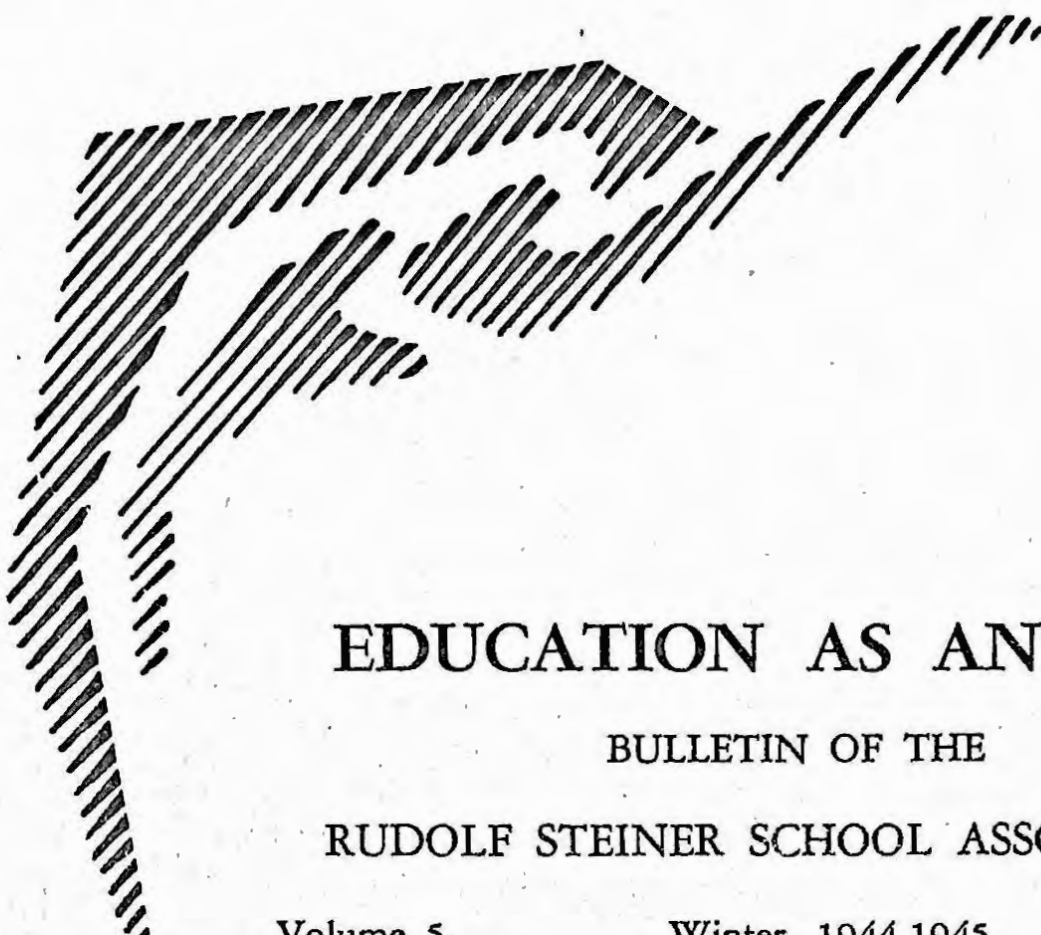




EDUCATION AS AN ART

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DO YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD'S TEMPERAMENT

Suppose, unobserved by them, you watch six children who have come to play in your garden. The ensuing dialogue was taken down verbatim and you are likely to hear something similar.

Ada: "What 'll we do?"

Amy: "I want to swing. Arthur, come push me!"

Alice: "Let's play hospital. I'll be the nurse!"

Arthur: "Yes, let's play hospital! Let's play hospital!"

Andrew: "I'll drive the ambulance. Arthur, you be the doctor. We'll put Amy in the wagon. She can be the sick one."

Alvin says nothing. He sits motionless on his tricycle looking on.

This exchange offers a wealth of information about each one of the children. It is there in the expression of leadership and in the passive withdrawal, in the joyous sociability of Arthur and the self-absorption of Amy. Gestures and physical make up, likes and dislikes, moods and responses are all revelations of a child's inner life. Could we decipher the entire message, we'd really be ready to guide boys and girls along the road to maturity.

Ages ago the Greeks were aware that every human being had a certain cast of nature which made him distinct from his fellows. They called this differential the temperament and declared there were four distinct varieties to be found in the race of men. The classic names for these attributes had so much reality that they worked their way into every modern language. We are

all vaguely familiar with the terms — sanguine, choleric, melancholic and phlegmatic. Recently, however, scientific research in this realm has thrown penetrating light on the riddle of personality.

The man chiefly responsible for this turn of investigation was the late Dr. Rudolf Steiner. He came to prominence in Europe as a leader in science and philosophy. But, since his real concern was with man himself, it was inevitable that he should turn his attention to the problems of education. These, in his opinion, remain unsolved by modern school systems. In associating itself with materialistic interpretations of life, pedagogy had become abstract and theoretical. It set no value upon insight into the nature of a child. When Dr. Steiner was asked to start a school in Stuttgart, he had an opportunity to demonstrate how real and practical were his ideas. The method of teaching he originated there became famous the world over. It was widely adopted both on the European continent and in England. Here in America there are three schools organized on the same principles. In this new art of education one of the essential tools is knowledge of the temperaments.

Midway between the streams of inheritance and the elements which make a person his own unique self lies the temperament. It is the instrument of individuality. That is why teachers and parents must learn to recognize it. Each type of personality needs to be handled in a special way. We know this instinctively through our own moods and the cycles of living. Childhood is naturally sanguine, like Spring, and youth is choleric—a summer of bursting bloom, of thunderstorms and violent heat. Maturity reaches the autumnal stage of melancholy and then comes the winter of old age and phlegmatic calm.

To understand a human being, however, is to realize how he deviates from the general picture. Those children playing in the garden are not all of sanguine temperament by any means. Alice and Andy, headstrong and tempery, always the leaders, are definitely choleric. Alvin, drawn into himself, is melancholic. In the school room and at home these children respond very differently to experience.

Practical application of discernment about the individual transforms teaching. To begin with, it is an advantage to seat pupils according to temperaments. The phlegmatic group is placed at the front where it is hardest to fall into a comfortable doze. Melancholic children, least apt to be distracted by the outside world, are installed near the windows. Choleric and sanguine children brighten up the corners where their sections are.

To place children of like disposition side by side is an excellent means of helping them overcome exaggerated tendencies. When they see in their immediate neighbors a reflection of themselves, they grow dissatisfied with the image. The choleric child, annoyed by the aggressiveness of the others in his group, wants to be let alone and strives for peace and quiet. The phlegmatic youngster becomes thoroughly bored with his dull companions. Therefore he snatches every chance to work and play with more energetic classmates.

Nowadays it is hard for the inexperienced to find out what children are like. Over their real selves vibrates the nervous tension induced by modern life. The sturdy individual of phlegmatic disposition, so characteristic of peasants and of those with the stamina for great business enterprises, is rare in this

generation of children. They are far more apt to have a melancholic cast — even if they are by nature sanguine. Only after a rhythm of work and play and rest has soothed nerves jangled by noise, mechanism and the staccato pace of the world can the true individuality emerge.

Suppose we watch Arthur at play there with the others. He has shouted gleefully that he wants to join the drama suggested by Alice. Yet, hardly has Andy come storming up to the hospital under the pear tree with his delighted patient in the wagon, when Arthur wants to play something else. He is always like that—zestful for a new activity and then quickly tired of it.

"You must finish what you begin!" cries Arthur's mother. "You'll never amount to anything if you don't learn to concentrate."

With deep comprehension of the complexities in a human being, Rudolf Steiner says a command of this sort is of no avail. Because Arthur's temperament is sanguine, he hasn't the strong will forces needed for sustained interest. Physically this type of child is tall and slender. Mentally he is very alert and must have swift change of activities and topics. There is but one way in which he can be expected to gain concentration. This is through sincere affection for some older person. He learns by unconscious imitation of someone he loves. The effect of a deep and lasting devotion which sinks into his whole being permits other interests to become enduring.

Now when it comes to the dynamic children of choleric temperament, a quite different response has to be elicited. Stocky, rosy-cheeked, vigorous in body, this powerful small being is quick tempered and willful. He needs to feel the firm rein of authority—not as a repressive force, but as a strength and poise which can be respected.

"If I should ever allow myself to show furious anger at the naughtiness of a choleric child," said a teacher of long experience, "I would lose my entire hold upon him. He likes violence and would then set himself to provoke it again. What he admires is resolute mastery."

By way of illustration, the teacher reported the case of a nine year old pupil. Repressions at home had made the boy an exaggerated case of frustrated energy. In the eurythmy class, he tried time after time to drown the music and break up the intricate movements of the lesson by noisy imitations of a riveting machine. This exhibitionism was snubbed by a complete ignoring of the disturbance. Afterwards, very quietly the teacher would praise the members of the class who were able none the less to follow the eurythmic pattern. Then he would add gravely,

"It's a pity Thomas isn't strong enough yet to make this big effort, but let us hope he can soon overcome his weakness."

At last the boy's ego was penetrated by the repeated comment. Hating to be accused of infirmity, he presently became a cooperative leader in all school activities.

Difficult tasks must be given the child with driving ego power. He has to learn that he can't do everything as easily as he supposes. The stories which are good for him are those of the hero who overcomes obstacles. A favorite

theme for painting is that of St. George and the dragon. Such a child may be capable of warm affection and needs it poured out upon him, but profound respect for the adults who guide him is an essential to inspire self control.

Melancholic children are far more difficult to reach. They are the individualities who find little joy in their physical being. Drooping head, uncertain gait, an anemic condition of the blood are the outer signs of this inner suffering. Unsocial and apathetic, they resist being drawn into relationships. Apparently it is no use to try to liven up such youngsters by jokes and gaiety. Such attempts only make them realize their lack of kinship with the world. What moves them is to learn that other human creatures experience sorrow and pain, that even certain portions of the earth itself have been laid waste by misfortune. To show the melancholic that he is not alone in his inner miseries is the one way to impel him to share the life of his family or his schoolmates.

A public school official in New York City described an interesting instance which proves the success of this appeal. In a very poor neighborhood of the city a group of forlorn, unattractive children were gathered into a special reading class. None of them had been able to learn to read. It seemed as if they were too sunk in gloom to value the mastery of this basic skill. But at last real interest was aroused. They were given the story of little Hans, a homeless waif who was buffeted about from pillar to post. So keen was sympathy for a story-book child who was worse off than the pupils themselves, that the entire class wanted to read about him. In this way they began to learn.

It was only by accident that this happy solution was found. But when teachers and parents can act consciously through deep insight, they will unlock the secret passage to difficult adjustments. In the case of phlegmatic children, the way must be blasted through lethargy. Nagging, however, will not serve for dynamite.

"There is the most popular child in my group," said a kindergarten teacher, pointing out a little golden-haired roly poly. In a room full of activity the small girl sat quietly looking at a picture book. A child came stumbling up against her and her hand went out to steady him. Then she smiled at him in a way that was nothing less than motherly.

"But," went on the teacher with a chuckle, "when Una first came here, everyone thought her a very dull little lump. The other children have helped to wake her up. Now she is lively enough, but never gets upset and is a great comfort to us all."

Full of satisfaction in all bodily sensations and in love with peace is the phlegmatic child. The problem is to break down resistance to mental and emotional activity. Association with other children who kindle sleeping energies and arouse affection is the greatest single need of such a personality.

Wisdom and knowledge build the direct and practical road of guidance for boys and girls. What we want for them is a well balanced wholeness of being. Some children must learn patience and self-control. Others have to

be prodded into interest and effort. Parents need to know exactly what to stress. Since today's children are doomed to meet tomorrow the staggering problems piling up in the world, their stability and rounded development is supremely important. Maladjustments are more serious and wide-spread than ever before. To overcome them is worth every effort of imagination and ingenuity.

Doubtless tired and over-worked fathers and mothers are beginning to groan at this point. It isn't easy after a day of multiple chores to preserve a margin for imaginative handling of child problems. Perception, however, is not a time-taking effort. Once cultivated, it flashes out to point the way step by step. Rhythm in regular chores and little rituals help every type of child to meet the strains and stresses of the day. A morning song while a child is dressing, a verse repeated at bed time, above all the place of the evening meal, as the great function of the day, pilot the temperaments to safe harbors.

It is a shocking aspect of American life that the peace of the dinner table is so often disrupted by children. Women who consistently follow the best advice in planning menus, who cook well and adopt authentic standards of setting the table, are singularly blind to the spiritual values of this gathering of the family. Children are allowed to be noisy and insistent, to jump from the table at will and leave food uneaten. Yet here is one moment of the day when they could learn to enjoy the enriching experience of sharing the grown-up world. If the stage is properly set, what father is saying, how mother is looking, the pleasure of being united for a feast, become important. The more ceremonial is this meal, the deeper will sink an impression of the dignity of the family and the ascendancy of the adults who rule it.

"Modern children aren't in awe of anybody or anything," said a thoughtful young mother in a recent speech before a literary club, "Perhaps it is honesty which has chased away idealistic illusions, but utter lack of reverence seems rather a loss."

It is an irreparable loss. When the child is allowed to dominate family relationships, he sees his own little ego exalted and naturally feels very little deference for less regal personalities. Parents who set up a democracy in which children have an equal vote with their elders would be surprised at the function of the teacher in a school based on Dr. Steiner's ideas. Here the teacher's authority is the pivotal point of action. No child is left in doubt for a moment that his instructor is directing the lesson and is the source of inspiration for all the creative work in painting, modelling and music. Firm control gives children a feeling of security which is impossible if they are merely indulged.

This truth is made luminous by a study of the temperaments. A deepening knowledge of a child's being indicates how precise are his unconscious needs. Not to work against a temperament, but to use it to the full for healthy growth, is the art of education which must flourish in both home and school.

Jeanette Eaton

ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHILDHOOD

By a Parent

There was a time when one set out the ingredients for a cake—flour, eggs, milk, shortening, sugar, raisins, baking-powder—mixed them up to the required consistency, turned them from the bowl into the cake tin, and put the tin in the oven, closing the solid door carefully and firmly, leaving the mixture until, after a certain length of time, one could safely open the door and take out the beautiful completed cake.

But now the future promises us a glass door to the oven, so that the gradual development of the cake can take place, as it were, publicly.

And as in cookery, so in many fields there is a conspiracy to do away with the darkly changing magic interval—as if by sufficient insistence on spotlights, mystery could be annihilated. And nowhere is this attitude more apparent than in the approach to childhood.

In "Penguin Island" Anatole France has described how the blessed Maël being both zealous and shortsighted—seeing a flock of penguins, mistook them for men and baptized them. This act created considerable confusion for the Saints in Heaven, since baptism conferred an immortal soul upon the recipient, whereas penguins were birds and consequently soulless. After much discussion, an appeal was made to Saint Catherine of Alexandria whose talent for resolving argument was undisputed, and the Saint pleaded that the penguins should be given an immortal soul, yet, remembering the difficulties, 'one of small size'.

And this resolution seems to have passed from the immortal souls of the penguins over to the mind and character of the child, and a child is regarded as being fashioned of the same stuff as a grown-up—but using less material: being, in fact, a grown-up, but 'one of small size.'

A difference of quantity and not of quality, as if the child were a small cake and the grown-up a large one.

Whereas in reality, a child is not a cake at all, but the ingredients for one.

For childhood's world is a world that changes, that is always moving towards some other stage. The adult world is the world of serene integration. But between the two is the transformation.

As, indeed, it is between so many things.

Digestion is a transformation of food into the physical components of the body. Blood is not made by drinking blood: nor bones by gnawing bones. Something is put in which transforms to something else. The transmutation of metals was the age-old problem of alchemy. Not an exchange of one thing for another, but a development, a metamorphosis of one thing into another.

And this change is essentially a mother's care, because, from conception to birth, she has borne within her body the one original transformation, when the embryo lies in the creative darkness of the womb.

Science may produce diagrams of the various stages of gestation, but they can have no more relation to life, being denied movement, than can one note of music to a melody, for its relation to the note past and the note to come is a necessity to it. The kinetic quality is the essential quality. By pausing too long, we destroy the essential. As, if we concentrate too deeply on our breathing, we suffocate.

The ingredients of a concert pianist are, I am afraid, scales: and of a prima ballerina, the exercises before the long mirror. Even the nursery rhyme is in agreement,

"Don't try when you're young to say 'Grumph! grumph! grumph!'

When you only can say 'Wee! wee!'

And the solution is not to set children grown-up tasks which they will complete ineptly, but rather to decide what ingredients will, after transformation, attain the mature qualities of integration—and it is wise to remember that if any ingredient has been left out from the mixture, the finished cake will show a corresponding lack.

For laboratory work the cake must be broken into little bits: and in it we should wish to find a sense of security, tolerance and a capacity for individual judgment.

A mother, absorbed in her two-and-a-half year old infant, once told me, with an air of complete satisfaction, "We are two-and-a-half years old. We know nothing else." I only hope she was an exception, for an infantile regression on Mama's part will accomplish nothing, because in those around him the child must have an opportunity to recognize maturity. I do not mean that we should put out an umbrella of righteousness and superiority, but I think we must take the responsibility for having chosen our way of life. We should manifest what makes us tick—how far we have shown fidelity to the law of our own being. And for this, our individual attempt, being sincere, we should require respect—for the furnishings of one's mind should be treated with as much politeness as the furnishings of one's house.

And this respect will create a tolerance: and I think it can be created in no other way. Because tolerance must grow on a basis of understanding — otherwise it deteriorates into a lack of discrimination.

Besides tolerance, educationalists speak frequently of emotional security—of loving the child and allowing him to grow in a pleasant atmosphere, of permitting him as much artistic creation as possible. But I would like another security to be given equal attention.

Education is towards citizenship—towards making a human being realize his responsibilities and accept them: so that he will not shrink from the appearance of the world around him. Man from his conception parallels in himself the course of life on earth, until he stands, at maturity (but not before) at the point which the world has reached. That he does not find himself a stranger in an alien place, depends on the ingredients which went towards his development. He should have learned that there is an inter-relationship between

the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms: that he belongs to the procession of all created things: that this particular moment of time has special characteristics and that he, by being born now, shares in this moment: and that the eternal verities flow. For his consciousness has gradually emerged through fairy-tales, through myths, through hero-legends, into history, until, in its progress, it became the thing it is today. Integration must be brought about by the transformation of the sum of our experience, collective and individual.

Down the stream went the Ugly Duckling, gray and drab, gangling and ungraceful, yet fraught with his own potentialities, and time passed, until he was changed (as the cake mixture in the dark oven changes, as the child to maturity changes) and so he returned, transformed, white and lovely and a Swan.

Ann Napier

WHO SHALL RULE

The children of the class for whom this story was composed are ten and eleven years old, and have outgrown the fairy story age, although most of them still have a warm affection for such stories. In the early grades when any unusual disciplinary problem arose, the class teacher could find a fairy story to fit the case, or make up one herself; but now such a tale would be too child-like for a serious occasion. Such an occasion arose when some of the boys began grumbling about what they considered too great strictness in governing their behavior. So the following story was told to meet the problems of this particular age. The class had just finished a study of Roman law in a simple elementary form.

Once upon a time, somewhere in this world, the ruler of a country had governed his people wisely and well for many years, but the young men growing up became restless and wanted something new. The youths of the city said one to another, "Our ruler is a fine man, it is true, but it is time *we* had a chance." And then the country youths, who think more slowly, for they live among slow-growing plants and placid cows, said one to another, "Ours is a good ruler, but his palace is in the city and he favors the city people."

At first these complaints were whispered, but soon they grew until the noise reached the palace. Then the ruler with a sad heart called together his council of wise old men and took counsel with them. The next morning a herald summoned all the young men to appear before the palace steps. When the crowd had gathered, the oldest counsellor of all stepped forward and silence fell, for they still had reverence for the old.

"O, young men," said he, "I bring you a message from your ruler. He has heard your whisperings and complaints and he has gone into voluntary exile."

At this news a great silence, almost of fear, fell upon the young men. Then an excited murmur ran through the crowd, "O, learned counsellor, who shall rule us now?"

The old man answered, "The responsibility rests upon your shoulders. You must choose."

There was much excitement and rioting before a new ruler was chosen and, because there were more country men than city dwellers, a farmer was chosen for a ruler, and came to live in the palace. Very soon he began to feel unhappy. City life seemed strange and unnatural; when he woke with the sun there was a great silence; no cocks crowed, no cows lowed and no horses neighed—only when the first milk-wagons reached the city did he hear a stir of life.

It was not long before the ruler issued an edict ordering all city men to rise with the sun and go to their factories and their shops, and to work there until sunset. There was much grumbling, but they obeyed. While this went on, the country people were enjoying easier laws, growing fat and lazy, and raising poorer crops and thinner milk, but the city workers were too tired to notice anything. When they came home from work they were too weary to eat much, and fell into their beds. But the shop people had plenty of time to notice, for they had few customers in those days. The workers worked from sun-up to sun-down even on Saturdays. And the theatrical producers had time to notice, for few workers could keep awake long enough to attend their performances. Gradually a new whispering went through the city. It started with the shopkeepers and the theatrical managers. Soon it reached even the weary factory workers, and the whispering grew to a grumbling and the grumbling grew to loud talking and quarreling; until one day, as the sun rose, instead of going to the factories and shops, the workers crowded to the palace and surrounded it. Young men stood on the palace steps and shouted speeches at them, until they were so excited they began shouting too; and finally they threw sticks and stones at the palace windows, until they broke them all. The country ruler escaped through a secret passage out past the city gate, and returned to his farm to hide.

After a time the people were too tired to shout. The council appeared on the palace steps again and told them to choose a new ruler, if they were not satisfied with their first choice. This time many of the country men were too discouraged to vote, so a city ruler was chosen.

The city ruler was sure that he knew just what to do to make everything all right: the whole country should be governed like a city. He issued an edict that everyone should rise at seven o'clock in the morning and stop work at five. Then he started to "improve" the country; he had fine new hard roads built everywhere, even to the barns and pastures. He had theatres built, and ordered the people to go at least twice a week. The country people grumbled, but they obeyed. The cows and hens and growing crops, however, did not understand any laws except those of nature.

At sun-up the cocks crowed, and soon the cows began to low and then to moan and bellow. Not being milked at the proper time they became diseased

and gave less milk, and their hooves grew sore from the hard roads. The hens, on the other hand, had not enough feed and laid smaller and fewer eggs. Sometimes the hot sun was high enough to burn the young plants before the farmers came out to cultivate and water them. Sometimes it rained after five o'clock and the hay, which had been dried, rotted ungathered. The plowing and the sowing were never all done. The farmers worried and grumbled, but they managed to have enough food. Not so the city people! They soon found their milk did not arrive fresh for breakfast, and it had less and less cream; the vegetables in the markets became fewer and poorer and the meat tougher. Then the city people grumbled too, and as conditions grew worse in the country—cattle dying, and crops failing—many people in both city and country began to starve. This stirred up even the country men to action.

One morning at sun-up a mob started marching to the city. The sound of their marching feet woke the city people, and, when they saw that they were headed for the palace, they joined them. Soon the palace was once more surrounded. This time it was the young men from the country who stood on the steps of the palace and shouted to the people; but when they began to throw sticks and stones at the palace windows the young city men joined them, until all the windows were broken. When they were tired out with shouting and rioting, the palace doors opened and out marched the council, headed by the oldest and wisest counsellor. The people, who still revered old age, grew still; and at that moment a stranger, with a long gray beard and travel-worn clothes, passed through the crowd and up the steps. He whispered a while to the oldest counsellor, who nodded his head, and then spoke to the people.

"Young men, you have had your own way and you see the results. Will you listen to one who has traveled through the world and learned much?"

"We will listen!" shouted the mob, who still wanted something new.

The gray-bearded stranger stepped forward and looked quietly at the mob, and there was something about him, dusty and shabby though he was, that held their attention as he spoke.

"O people, I have travelled up and down the world, through many lands, and I have learned many things about men and their needs. These many things men need can come from three simple laws of life, if men will accept them. The first is that men must have love and sympathy for one another. The second is that men must have equal justice from their ruler. And the third is that men, even rulers, must learn to obey before they can govern themselves and others." When he had said this the stranger stopped speaking and stood there quietly.

The mob was quiet too for a moment, and then with one voice they shouted, "Be our ruler and show us these things!"

The stranger spoke again, "Have you thought well? Are you sure?"

"We are sure!" they shouted impatiently.

"Then hear my first edict," commanded the new ruler. "The city leader and the country leader must go to prison for misruling the people and harming the whole land."