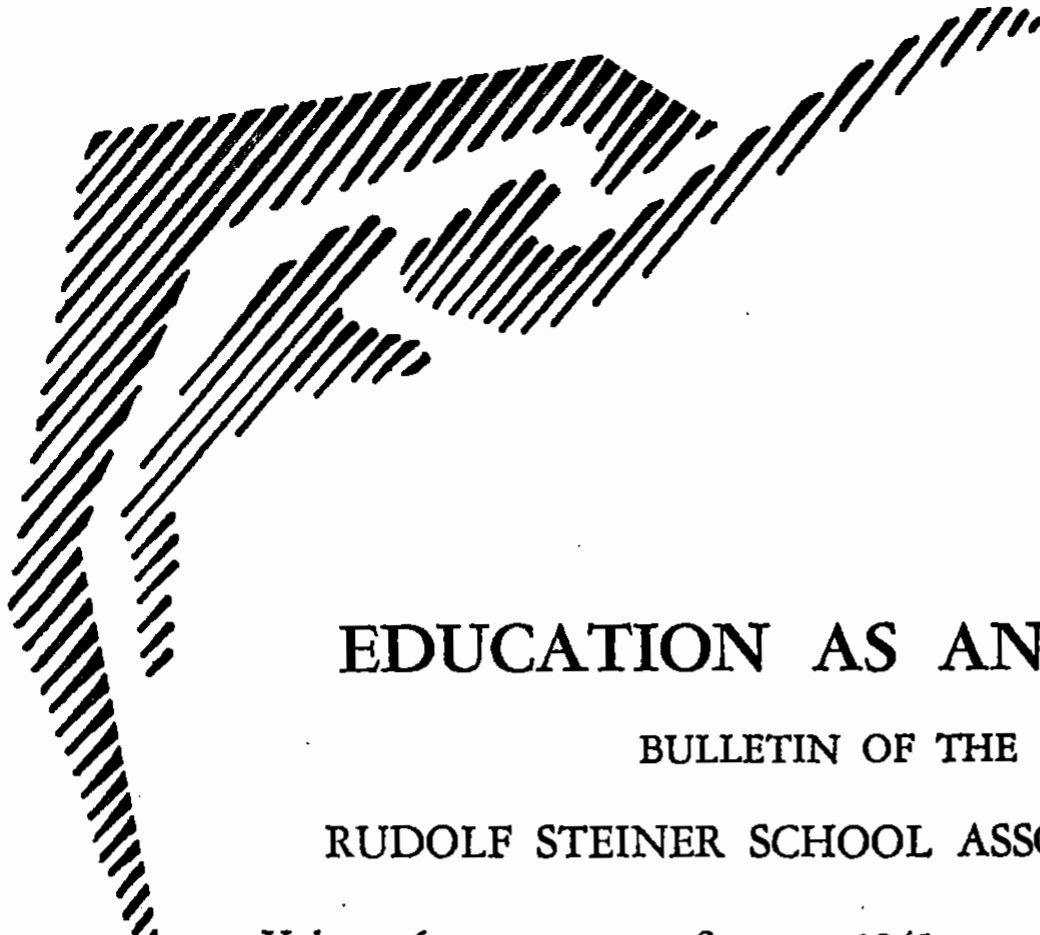




EDUCATION AS AN ART

BULLETIN OF THE
RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Volume 6

Summer, 1945

No. 2

THE SOLDIER, THE HUNTSMAN, AND THE SERVANT*

By Dorothy Jeffery

Once there was a young King who ruled over a great kingdom. He was not married, and his counsellors begged him to find a wife so that he might in time have a son to rule over the kingdom when he should die. But the young King refused.

"For," he said, "women are silly, stubborn creatures who think only of themselves, and a wife would only bring me trouble."

Nevertheless the counsellors continued to beseech him to marry, and gave him no peace until he finally said

"Very well, I will marry any woman who can come to my court and serve me for a year and a day, disguised as a man, without my discovering her."

And so a proclamation was sent out through the whole kingdom that,

"Any woman who, disguised as a man, can serve the King for a year and a day without being discovered, shall at the end of that time become Queen."

Now it happened that in this kingdom there was a poor woman who had three daughters. The oldest was proud and stubborn. She thought only of herself and would never do anything that she didn't want to do. Whenever she was asked to help at home she would stamp her feet, toss her head, curl her lip and say, "Why should I? I don't want to!" or, "No I won't!"

The second daughter was very pretty and very silly. She spent most of her time dressing up and giggling at herself in the mirror. Her mother could get no help from her at home, because this daughter would leave the bread to

* If you know any little boys who say "I won't!", who make faces at mirrors, who get the giggles too often, this story is for them.

burn up in the oven, or the beds unmade, or the floor unswept, while she stood in front of the mirror primping and preening and giggling at herself.

So it was that the youngest daughter did more than her share of the housework, but she did it well and did whatever she was told without complaint. She cooked and cleaned, worked in the garden and chopped firewood with an axe. She learned to do all the work that a man can do, and grew to be strong of arm.

Often the mother would say, "If it weren't for my youngest I don't know how we would get along, for she can do all the work that a man can do, and she is like a son to me."

Now when the two eldest daughters heard of the King's proclamation, each one immediately made up her mind that she would be Queen. So the oldest one disguised herself as a soldier, and went to seek service with the King. The second one dressed herself as a huntsman and likewise went to serve the King.

Their mother was only too glad to see them go away, for it meant that there were two mouths less to feed and they had never been any help or comfort to her. But when she saw her youngest daughter working day after day without thought for herself, the mother said,

"Why shouldn't you be Queen some day? You'd make a fine Queen!"

At first the youngest daughter said, "No! I will stay with you and take care of you."

But the mother said, "If you became Queen, all of our troubles would end." Thus she persuaded her.

So the youngest daughter dressed herself as a common serving-man and went to the King's court to become his servant.

By now, all three sisters were in the King's service. The oldest, dressed as a soldier, carried a sword and shield and stood next to the King wherever he was, to protect him from his enemies. The second, dressed as a huntsman, carried a bow and arrows, and followed the King when he went hunting. And the youngest, dressed as a common servant, also went with the King wherever he went and polished the King's armor, fed his horse, and cooked the King's food.

Nearly a year passed by and as yet the King had not discovered that the soldier, the huntsman or the servant were in reality women. But near the end of the year something happened.

The King heard of a great treasure in a far, wild country—gold, silver and precious stones in great numbers — which was stored in a hollow mountain and guarded by a fierce dragon with nine heads. The King made up his mind that he would capture this treasure, and rather than take a whole army with him, he decided to take only a few picked men who by their wits and courage would help him conquer the dragon and win the treasure.

So he chose one soldier, one hunter, and one servant to go with him. And, strange to say, these three were none other than the three sisters.

And so they set out on their journey. The King rode forth first on a beautiful snow-white horse. Then came the soldier, carrying a sword and shield, and riding a coal black horse. Next came the huntsman, dressed in green, carrying his bow and arrows and riding a brown horse. And last of all came the servant riding on a mule and carrying an axe with which to cut firewood in the forest.

At the end of the first day they stopped to camp for the night, and the King said to the soldier

"You are the one to fight the dragon."

Then he said to the servant, "You are the one to make the fire and cook the food."

But to the huntsman he said, "You are the one to hunt in the forest for meat that we may eat tonight."

At this, the huntsman acted very strangely. First he giggled, like a girl, then he jumped up and down in great excitement so that his bow and arrows slipped off his shoulder into some bushes; then he started to look madly around for the bow and arrows and his cap fell off. Then he had to look for his cap. It took him quite a while to find everything, giggling as he went, and finally he found the bow and arrows and the cap. Then he took out a comb and a mirror and combed his hair very nicely before putting his cap on again. Then he looked at himself in the mirror, primping and preening like a girl.

The King, who was impatient for his dinner, flew into a great rage and was just about to give his huntsman a blow with his fist when he stopped. Taking a piece of paper out of his knapsack he wrote something on it, and then folded it and sealed it. Giving it to the huntsman he said, "I can see that you will be no help as a huntsman, so take this message back to the counsellors at my palace, without fail, on pain of death."

So it was that the huntsman returned to the King's palace and delivered the paper to the King's counsellors, and when they opened it, they read,

"This huntsman so fine
Will be no Queen of mine.
He's just a silly girl.
So put her to work as a palace maid
And let her sweep the floors."

So the second daughter was discovered and had to spend the rest of her days sweeping the floors in the King's palace.

In the meantime the King, the soldier and the servant travelled on. And it was the servant who now, not only made the fire and cooked the food, but hunted for meat as well.

At last, one day, they drew near to the dragon's mountain. They could hear the dragon roaring, they could feel the earth shake under his mighty tread, and could see clouds of smoke and flame rising in the air from the top of the mountain.

At this, the King said to the servant,

"You are the one to make the fire and cook the food which you have so faithfully hunted for us."

And to the soldier he said,

"But you are the one to fight the dragon. So sharpen your sword and mount your horse, and advance against the dragon. We will follow to give you aid should you need it."

Then the soldier acted strangely. He stamped his feet on the ground, he tossed his head and curled his lip and said, "Why should I? I don't want to!"

Whereupon the King said, "I am the King! You are my soldier. You are bound to do as I say."

"Oh! no, I won't!" answered the soldier.

This put the King in a great rage, and he was just about to give the soldier a great blow with his fist, when he stopped himself, took a piece of paper out of his knapsack and wrote on it. Then he folded the paper and

sealed it and said to the soldier, "Since you are no help as a soldier, take this message back to my counsellors without fail, on pain of death!"

The soldier, who was glad enough not to have to fight the dragon, rode away. When he finally delivered the King's message to the King's counsellors they opened it and read,

"This soldier so fine
Will be no Queen of mine.
He's just a stubborn girl.
So put her to work in the scullery
And let her wash the dishes."

So the oldest daughter was discovered and had to spend the rest of her days washing dishes.

In the meantime the King was left to face the dragon alone with his faithful servant, who said, "Let me go first to fight the dragon with my axe, and while the dragon struggles with me, you, then, can creep up behind him and safely slay him."

The King agreed to this. While the servant swung his axe at the dragon in front of his nine smoking heads, the King came upon him from behind and chopped off his heads one by one. So they won the treasure. As a reward the King gave his servant a beautiful gold chain to wear on his neck.

Now it was just a year and a day since the youngest sister had dressed herself as a servant and entered the King's service, but she didn't reveal herself. And after they returned to the palace she disappeared.

The King, however, had learned to love his faithful servant, and when he disappeared, the King was so sad that he dressed himself as a poor working man and set out to travel through his kingdom in search of his beloved servant.

And thus he came to a poor woman's hut one evening and begged to be sheltered there for the night. The woman let him come in, and told him to warm himself at the fire. Then she called out to someone in the kitchen, "Daughter, cook another potato, for we have a guest who will share our food with us."

When it was time to eat, the King sat down at the table with the poor woman. From the kitchen came her daughter carrying a big bowl full of baked potatoes and wearing around her neck a beautiful golden chain.

As soon as the King saw the chain he jumped to his feet, and in great excitement looked at the girl. Then he saw that her hair and her eyes were of the same color as those of his lost servant. With great joy he revealed that he was the King, and he begged her to become his Queen, "For," he said, "You are as strong as a man and as brave, and you are not silly and stubborn as most women are."

So they were married. The poor old mother came to live in peace and plenty at the palace and they all lived happily ever after, while the oldest daughter washed the dishes and the second daughter swept the floors the rest of their days. And if they haven't stopped they are still washing and sweeping for all I know.

THE END

During the past school year the children of the 8th class were asked to write a number of short papers, the subjects having been chosen to stimulate their interest in expressing themselves in a simple, direct manner and in using a growing vocabulary.

After they had written book reviews, dramatic criticisms, and descriptions of characters, it seemed a good time for them to compose something based on their own ideas. The following dialogue was written for an assignment calling for "a conversation about the movies, one of the speakers to be a parent".

The papers all showed keen awareness of parental opinions but none revealed the true opinion of the offspring!

THE MOVIES

(A dialogue between two mothers on the pros and cons of the movies. These mothers represent the two extremes.)

Setting: The street corner

Characters: Mrs. Townley and Mrs. Gibson

Time: 2 P.M. Saturday afternoon.

Mrs. Townley is standing on the corner waiting for the green light when Mrs. Gibson walks up to her.

Mrs. G.—My dear, how nice to see you! It's been simply ages since I saw you last.

Mrs. T.—Yes, we haven't seen each other for so long, we must get together some day soon, maybe Tuesday.

Mrs. G.—And how is that dear little son of yours? He must be eight by now.

Mrs. T.—Why, yes, he's just eight. He happens to be at the movies this afternoon.

Mrs. G.—At the movies! It must be a very special picture you're letting him see.

Mrs. T.—Well, to tell you the truth I don't exactly know what the picture is. It's either "The Case of the Midnight Murders" or "The Mystery of the Strange Suicide."

Mrs. G.—Why, I'm so shocked I don't know what to say. I never could have believed that you would let a sweet innocent little boy see such pictures. I'd never think of letting my little Joey, who's ten, go to the movies unless it was a very special picture.

Mrs. T.—Why, my Ralph goes almost every Saturday. I think you are extremely narrow-minded, Mrs. Gibson.

Mrs. G.—Well, I think you are much too carefree, Mrs. Townley. You will completely ruin your child's life by letting his mind become filled with those *terrible* murder stories. I never let my boy even hear such stories on the radio.

Mrs. T.—Well, you are going to make a sheltered sissy out of your boy, and I think that is much worse than what I am doing.

Mrs. G.—Well, since you feel that way it might be better if you didn't let your *dear* boy go near the little sissy.

Mrs. T.—I think that's a very good idea, and maybe *your* dear boy better keep away from my neglected child.

Mrs. G.—I must go right away. I'm late for my appointment already, and you can forget about next Tuesday! Goodbye!

Mrs. T.—Yes, I will. Goodbye!

The End

In contrast to the transcribing of the parental viewpoint, is the following excerpt from a letter of a former pupil of the school, written to her mother. Although shorn of context it does not need a background nor an announced subject to assure the reader that the words were written directly out of a child's own experience.

"But that was the wonder in the Rudolf Steiner School, that both parts of a person were used, and so you felt completely alive and useful, and you had a central unity within you, which gave you a definite attitude towards the world, and so the confusion was gone."

Reluctantly the Rudolf Steiner School Association accepts the resignation of Arvia MacKaye as editor of The Bulletin. With sincere appreciation we wish to thank her for the time she has devoted to her editorial work, which took her from the important task of translating certain works of Rudolf Steiner and Albert Steffen. Now she will be able to give more time to this activity. We are indeed glad to make it possible for her.

THE "900 FUND"

When the School appealed to its friends this spring for the help that was needed in meeting the financial obligations of the first year in the new building, the response was heart-warming. Throughout the month of May there was a daily influx of checks which seemed to speak for an untiring interest and faith in the School on the part of friends in America, Canada, Hawaii, Mexico and Panama.

No day passed during this time when less than sixty dollars came in, and the letters which expressed hopes for the future of the School were many. All the good wishes received were as enriching as the money which came with them. The Board of Directors and the Faculty of the School were immensely cheered by this evidence of so many faithful friends who have never even seen the School.

We would like to give you a colorful picture of some of the expressions

of good will, as well as of some of the individuals who, as one person put it, "wanted to join the 900 Club."

The following letter was heartening: "Your recent letter was fine. I think this plan to raise money is excellent. Ten dollars is not terrifying, thousands are. And to realize that ten dollars will help is a comfort to all who, like me, are poor and yet full of guilt and regret at not being able to help. I'm racking my brains to think where I might sign up someone else. Meanwhile, accept my modest subscription for twenty dollars with all best wishes."

Another person wrote: "Happy to make this contribution and am deeply interested in your method of education, and trust that people will be increasingly open to what you have to offer."

And from still another: "Being myself a product of the orthodox system of education, I am glad to assist in shielding the rising generation from it."

One person said: "I do hope the need is felt by many and that you will get the necessary amount and more."

A friend in Hawaii was able to interest six others who sent their contributions. Hawaii seemed a very friendly place, for among those who helped the School were three Chinese friends, and two children who used their allowance. At the same time, those people who are nearest to the School — the parents of our school children—responded generously also, and even many parents of the parents. The alumni contributed individually, and as a group sponsored a play, flower sale and tea to raise money for the fund. Then too, several children in the School brought in one dollar each, in envelopes which were addressed in colored pencils "For the 900 Fund". One of them, a girl, probably expressed what they all wanted to say. When she handed her envelope to the Faculty Chairman she took a deep breath and said, "Here, that's all I can do."

There were those who were able to contribute five or ten units of \$10.00, and others with as great good will put together what they could as a joint offering. We also received gifts from those who were friends of friends of the School.

The School itself sends all of its friends most thankful greetings. We are glad to be able to say that, although the "900 Fund" has not yet reached its goal completely, it has taken the School through the most critical period and helped to meet the immediate needs. More than seventy-five per cent has been covered and we feel quite confident that the last twenty-five per cent will come in during the summer.

This issue of The Bulletin is a truly co-operative product. Without the interest and assistance of Miss Jeffery, Miss Reeve, Mrs. Mitchell, Miss MacKaye and Mrs. Bugbey, it could not have been assembled and published. Acknowledgment and thanks due them are hereby given.

Mary M. Cross

PUBLICATIONS

Nature Stories and Legends from the Waldorf School Reader
Translated by Virginia Field Birdsall \$.50

The Blind Brethren, a fairy-story play about the minerals
by Frederick Hiebel \$.50

Orders may be sent to The Rudolf Steiner School Association.

Membership in the Rudolf Steiner School Association, including the quarterly Bulletin, is \$2.00 per year. Single copies of the Bulletin, 15c each; for more than 10 copies 10c each, postpaid.

Address Secretary Rudolf Steiner School Association, 15 East 79th Street, New York.