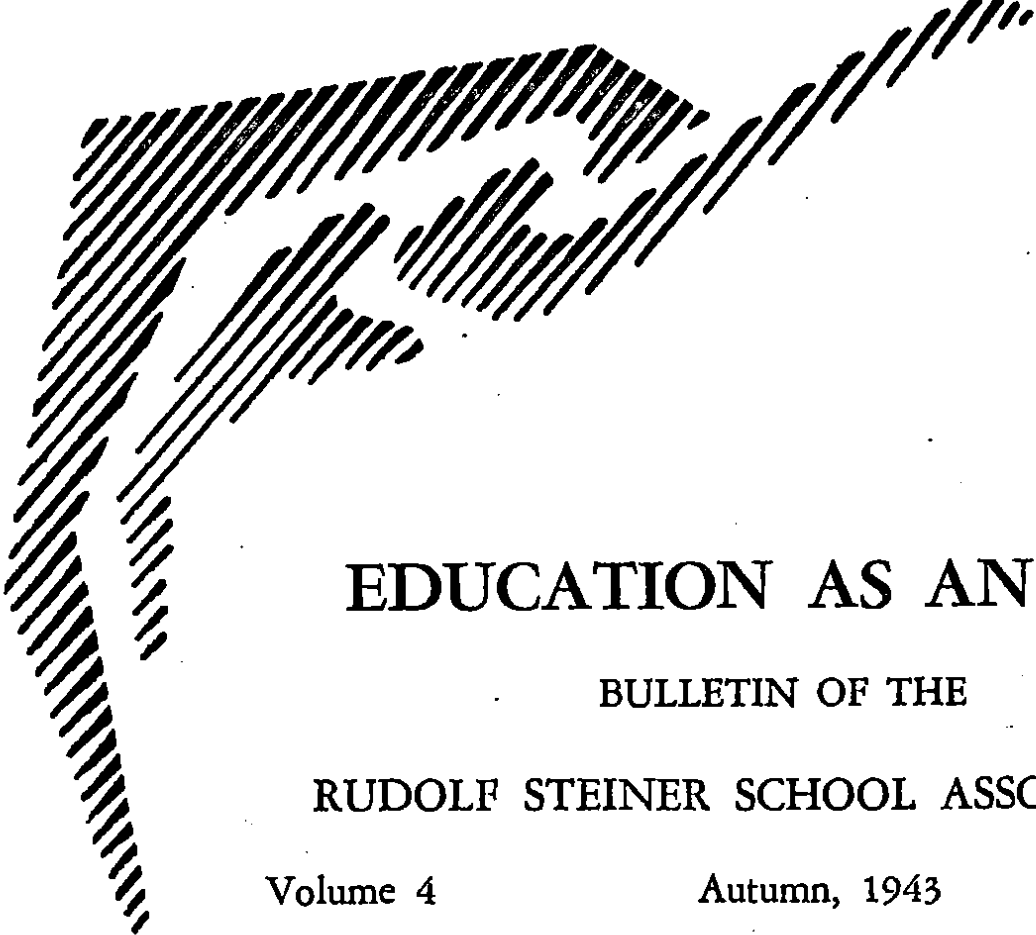




EDUCATION AS AN ART

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FROM THE
SUMMER EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE
at Spring Valley, N. Y.

FOCAL POINTS IN AN OUTLOOK TOWARD THE FUTURE
A Brief Report
of a Lecture by Dr. Hermann von Baravalle

In reference to prevalent present-day nervous illnesses, Prof. Jung says that in the Greek civilization it would have been impossible to find certain phenomena of mental disturbance such as are very common today. The reason for this is that in the Greek civilization there was an inner urge towards totality. In a civilization which balances human potentialities, no place is left for certain tendencies to go astray, and therefore no need of calling in a neurologist.

The so-called "Age of Enlightenment" depended upon the process of intellectual reasoning. It did away with religion and enthroned the Goddess of Reason in place of the statue of the Virgin, in Notre Dame, in Paris. This was a symptom of the developments in the western world. At the same time there appeared the first publications by Europeans of oriental wisdom, and there were expressions of a longing on the part of many to find a saint, or secret Mahatma. These two events occur simultaneously.

Goethe was convinced that in the west we must build up a middle road which was neither that of cut-and-dried reason, nor the blind belief in a saint, but instead, the finding of the spark within oneself, the full development of the capacities of the individual.

A school should build toward the development of a full human being. It brings a child in contact with a cross-section of the society in which he lives. The important thing is that he find satisfying work, something he really looks forward to, work to be done for which he can have real enthusiasm.

As we know, the imitative instinct is strong in the little child. We have often seen a child even scolding a doll in realistic imitation of an angry parent, or an irate school teacher. Impressions from his environment are engraved upon the child and sink deeply into the growing processes of his organism. They may lead either to internal disturbances, resulting in sickness and an anti-social attitude later in life, or to health and a fruitful social attitude.

In an Art of Education, the principles of continuity and rhythm are carried through the day, as well as through the year, and throughout the whole course of study. Each lesson should have a dramatic structure and climax. The principle of an organic succession of subjects, in units of three or four weeks, with repetition of subjects later in the year, makes it possible to build up the children's interest to a climax. This gives the satisfaction of a completed task and interest for each new beginning. It is also a good thing to leave a subject alone for a while, and then come back to it later on. The question is often asked, "Why is it that a person can do something so much better after dropping it for a time?" We have all experienced this. Rudolf Steiner has answered this question in the following words: "The forgetting of details in the process of learning goes parallel with the development of skill." To the pupil, this increase in skill is an experience of growth and attainment, and works against inferiority complexes. It gives him courage, confidence in himself and enthusiasm for his work.

Through a middle path, which neither depends on cold reason, nor blindly follows some pedistalled saint, an education based upon a genuine knowledge of the human being can bring about a balance in human potentialities and lead to inner harmony instead of neurosis, as well as to social instead of anti-social human instincts.

Miriam Wallace

CLASSES IN SPEECH

It was the endeavor of the artistic activities during the summer Educational Conference to give impulses which may grow and ripen in those who received them. In the case of speech it holds true that the better the teacher speaks, the more the voices of the children will improve. Therefore the speech classes during the conference sought mainly to give a stimulus to the teacher himself, that he might gain a new experience of voice training, the activity of breathing, articulation and the motion and expressions of the soul in speech.

The lessons were divided into three parts. First exercises were given which show how and where to place the voice for different sounds and for different moods of the soul. It is one of the most stimulating parts of Rudolf Steiner's teaching of speech and language that he leads from the whole to the details,

which group themselves according to the Being of Speech itself, of which they are the offspring. Nothing stands isolated, nothing is a particle in itself, as we so often find in the world of mechanics. We have definitely to deal with life forces similar to the germinating forces of the plant. Even single exercises find their balance in connection with others. Distinctness in speech, for example, is a matter of balance between the sounds M, S and N; strong, effective speech should be supplemented by fluent, intimate and formative speech, etc.

The second part of the lesson may have puzzled the participants a little at first, because it was very unusual. But it had to do with one of the great vital activities of the human being, distinguished by its rhythmical character—the breathing and the pulse. In his essay on "Poetry and Imagination", Emerson shows that he had a clear knowledge of facts which later on Rudolf Steiner confirmed and vitalized. Emerson says: "Metre begins with pulse-beat, and the length of lines in songs and poems is determined by the inhalation and exhalation of the lungs . . . you can easily believe these metres to be organic, derived from the human pulse, and to be therefore not proper to one nation, but to mankind." In ancient languages we can find the most suitable material for these purely organic forces, because the early poems were recited, or sung, before they were written down, and still breathe some of the "Olympic" musical air whence they sprang. Thus an old Peruvian Hymn to the Rain Goddess was chosen. From day to day everyone enjoyed it more and more, grew into it and felt the power and health of its rhythms and the composition of its sounds. The giver of life *Viracocha* began to speak to us through these simple, but mighty, lines.

The third part of the lesson sought to give a little practice in flexibility and in the power of expression. Goethe's Fairy Tale, "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily", in Thomas Carlyle's translation, proved itself very appropriate material for such training. The Will-o'-the-Wisps, the Ferryman, the Green Snake and the Four Kings in the Temple—each of these demands an entirely different mode of expression and characterization. At the same time they reveal parts of our own human being which have to be known and cultivated by everyone who wants to do educational work.

In this Fairy Tale is embedded a seed which is one of the greatest stimuli for the social life of the future—a seed which is implanted in every human soul. One of the kings asks the green snake:—"What is more refreshing than light?" And the snake answers: "*Communication through Speech!*"

Hans Pusch

EURYTHMY

A class of fourteen, sometimes more, met daily for the Eurythmy lesson. Some were beginners, others had had many courses. Through wise selection of material and skillful planning of lessons, Mrs. Pusch was able to give the beginners a foundation in the principles of Eurythmy and at the same time

lead those for whom the material was a review into deeper experience of this art. So essentially is Eurythmy dependent on inner activity, that a repetition of fundamental work always brings to the advanced student the joy and satisfaction of new discoveries.

Although a great deal of ground was covered, the work progressed with unhurried ease enabling the beginners to find their way into new paths and widened space. At the same time all found in the lessons refreshment of body and spirit at the end of already very full days.

Throughout the course, the educational values were emphasized. For instance, the experience of "I", in contrast to "YOU" or "WE"; i.e. the relationship between the individual and the group was illustrated by a number of exercises, given by Rudolf Steiner for use in schools. Both the movements for the sounds and the geometrical forms through which the group moves give an opportunity to experience aloneness within oneself and then the contrasting union with others. Through this polarity a true social attitude of working together is developed in the children. The in-going and out-going spirals are the geometrical patterns used in this exercise, as well as the metamorphosis of form from ellipse to lemniscate and then to two isolated circles within the lemniscate. Other Eurythmy forms based upon different types of triangles gave the class the consciousness of inner activity and energy which the narrow based triangle arouses through the effort needed to reach its long pointed apex. In contrast to this is the peaceful mood which develops when the class passes rhythmically towards and along the elongated base of wide flattened triangles. It is known that these forms were used in group dances in ancient Greece around a central altar, the priest intoning the rhythm with vowel sounds on a minor triad. Rudolf Steiner called these two forms "The Energy Dance" and "The Dance of Peace".

Exercises with copper rods gave the class a new realization of orientation in space—of below, above, right, left, forward and backward—and brought mobility and elasticity into the entire body in preparation for other aspects of movement. Three-part walking—so difficult in its harmonious simplicity!—gave a basis for equilibrium and grace. Practice in beating the time and "stepping" the rhythms of the four fundamental metres of poetry was accompanied by the recitation of poems and later by the movements for the vowels, as well as a few of the consonants.

Throughout the course, a long and beautiful group form was developed. This form was also given by Rudolf Steiner, and music has been written for it by Max Schuurman. It is based on the Greek word EVOE, meaning greeting. Besides the development of the movements for the four sounds, or letters, in this word, many Eurythmy positions—seriousness, sadness, hope, knowledge, gaiety—are woven into the dance. The form begins with a procession which, with slow, dignified steps, gradually forms a circle. Sustained by full chords, the first EVOE, or greeting, is made towards the centre of the circle, the

group kneeling on the "V" to express the sound by direct contact with the earth. The various positions lead through "tenderness" to a repetition of the EVOE greeting; this time the participants turn towards each other and with the EVOE each faces and greets another by placing the hands on his shoulders. This position of greeting is found in paintings of old masters and a modified form is used in the procession of knights in "Parsifal". Through the gradual building up and daily repetition of this beautiful form, the class was given the feeling of achievement and the participation in a unit of artistic work, which in itself is a gratifying experience.

The entire course indicated the wide scope of Eurythmy, both in its artistic and pedagogical aspects. Through unfolding the laws of man's own being in relation to the surrounding world, Eurythmy makes it possible for man to use himself, the noblest of all instruments, as a channel for this Art of Movement.

Report by a member of the class.

A SUMMARY of the Summer Conference

The annual summer Educational Conference, sponsored by the Rudolf Steiner School Association and held at The Threefold Farm, Spring Valley, N. Y., was in session from August 17th through August 30th. From forty to fifty people attended the classes, and it is noteworthy that of these a far greater proportion were teachers than in any previous year. It was generally felt that this year's conference reflected an interest in the workmanship, or practice, of teaching as never before. This was enhanced by the opportunities that were given in Miss Peckham's classes for teachers to work out demonstrations of method in teaching various subjects for the different grades.

Members of the faculty from the Kimberton Farms School, High Mowing, and the Rudolf Steiner School had the privilege of studying together for two weeks, and of thus bringing into being a closer relationship between the three schools. Teachers from other schools were also present, some of them elementary school teachers and some college professors. There were also several people who, though not as yet teachers, were interested in the conference from the point of view of becoming such in the future.

The group seemed to move as a whole from one session to another with a real unity of interest. During the first hour each morning Dr. Poppelbaum lectured on "How to Study the Relationship of Soul and Body in the Child". This was followed by a "Practical Course in Teaching" covering the first six grades, conducted by Miss Peckham, and concluded by Dr. von Baravalle from the level of Junior High School and High School teaching.

In the afternoons Mr. and Mrs. Hans Pusch taught classes in speech and Eurythmy; Miss Peckham gave a course in painting; and Miss Hilda Deighton taught singing from the standpoint of helping the teacher himself to sing.

Several especially interesting lectures occurred as accompaniments to the main study courses. Mrs. Miriam Wallace gave two evenings on "The Practical Application of Curative Eurythmy". Dr. Christoph Linder and Dr. Edward Whitmont lectured respectively on "How Can We Influence the Physical Constitution of the Child Through Education" and "Eating and Nourishment from the Standpoint of Spiritual Science". Dr. Whitmont also lectured on "The Function of Music in Pedagogy and Curative Pedagogy". Professor Fritz Koelln, of Bowdoin College, gave an interesting description of the possibilities of introducing Rudolf Steiner's educational methods into the college curriculum.

The evening lectures provided a view of the wider implications of Rudolf Steiner's principles of education and their fruitfulness in making possible a free cultural life.

Not all the evenings, however, were devoted to lectures. Mr. and Mrs. Pusch and Mrs. Monges gave a demonstration of Eurythmy and Recitation. The Goetheannum Evening included a reading, by Mrs. Kroth, from Goethe's fairy tale "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily", two numbers of tone Eurythmy by Mrs. Pusch, and a dramatic performance of a part of Moliere's "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" with Mrs. Myrvaagnes, Mrs. Kroth and Mr. Pusch in the cast. Another evening was the occasion for a program of ensemble singing given by Miss Deighton, Miss Palermo, and Miss Selke, with Mrs. Blickfelt at the piano. Dr. Bauer also gave some piano selections.

The Rudolf Steiner School Association wishes to thank the many people who contributed to the fine outcome of this conference, and this includes the children who, as members of Mme. Sorge's kindergarten at the farm, did their part by giving several performances of the fairy tale "Rapunzel" for grown-up audiences.

Dorothy Jeffery

SEA FAIRIES

*Written by a child of the sixth grade
in the Rudolf Steiner School.*

Down on the seashore
Where the sand is bright,
Where the gray gulls soar
In the bright sunlight,
The wee fairies dance
In a dark green cave,
The wee fairies prance
In a cool green wave.

When the sun goes down
Behind the hill,
When darkness covers the town,
Then all is still;
The fairy mother lulls
Her babe to sleep
To the coo of the gulls,
To the hush of the deep.

PEDAGOGICAL CONFERENCE IN CALIFORNIA

A pedagogical conference dealing with the impulse given by Rudolf Steiner, held on the West Coast, has an entirely different character from anything which we can experience here in the East. It is a pioneer work in the truest sense of the word. The study groups on the West Coast which are devoted to the work of Rudolf Steiner are not only three thousand, five hundred miles away from the headquarters in New York, but the groups in southern California are almost as distant from those in northern California as New York from Chicago. Friends who wanted to come from Los Angeles and the vicinity, or from Santa Barbara, had first to travel for a whole day to San Francisco, then take a journey of seven more hours by train, which was concluded by a whole day's bus-ride into the deepest and loneliest mountain valley of Trinity County, where they finally reached the biodynamic farm at Hyampom. On the last twenty-two mile stretch along a steep mountain road, it is not possible to drive faster than ten miles an hour.

All these circumstances have to be taken into consideration when one tries to describe this first summer school in the West, which was made possible through the initiative of Minerva Brooks, who started this farm work seven years ago. Her farm lies really at the end of the road, surrounded entirely by mountains and primeval forest—in fact, virgin soil. Hyampom is an Indian name meaning Valley of Peace, and it was here that various warring tribes always came to make their peace pacts. The farm is situated in the midst of a triangle, the two sides of which are formed by two rivers that give the dry soil the wanted irrigation. The alfalfa fields give four or five harvests. A mighty fir-tree watches over the farm, a powerful guardian standing in the midst of the farm yard—a symbol of strength, stability and self-reliance.

Good fortune brought to Mrs. Brooks' farm two other friends, Mr. George S. Simons, who bought a farm in the neighborhood, and Miss Elly Havas who, as a representative of eurythmy and speech, has decided to remain at Hyampom for the larger part of the year. With the additional help of two Dutch friends, who have temporarily joined the little community there, it was possible to arrange the first study weeks, a conference dealing especially with the pedagogical impulse given by Rudolf Steiner. Friends and students

from Los Angeles, Duarte, Santa Barbara and San Francisco ventured to come up to this remote mountain valley in Trinity County and to remain for more than three weeks. This fact alone speaks for itself, and is an expression of the sincere desire for study and experience.

Each morning throughout the three weeks there was a lesson in Eurythmy. After a short intermission the work continued with a study class—an introduction into an Anthroposophical knowledge of the human being. This study was concerned with the human being from the standpoint of physiology, psychology, pedagogy, medicine and history. Every day one of the participants gave a review of the last lesson and the study group was always concluded by a very vivid and interesting discussion. The problems of the temperaments, of the threefold human organism, the rhythms of the human being and the psychology of the human will were placed in the foreground.

After a period of rest during the luncheon hours, lessons in painting, drawing, geometrical drawing and speech formation filled the busy afternoon. Every evening the participants of the study group joined all the other friends and farm workers who were not able to attend the courses during the day and listened to special evening lectures dealing with general aspects of Anthroposophy. Among these lectures on music, history, literature, the fundamental books of Rudolf Steiner, etc., there were also two lectures given by Elly Havas on the new art of speech formation and dramatic art, and two lectures by Norman Macbeth on social questions, dealing with the problems of various folk groups, as well as with geopolitics.

The three Sunday afternoons during the conference were given over to recitals by Elly Havas. On Sunday evenings there were violin and piano concerts. The noted violinist, Sylvia Maxwell, of Los Angeles, one of the most ardent students of our course, played Haendel, Bach and Beethoven violin sonatas. Last, but not least, Minerva Brooks gave a talk on the new methods of biodynamic farming, especially as these are applied to the Californian climate, and once she took friends and participants of the course over the whole farm showing us systematically the results of the last seven years' efforts. Farm work and study group stood in brotherly cooperation, both as true beginners of a serious pioneer work.

Frederick Hiebel

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Address Secretary, Rudolf Steiner School Association, 49 East 91st Street, New York.

Editor of the Bulletin: Arvia MacKaye.
