature's beauty and perfection, must not lead to frustration but to reverence towards that which we meet in the living world. Such an undertone

should prevail in the teaching that the child feels his gain in knowledge is the means by which he will be able to help in the world.

It is of little use to talk to the adolescent about moral behaviour and the need to do good in the world, if, in the early stages of childhood we have neglected to open the world to the child through the power of love, wonder, devotion and reverence.

* * * * *

"Wynstones School is in need of a competent married couple to take over the running of the Hostel, which accommodates some 50 children between the ages of 7 and 17 years. Communication to The Chairman of the College of Teachers, Wynstones School, Whaddon, Gloucester".

Christmas Term

(Reprinted from the Michael Hall letter to parents of 18th January, 1958, by kind permission)

OVER the last few years I have grown to envy the youngest shepherd more and more. How wonderful to sleep so soundly on Christmas morning! Last year my daughter sang carols and choruses from Christmas plays until well after midnight, when at last she fell asleep and I could steal in and hang her stocking on the bedpost. This year she had earache, crept into my bed and demanded one story after another until close on two in the morning: she woke finally at around six. Twelve hours later I had to brace myself to greet with enthusiasm the proposal that a wigwam, which had come as a Christmas present, should be erected in the middle of the sitting-room floor as a stable and that the Shepherds Play should be performed once more.

The first performance has been in the grey light of dawn and had gone smoothly enough until my daughter, vigorously playing one of the shepherds, had attempted to bludgeon her younger sister into presenting at the stable a beautiful ship which she had just found in her stocking. In the end she gave it, but clearly the heart had gone out of her performance and the two final scenes missed the right mood and ended in tears. I could not stand another such disaster; the fight that had gone on intermittently over the last hour around a box of crayons seemed infinitely preferable. However, I was persuaded, the wigwam was erected, a candle lighted for Mary and the play began.

How could there be a thing so rare
As that a maid a child should bear.

For the adult a marvel indeed! As much of a marvel as that a wigwam could be the stable at Bethlehem or a yellow balloon tied to my bread-knife the star which guided the kings and shepherds to it; as much of a marvel as is the absolute solemnity of small children, their reverence before a rolled-up scarf on a sitting-room carpet, and, at the same time, the complete naturalness with which they accept the miracle that it represents, regarding it as all of a piece with the collapse of the wigwam stable when a dancing shepherd accidentally trips over one of the precariously straddling legs. For them Jacob's Ladder is securely "pitched between Heaven and Charing Cross."

When the shepherds had presented their gifts and Crispin the tassel from his cap, they went to bed and I settled down to read Chesterton's essays. He would, I am quite sure, have appreciated our Nativity Play, balloon, wigwam, bread-knife and all. He saw the miraculous so readily in what appeared quite commonplace, and accepted the obviously miraculous with such equanimity as part of the natural order of things. I read him on Sightseeing and Leisure. Nobody has tilted more skilfully or wittily against this Age, which has put mere information above knowledge and knowledge above

experience. The Museum is its symbol, a place where a man feels impelled "to stuff himself with every sort of incongruous intellectual food in one indigestible meal," only to remain a mere sightseer of life after all his efforts.

Chesterton would, I think, have appreciated as much the Christmas Term at Michael Hall for the quality of concentrated experience which runs through it, especially through the last few weeks. We do not celebrate Advent and Christmas in the one-day-and-that's-that sense which that verb has grown to suggest in English, but in its original Latin sense of doing something frequently and in the company of large numbers of our fellowmen. Every classroom has its Advent wreath, from beneath whose lighted candles each morning carols stream and dance and float out into the playground, with all the variety of twelve classes and the extensive repertoire that most children have acquired even before leaving the Nursery Class; and to visit any classroom at nine o'clock in the morning is to lay oneself open to being called upon to be one of the Three Kings of Orient. The classroom windows become gay with shepherds and stars and stables and the opening of the doors of the Advent Calendars is eagerly anticipated and greeted with delight in the younger classes.

"It's hard to believe they can be so angelic!" a parent remarked to me as the children of Classes One and Two carried their candles up at their Advent Festival, while a Pied Piper crowd of smaller ones waited, shining-eyed and still, for their turn to receive an apple and a candle, and join in the moving garland of light, woven round the Christ-Child with such deep, and yet quite unselfconscious reverence: as unselfconscious as the gusto with which they settled down to their tea afterwards!

The Carol Concert and the Christmas Plays bring the whole Advent experience to a fine climax and take us to the threshold of Christmas itself: and if they are as much responsible as anything for my lack of sleep on Christmas night, it is a small sacrifice for all they mean to my children and the whole school, both at the time and for the future.

The eager enthusiasm of the Green King, the fearless vigour of the Red King and the thoughtful wisdom of the Blue King all find their source and inspiration in the stable at Bethlehem.

J.H.M.E.

IS TELEVISION HARMFUL TO YOUR HEALTH?

(The following letter was published in the "Suddeutsche Zeitung" No. 16 (S.Z.), and dated Saturday/Sunday 18th/19th January, 1958).

Many families will have saved up enough money to buy a television set for Christmas and they may be joyfully greeting the big world which is now entering their little rooms through the Television Screen. As an old T.V. watcher I should first like to advise the 'new-comers' to take their living plants out of the area of radiation of the set. Already during the third year of using my T.V. set I observed that finely grown plants with a comparatively large area of translucent leaves showed symptoms of disease and that they died unless I took them out of the room. At first they appeared to grow even more prolifically within the area of radiation, but soon after they showed a marked decline. This did not happen in the case of hard-skinned and somewhat robust cactus plants, but these, however did not blossom as they had previously done. It is possible that physicists will smile at these statements and find other causes for these ill-effects.

Needless to say I carefully excluded other possible causes, such as lack of wrong soil, faulty care of plants, insufficient moisture in the air as a result of central heating, etc., before I even considered the possibility of a harmful influence of radiation upon the life of the plants. The ill-effects of radiation became specially evident when I placed the plants in different positions in the room. Furthermore I found that damaged plants—in as far as they did not perish altogether—recovered when placed outside the T.V. room but that they again showed the same symptoms of illness when put back into their old places.

I also seem to remember reading in a biological magazine about 6 months ago an account of a man who kept a T.V. set, he had an unpleasant surprise because his entire stock of fish died within a few months, after having first shown an increase in vitality.

To a medical doctor the inevitable question arises whether the structure of human cells is not likely to be adversely affected by radiation. Owing to the far greater power of resistance of the human body, it is doubtful whether such harmful influences could be detected straight away. Yet the logical anxiety arises that—should there be such harmful effects of T.V. radiation—the life-forces of expecting mothers, young children and growing school children are more open to this danger, since the young and tender plants and blossoms have shown themselves to be particularly liable to take harm in the hard light of the T.V. tube. I dare not lightly coin the expression "delayed effects of damage" without further evidence, as proofs for this surmise will probably not be available for a long time to come.

Nevertheless I could imagine that such a warning from a private

source might give rise to careful and accurate research by specialists in botanical and physiological institutes, while the physicists might try to invent a way of filtering the harmful rays of a T.V. tube.

Dr. H. P. Schone, Mu-Obermenzing Verdistrasse 70/72

(Translated by R. Everett.)

FILM STRIPS

Educational Productions Ltd.,
East Ardsley, Wakefield, Yorks.

These strips of film, containing on the average thirty frames, cost 25/- or 15/- according to whether or not they are coloured. On the whole clear and large images are produced by them on the screen. Clarity is greater with the coloured films. The hues, produced in the latter, are quite good except for those in the yellow-orange-scarlet range.

Undoubtedly the film strips dealing with geography are those which might be favourably considered in Steiner schools. The exhibition of an appropriate series of good coloured photographs on a screen, on one or two days towards the end of a Main Lesson period in Geography — for Class 7 onwards — can have educational value. There are good series on regional geography depicting the various human occupations.

The value of film strips devoted to other subjects is considerably lower. Until the colours are improved, the series devoted to famous works of art must remain disappointing. Not only are the film strips on Science and Mathematics dull and confusing, but they could lead only too easily to a destruction of life and imagination in the soul of the teacher as well as the child.

Supplied with each film strip is a booklet of explanatory notes. This is obviously essential, and some of the geographical notes are interesting and well-written. The soul-destroying character of filmstrips on geometry would seem, however, to be intensified by the notes. The following insignificant remarks appear in the introduction to a set of film strips entitled "Treasures of the Triangle" — "It is frequently difficult, if not impossible, to draw, unprepared, on the wallboard, reasonably accurate diagrams to illustrate certain geometrical facts . . . their demonstration is apt to tax the teacher's powers of guesswork."

If that is the argument in favour of the filmstrip, one can only comment that it is a pity some teachers don't take their lesson preparation more seriously.

R.A.J.

International Conference at the Hague, January, 1958

At the beginning of January some hundred teachers from the Rudolf Steiner schools in various parts of Europe met at the Hague for a conference organised by the Dutch Association for Rudolf Steiner education.

Friends were present from all the schools in Holland, from many in Germany, from Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, while from England there were representatives from Michael Hall, (Forest Row), Wynstones, (Glos.), King's Langley, Ilkeston and Leeds.

The central theme of the conference was a fundamental one for our pedagogy: What is Artistic Education? In the final instance the quality of the teaching depends on the quality of the teacher. Dr. Steiner speaks of "imponderables" — what the teacher is, is of far greater importance than what he knows. The teacher has to make the material his own in order to transform it artistically into substance of educational value for the child; but there is far more involved than this. Of far greater significance is the fact that the teacher should continually work at his own self education. It is a fundamental concept in Rudolf Steiner's work that in the modern age the human being should seek to develop latent powers within himself which will lead to development of higher faculties. But this requires an ennobling of the whole of human nature. The greater the step that the teacher can take forward in this direction, the greater his value as a teacher.

Among many other matters it was of great interest to hear about the beginnings of the first Rudolf Steiner school, (the Waldorf School in Stuttgart), from one of the rapidly diminishing number of people who were present and who knew Dr. Steiner personally.

It was of further great interest to exchange views and experiences with such a diversity of colleagues. This is mutual enrichment, and emphasises the international character of the Rudolf Steiner way of education.

ROY WILKINSON.

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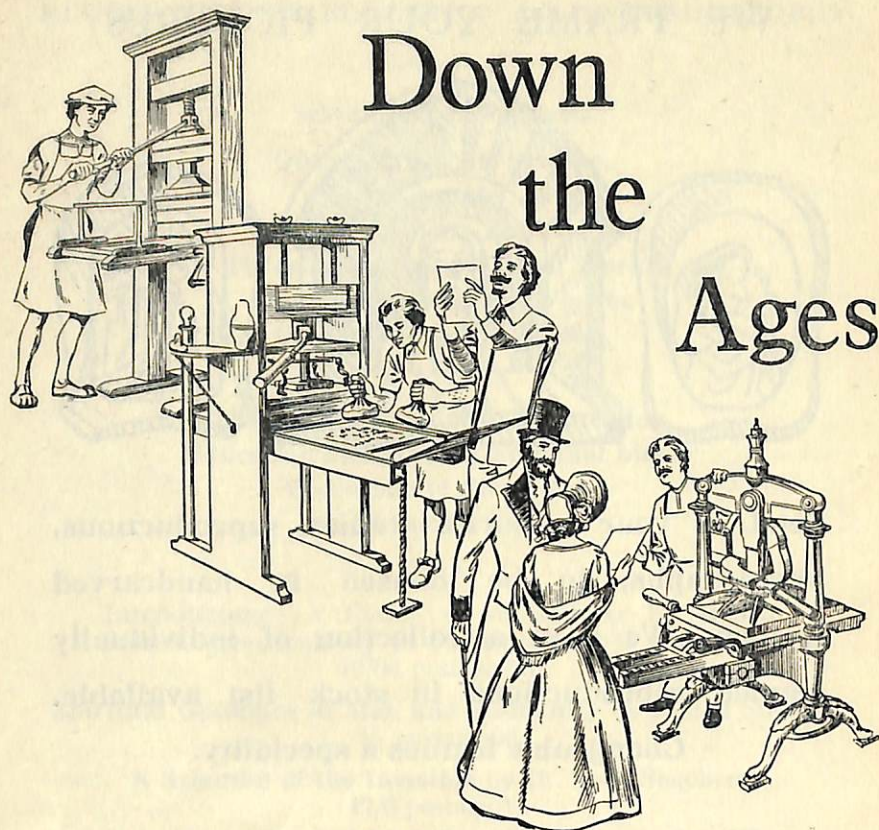
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