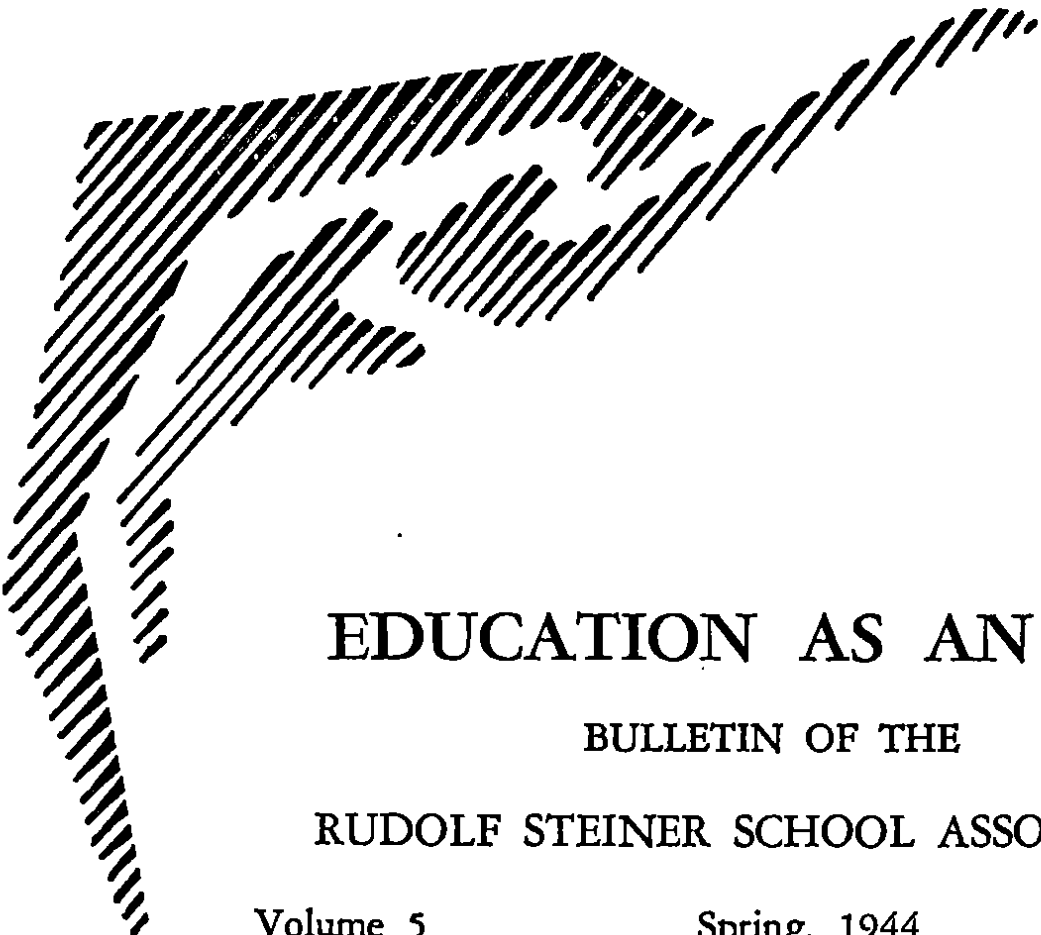




EDUCATION AS AN ART

BULLETIN OF THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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FOREIGN LANGUAGES AT THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL

In general, teachers of language have a difficult time, because the children, unless they are taught otherwise by their main class teachers or at home, unconsciously think them unnecessary. As a result, they feel that they can relax during the language periods and not keep the discipline they are accustomed to with their main class teachers. Besides, the language teacher comes to the class only two or three times a week and during the noon hours when the children are naturally not as receptive as in the morning. But without discipline, which of course need not be rigid, nothing can be achieved. What results can then be expected? And what is the best way to make the children enjoy learning languages without tiring? One must not expect that after seven or eight years of elementary school, with two or three periods a week of two foreign languages, the children will be able to speak the languages fluently, nor will they have a vast vocabulary. But they will be able to form conversation of their own, to read simple stories and poems, to recite poetry and experience the music and the spirit of a foreign tongue, and thus gain a sympathetic picture of other countries and peoples. It is not the intellectual content which counts, but as with the other subjects at a Rudolf Steiner School, the languages, if taught in the right way, will unfold and bear fruit in the course of time.

But is it not, after all, burdensome for the child to start with two foreign languages from the first grade on? He is actually learning three, counting his mother tongue. But this is just the point. It is in these early years when the speech organs have the greatest flexibility that they can serve with the greatest ease the task of learning foreign languages along with the mother tongue. We may remember from our own childhood how quickly we picked up foreign words or songs which we have never forgotten. Songs, rhymes, sounds, games, small talk, the music of the foreign language, are all absorbed in the early

years without any effort. The little child imitates; so at this age it is good to teach a language by using it almost exclusively during the lesson. The teacher must watch, however, to see that the child does not confuse the foreign language with his own. For the higher grades the teaching is more successful if both languages, the foreign and the mother tongue, are used during the lesson. This is still more the case with ancient languages, which are not taught before the fifth grade.

It is extremely important that the languages in an elementary school should not be given in an intellectual way. The faculty of thinking is not really developed before puberty. Learning a large vocabulary, translating from one language into another and vice versa, writing and reading, the use of text-books at all in the early years are all detrimental to the forces which are needed for the growing process in the young child. At a Rudolf Steiner School the first three classes do not write or read the foreign languages. Only in the last quarter of the third year do they begin to make notebooks. The children are always very eager and proud to receive these notebooks. After some years of songs and rhymes and of only listening to a language, it is a great experience for the child to see the words written on the blackboard and then to copy them in the newly acquired notebook. These books we make as colorful as possible, but also as neat as possible. We use colored crayons and illustrate what we write. As a rule, no English is used in these books. At this time we also make the transition from rhymes and poems, used almost exclusively during the first years, to prose. Pictures are also made occasionally by the first and second grades. "Chateau" or "Schloss" is remembered better when seen, so the first three classes make their French and German "books" without words. Each lesson is built up from the reciting of a verse at the beginning to the singing of songs, and then to the learning, first in verse and then in prose, of the days of the week, the names of the months, seasons, numbers, simple conversation and so forth. The lesson ends either with a guessing game, some more active game, or the making of a picture with colored crayons. And of course there is also a story which is continued over a period of several weeks, ending often, but not always, by being acted out by the children in a primitive way.

To act out the verbs from the third grade on is obviously the easiest way to keep them in mind. At the beginning of a period devoted to the study of verbs, one child after the other shows how he can skate or skii, jump, or open and close the door in the foreign language. Later, when they know more words, they choose their activities and take each other by the hand to demonstrate the plural. This method can be followed through the conjugation of the verb until the children are able to rattle off: "Je patine, tu patines, il, elle patine, nous patinons, vous patinez, ils, elles patinent. From the verbs one goes on to more grammar. Translating is begun at first more according to the sense than literally. Pronunciation exercises are practiced throughout all the grades, the children being generally very fond of them.

Almost all children like to perform, particularly in costumes. A play is thus a good medium for making a special effort to memorize a language, and it is a reward for the teacher to see how lively and creative the children are in their treatment of a play they like. This year, for instance, the fourth and fifth grades dramatized and acted in French for the Spring Assembly scenes from the Brave Little Tailor. Almost every child had a speaking part. There were

the tailor, the peasant woman, the king and the princess with their court ladies and cavaliers, and two giants who were very funny. Their main class teacher was very helpful in finding the right costumes, which contributed to the joy of the performers and the play's success. But first and foremost the play was for the actors and if they remember it for some time it will help them to progress in their language work.

Christiane Sorge

THOUGHTS BEFORE THE INVASION

The war has temporarily halted most of the positive cultural and spiritual work of the world. Much has had to be abandoned for the time being and much has been frozen in a situation where its best hope is to survive until the moment when new work can again be undertaken. But although so much has been apparently destroyed and paralyzed, it has in many cases been driven underground whence it will emerge with new strength and clarity, like a stream which has been forced to pass through sand and rock below the surface of the ground. In many instances, what had been built up as outer organization in the years between the wars, now can exist only as idea and enthusiasm and determination in individual men and women who thus become the bearers of the cultural impulses for the future.

What is true of cultural work in general, is true in particular for such a movement as the educational work based on the ideas of Rudolf Steiner. Out of the more than twenty Rudolf Steiner schools which existed in 1933, now only seven or eight are in existence, and of approximately 6500 children who were then attending these schools, less than one thousand are now Rudolf Steiner pupils. There were formerly schools in eight different countries, whereas today there are only three countries left where such schools have been able to continue—Switzerland, England and the United States. And even in these countries there have been very great difficulties to be overcome due to war-time conditions.

It is, therefore, heartening to know of the vitality and hardiness of those schools which survive and to hear from time to time of individuals who, under the stress of war, are searching for and finding this education. Although news of the schools abroad is scant, we do know that the Rudolf Steiner School in Basle, Switzerland, has grown to such an extent that it was finally forced during the past year to move into a much larger building which was bought for the school largely through the generosity of the parents. We also know that the English schools are not only surviving, but are growing. It was for the first time during the war that a twelfth class was opened at Michael Hall, which was evacuated from London to Minehead, on the west coast of England, and two new boarding hostels have had to be opened to accommodate the demand to send pupils from other parts of the country. The school in Ilkeston is growing steadily in the Derbyshire coal-mining district in which it is located. And so too, it is good to know that the Rudolf Steiner School in New York is growing, and is threatening to burst the walls of its present building.

In addition to these indications of the vigor of some of the schools in the face of great outer difficulties, it is interesting to hear of individuals who have found their way to this work. The quotations which follow are from a letter received during April from a flight officer in the Royal Australian Air Force who, while in Nova Scotia in 1941, chanced to read an announcement in the New York Herald Tribune of educational courses which were to be held at the Rudolf Steiner School. He entered into correspondence with the Association which he later joined. He writes:

" . . . Having heard nothing of me since then (November, 1941), you have probably considered me as having joined many others of our boys who have paid the full price of the world's folly. Firstly then, I must apologize for my long silence. For eighteen months I was operating on flying boats in West Africa, and have been back in England for only a short time. Secondly, may I thank your Association for having continued to send me announcements, copies of lectures and other literature to do with your work in the U. S. A., despite the fact that my membership subscription was so far behind. . . . Acting on your recommendation, I communicated with Mr. Harwood, of Michael Hall, now evacuated to Minehead, shortly after I arrived in England in 1942, and, at his invitation, spent a particularly instructive three days with him, his family and members of the staff. . . .

"The intuitive urge which made me write you in 1941 after having read a brief announcement of your course of lectures in the New York Tribune has repaid me beyond all my expectations. In fact, it has added a new dimension to teaching, has opened up vast new possibilities, and has given me a yearning to return to my work, where I left off in 1940, in order to put into practice the experience I have gained. I'm certain I can take back to Australia ideas which cannot fail to have far-reaching effect on our own educational system, even though it will probably take my lifetime and somebody else's to prove the efficacy of Dr. Steiner's system. . . ."

It is from such indications of the awareness of the deeper needs of our time and the recognition of the part which the Rudolf Steiner education has to play in the future that we can draw courage with which to meet whatever may lie ahead for us. We know, too, that there are thousands of individuals in the conquered countries of Europe and in Germany itself who carry the thought of this education as an ideal which they are waiting to be allowed to realize. At the time that this is written the world is awaiting the news of the start of the invasion of Europe which may have such immeasurable consequences for the future of civilization. It is important that we realize at this time what the Rudolf Steiner education has to offer toward a genuine rebuilding of this civilization and that we prepare ourselves to be able to make full use of any opportunity which may arise for us when the war is over.

Pvt. Henry Barnes

POETRY AND PROSE

*Written by children of the seventh grade
as part of their English work
at the Rudolf Steiner School.*

POEM

I ride through the woods on my mare and I see
The most wonderful things full of joy and of glee.
And I do thank God for a world full of bliss,
That we can call ours for the great grace of His.

AUTUMN

The pale morning sun and the frost on the ground,
The prancing of horses, the bay of the hound,
Awaken the rabbits and deer in the glen,
And warn them the hunter is coming again.

A BOY FROM LIMEHOUSE

A composition written in the style of Dickens.

Not far from the Limehouse district in London a small, skinny boy was scuffling down the street close to the houses. The light from the windows made patterns on the snow, and there were many gay and happy people laughing and singing. The children were round and rosy and merry, bundled up in winter clothes. The poor boy was white and shivering. His hands were blue with cold and his face was white. His eyes looked like deep cavities with purple rings under them. The skin on his face seemed as if it were drawn tightly over his bones between which there was no flesh.

He drew his jacket closer around his curved bony shoulders and looked eagerly into the window of a bakery. His eyes glistened like the eyes of a small bird which has been left behind by the flock and is thinking of the warm sunshine and green plants where his friends are. Finally he could no longer stand looking at the food so he turned and disappeared around a dark corner.

A junk wagon came by and the boy jumped onto it. They went down many streets. The houses got shabbier and shabbier, and it was very dark and dreary. Occasionally a dark swarthy, evil-looking man would slouch along with his hat pulled down over his eyes and his hands thrust deep into the recesses of his baggy pockets.

The wagon was rickety and clattered along the cobblestones. The cowbells on the hood jangled noisily. The poor horses were so thin that the bones stood out on their bodies. They were not pretty to look at, but they were very patient and plodded along at a steady pace. The junk man sat up on his bench and whistled a tune. He was very fat, and when they stopped to pick up some junk he did not find it easy to get down.

Then the clattering ceased and the boy lay back on an old torn mattress and listened to the far-off sound of music. But, much too soon, the clatter started up again. Finally he jumped off the wagon, ran across the street and down some steps that swayed as he went. As he stepped on one of them he fell with a crash into a snowdrift. At first it felt unpleasant, then he felt comfortable and warm and sleepy, but he remembered that he must not go to sleep, so he got up numbly and stumbled through the door into a dim, icy room. His brothers and sisters were huddled in a bed in the corner. His mother was lying worn out and asleep in a chair.

He was too tired to eat his crust of bread, which lay on a small scratched-up table. It only had three legs, a box held up the other side. So he sank down into a corner and fell fast asleep.

MRS. SWISS

A Caricature

Mrs. Swiss was only a little taller than the ordinary person, about eight feet high. She was very plump and resembled a barrel. And it was a wonder to most people how she held up her two thousand pounds on her tiny legs. She was well on in her years, and since she had just been to Florida for the winter she took on the texture and color of a dried peach. Her hair was silver white and very fluffy like the hair of an Angora kitten. When aroused her temper was ferocious. She was often heard at night throwing dishes and breaking glasses on the floor. Except for the few outbursts she was a very nice conversational person and talked practically all the time.

NOTICE

The excerpt from the lecture by Rudolf Steiner entitled *Education and Healing*, which appeared in the last issue of the Bulletin, was translated from a lecture entitled "Erziehung und Heilung" which was published in the magazine "Erziehungskunst", February, 1935.

My dear Fellow Members,

For the last few months Lacy Van Wagenen has been acting as Chairman of the Rudolf Steiner School Association. I have been busy with various activities in connection with the school, and found certain phases of the Association work could be handled better by Miss Van Wagenen.

Our Annual Meeting will be on May 29, at 8:30 p.m. If you have any suggestions for the Association please send them in to be read at that meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Mary H. Mitchell

SUMMER COURSES

In looking forward to the summer set aside August 22nd to September 4th for our Summer Courses. Dr. Poppelbaum and Dr. von Baravalle will be with us again, as well as different teachers telling us of their work. Ruth and Hans Pusch will give classes in eurythmy and speech, there will be painting, and Mrs. Andrews and Mrs. Pendelton will teach puppet-making. In the evenings there will be lectures by Dr. Poppelbaum, Dr. von Baravalle and Dr. Linder, as well as evenings of lighter entertainment.

The Program will be as follows.

SUMMER COURSES

AN EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

under the auspices of

THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Tuesday, August 22 through Monday, September 4, 1944

THE THREEFOLD FARM

Spring Valley, New York

P R O G R A M

Miss LACY VAN WAGENEN, Chairman

MORNING

9:00 A. M.

Every morning except Saturday, August 26th and September 2nd. The Body of Man as After-Image of Soul and Spirit—Dr. H. Poppelbaum.

10:30 A. M.

August 22—Problems of Pre-school Education—Elizabeth de Grunelius, Alice Smith Jansen.

August 23—First School Year: Approach to Writing, Reading and Number Work
—Virginia Field Birdsall

August 24—Story-Telling and Poetry in the Lower Classes, including fairy stories, fables, and Old Testament narratives—Virginia Field Birdsall

August 25—Nature Study in the First Four Classes, leading to Geography
—Virginia Field Birdsall

August 26—A Seminar, with various teachers reporting interesting phases of their work.

August 28—Teaching of Languages—Erica von Baravalle.

August 29—through September 4, omitting Saturday and Sunday.

Dr. H. von Baravalle and William Harrer will conduct a class on teaching children from the 5th class through high school.

September 2—A Second Seminar with various teachers reporting.

AFTERNOON

1:30 - 3:30—First Week—Puppetry—Mrs. Siloma Andrews and Mrs. Mary Pendelton
Second Week—Painting—Miss Dorothy Jeffery

3:30 - 4:30—Eurythmy—Ruth Pusch

5:00 - 6:00—Speech—Hans Pusch

EVENING

Lectures will be one hour sessions beginning at 8:00 P. M.

August 22—Imagination in the Child and in The Adult—Dr. H. Poppelbaum

August 23—Free

August 24—Free

August 25—Medical and Educational Problems During the First Seven Years of Life
—Dr. Christoph U. Linder

August 26—Entertainment

August 27—Education in a Changing World—Dr. H. von Baravalle

August 28—Festival of the Arts, Goetheanum Evening

August 29—Rudolf Steiner as Educator—Dr. H. von Baravalle

August 30—Free

August 31—Maturation and Its Risks and Possibilities—Dr. H. Poppelbaum

September 1—Education and Its Post-war Challenges—Dr. H. von Baravalle

September 2—Puppet Show

September 3—Concert

September 4—The Healing Power of Knowledge—Dr. H. Poppelbaum

The price of the Course with room and board is \$30.00 per week. Single admissions to courses are permitted, but it is to the best interests of all for participants to take entire courses.

Single admissions to morning courses	\$.30 and tax
Single admissions to any art course	\$.50 and tax
Single admissions to evening lectures	\$.30 and tax

Owing to the limited accommodations, we ask a deposit of \$5.00 with each reservation. For rooms, please write to Mrs. Elizabeth Kroth, Threefold Farm, Spring Valley, New York. Please bring ration cards.

For information about the Educational Courses, please write to Miss Dorothy Jeffery, Secretary, Rudolf Steiner School Association, 49 East 91st Street, New York, 28, New York.

The Program is subject to change without notice.

Private lessons may be arranged for:

Speech—Hans Pusch
Eurythmy—Ruth Barnett Pusch

Lacy Van Wagenen, Chairman, Rudolf Steiner School Association
Registrar, Nancy Mitchell