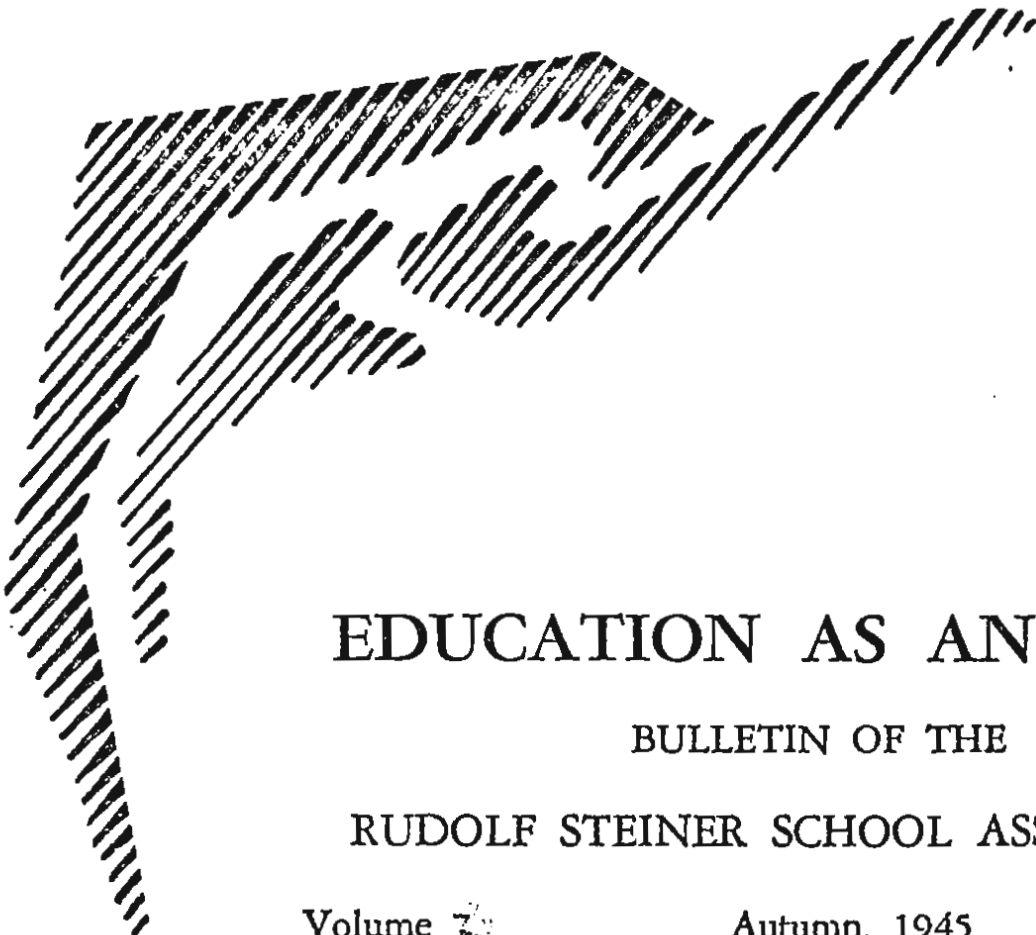




EDUCATION AS AN ART

BULLETIN OF THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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SUMMER EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Threefold Farm was again the center of the Summer Educational Conference, which this year was sponsored cooperatively by four schools: High Mowing School, Wilton, N. H.; Kimberton Farms School, Phoenixville, Pa.; The Rudolf Steiner School, New York City; and St. Hubert's, Sudbury, Mass. It was the first time that several schools interested in the theory and practice of Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy shared the planning of the conference and took part actively in it.

The conference began on a festive note as Dr. von Baravalle, the chairman, announced the re-opening of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart under the protection of the Americans, and the consequent restoration of Dr. Steiner's methods there.

Regular morning activities consisted of lectures of a general educational nature, Eurythmy, and Speech or Singing Classes. Concerning the first, faculty members explained or demonstrated through actual lessons how Dr. Steiner's methods were worked out in the classroom. Eurythmy classes, guided by Mrs. Pusch, gave beginners and others a sense of the freeing quality of the gestures and movements practiced in Eurythmy. The first week Mr. Pusch concluded the morning period with a class in speech; the second week Miss Hilda Deighton used this period for singing. With the latter we began as children in the first grade. Moving through the grades, day by day, we saw and felt how children can be helped to develop a free tone, and learned also of the levels of singing suitable to young children.

In the afternoons, Mr. Kroth gave a course in painting. He emphasized the necessity of working from a feeling for color, and of remembering that

the process in painting, especially for children, is more important than the result. Following this, Dr. Poppelbaum lectured on Botany and Zoology, his purpose this year being to give facts rather than methods, so that the teacher might have these facts as landmarks when consulting textbooks.

Evening lectures were especially interesting. Mrs. Birdsall told of her experience as an American at the Waldorf School. How much that experience meant we know, for she has been connected with the establishing of two Rudolf Steiner schools. The Waldorf School from the English point of view was given by Mrs. von Baravalle. Mrs. Huckel, of St. Hubert's School, described for us her school in Cannes, as well as her new one in Sudbury. It was wonderful to hear of her experience with children, especially the results of "problem" cases sent to her, in which true understanding of the child's nature made the difference between the "good" or "bad" boy or girl.

How education and medicine must go hand in hand was shown by Dr. Christopher Linder. Mr. Ralph Courtney spoke on "The Threefold Commonwealth". Dr. Poppelbaum lectured on "Contributions to the Psychology of the Will", and Dr. von Baravalle on "Perspective".

A delightful musical evening included a series of songs by Mrs. Judy Brown Maas, and several cello numbers by Mr. Rudolf Doblin, assistant conductor of the Buffalo Symphony Orchestra. Mrs. Jacobi and Dr. von Baravalle were responsible for an enjoyable picnic, as well as a corn roast on the beach, while Miss Rieschke won the gratitude of many for her splendid sessions of folk dancing following evening lectures.

Once again, teachers, parents, and others who gathered for this conference came away newly heartened, knowing that the hardening processes of the usual education can be transformed.

Ruth Geiger

THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Dr. Steiner has told teachers that "all method must be immersed in the artistic element." He says further that "one must realize the inner creative element which can be developed between the ages of seven and fourteen. If at this time one misses the development of this inner creative element, it can never be retrieved."

While developing the artistic and creative nature of the child one must also make sure that "all that the child learns during his school years should ultimately and in some way be so applied that he can trace its connection everywhere with practical human life."

Of the teachers Dr. Steiner says, "Man is so organized that with rightly directed feeling he can himself derive from these feelings his own guiding forces."

PRIMARY GRADES

The three primary grades form a unity, and what is started in the First Grade is carried further with the same curriculum form. As Dr. Steiner says, "Each lesson should be a picture created by the teacher. If the teacher can paint or draw an actual picture, so much the better."

It has been the experience of the teachers in the Rudolf Steiner School, New York, that it is best for the First Grade children, some of whom are barely six, to start the year with a long, slow development of printing the capital letters of the alphabet. The alphabet as a whole, and individual letters, are approached through painting and drawing, walking and running straight and curved lines; also by forming lines in the air with the hand, then printing them in color on the board and on paper. A fairy story leads up to a picture—of mountains perhaps—then these mountains are easily transformed into a carefully printed "M". The children follow the teacher through this process and then imitate it on the board and on paper. The vowels are introduced from an inner feeling rather than from imitation of an outer form. The name and the sounds of each letter are carefully drilled. By Christmas, in three months' time, all twenty-six letters are learned so that they can be printed from dictation and recited in alphabetical order. During this time a few simple sentences can be copied or originated by the children, using words which they can spell from the sounds. The children first learn to read from their own work, which they also illustrate.

In the next period of work with printing and reading, the capital letters are reviewed and then the small letters can be learned comparatively quickly. Sentences formerly printed in capital letters can be copied, and new sentences made. This is always followed by reading what has been done. Drill work is done with word families such as "at", the children learning to supply the first letter of each word. Silent letters are gradually introduced when needed, and are understood as something special.*

At the end of the year a little reading is done. Familiar folk stories, like "The Little Red Hen", with many repetitions, are best. The reading can be preceded by studying a list of new words on the board.

As part of the Main Lesson the children learn poetry through listening to and repeating poems recited by the teacher, emphasizing the musical and rhythmical qualities. The children retell stories and act out familiar ones in a primitive way with a little stage-managing from the teacher. Later a more finished performance can develop.

In teaching arithmetic full advantage should be taken of the fact that the children at this age are living especially in their rhythmic systems. Multiplication tables taught to the accompaniment of rhythmic clapping, stamping, walking and running, work into the whole child and become firmly fixed in his memory.

On entering school most children can count at least to 10, and can easily learn to march in the rhythms of the 2-table and 3-table. The outer forms of the figures in arithmetic are not as significant as the ideas behind them. For this reason the children are led to discover the reality of numbers in the universe, as for example *one* sun, *one* moon, *two* parents, *three*-leaf clover, etc. The numbers are copied with the pictures that give them meaning.

* *Various sound exercises are practiced.*

The four arithmetical processes are taught together. One can begin with a pile of nuts, or a bag of marbles, dividing and sharing them with the children so each receives 2. Then it can be made apparent how many times the total number has been divided. The children can give away and receive marbles from each other, which brings in subtraction and addition. This going from the whole to the part is fundamental in the work.

The multiplication tables are learned; "2 equals 1 x 2", etc. In adding, the sum is given first. A transition is made from rhythmic counting to counting with objects, and then to copying simple examples. By the end of the year the children begin to be familiar with the signs representing the four processes. They also learn to count by 5's and 10's to 100, to tell time by 5's and 10's, count pennies, nickels and dimes, and read the calendar figures.

In the first school year many fairy stories are told to the children, and are used in introducing letters or in playing number games. A first approach to nature study is made through stories in which mountains, rivers, forests and meadows live and speak in such a way that their inherent qualities are revealed.

SECOND GRADE ARITHMETIC

As a teacher in a Rudolf Steiner School one is constantly attempting to discover, in their reality, the realms of thought, feeling and will as they develop in the children. One is helped in this search by the wisdom with which the curriculum has been organized, for as soon as one works in it and undertakes to apply the methods which have been suggested by Rudolf Steiner, and developed by other teachers, the response from the children, over a period of time, throws light on that for which one is searching.

In considering the work of the second grade, it has seemed to me that it had a certain task which became more apparent as the year progressed; a task which was announced, so to speak, by the children's response to Aesop's Fables, and which was further revealed in the study of arithmetic. My first impression of the children's relationship to the Fables was that, in taking the step from the Fairy Tales in first grade to Fables in the second, they were stepping out of the weaving, feelingful pictures of the Fairy Tales into the kind of a story in which the pictures fall away, as soon as the story is told, and leave room for thought. One might even say that the moral of the Fable was the part that sank in; whereas the Fairy Tale with all of its imagery took hold of the children and lived on in them as a whole. In this respect, then, it seemed that the use of the Fables announced that the power of thinking could now be slowly awakened.

It was especially in the arithmetic periods that the way to do this was most helpfully opened. As the children showed themselves ready to begin thinking, to carry over into other kinds of arithmetical activity what they had learned to remember with the help of rhythmic counting, the teacher utilized this new capacity by giving them repeated opportunities to learn the reality of numbers by means of varied approaches.

When the children started arithmetic in second grade, they could repeat the 2- and 3-tables orally. They could read and write their numbers from 1 to 100. They could work out problems in the processes with the help of object counters. They could think the answers to very simple problems which

were in story form and in 1-figure numbers. But they could not take dictation in the processes, connect the written process signs with actual processes, read written examples and know how to get the answers, or do mental arithmetic purely within numbers. On the whole they could repeat what they had once learned, but could not apply it as method in a new situation.

During the year the effort was made to help them connect the rhythmic and object counting with mental arithmetic, and mental arithmetic, in turn, with written work. It seemed that it was time to bring together the various arithmetic activities so that the children became more and more aware of the fact that what they recited by rote in the tables could likewise be found in the grouping of objects, and could have the same meaning in mental arithmetic and in written work.

In the teaching there were five possible methods to be used: rhythmic counting, active arithmetic, object counting, written arithmetic (including number patterns) and mental arithmetic. The first four activities playing into each other offered an approach to mental arithmetic. Mental arithmetic became the goal, almost of itself, for it became apparent that until the children took the step of developing their ability to think out number relationships they could not advance. It was obviously the important step for the year.

We went from rhythmic and active work to object counting, to written and mental arithmetic, so that the awakening thought forces were continually supported by action and imagination. By the end of the year the goal, on the whole, was reached, for it was possible to introduce exercises in straight mental arithmetic and the children enjoyed their ability to think for themselves in all four processes.

By way of characterizing the five approaches mentioned above:

Rhythmic counting consists of the clapping, stamping and walking that accompanies the reciting of the tables and the counting by 2's, 3's, 4's, 5's and 10's; in the rhythmic work are also included the various forms—circles, triangles, squares, pentagrams—which are walked in connection with the tables.

Object counting is done with shells, marbles, acorns or anything else that is interesting to handle, and includes the working out of problems.

Written arithmetic includes copy work, dictation and some improvisation, the children developing their own examples. The drawing and writing of number patterns is a link between object counting or active arithmetic and methods of writing examples.

Mental arithmetic consists of oral story problems and finally pure number questions in all the processes.

It always appeared that the large, all-over quality of lessons which follow through from rhythms and action into object counting, then writing, help to concentrate the children and to bring what they have learned with the help of their limbs, breath and dramatic feeling, into their heads.

To give an example, the following will show a way in which the various approaches can lead the children to an understanding of odd and even numbers:

Active arithmetic: The children stand facing each other in two rows. Opposites hold hands as partners, then step back from each other and take numbers.

1 has 2 for a partner
 3 has 4 for a partner
 5 has 6 for a partner
 7 has 8 for a partner
 9 has 10 for a partner

They learn that when they all have partners, the two sides are "even", but if there is one without a partner, that one is "odd". If the teacher calls "7", all numbers above 7, i.e. 8, 9, 10, sit down. 1, 3, 5, 7 stand facing 2, 4, 6. Then 7 is seen to be odd, and the children chant, "7 is an *odd* number." The teacher then calls "4". All numbers above 4 sit down. 1, 3 still stand facing 2, 4. All have partners and the children chant, "4 is an *even* number." This can be very quick and active and the children learn to think fast when they have to make sure whether they stand or sit. In the end the children can be asked to say their own numbers by sides—1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 2, 4, 6, 8, 10—and thus find that one team is the "odd" side while the other team is the "even" side.

Object counting: (with beans, shells, acorns, etc.)

"Odd" and "even" teams sit facing each other across desks. The teacher gives the "odds" an odd number of beans and gives the "evens" an even number. Each "odd" then gives the opposite "even" enough beans to make the "even" odd and the "odd" even. Or "evens" can give "odds" enough to make "odds" even, and to become odd themselves. The teacher can work out variations.

Written arithmetic: In the following number pattern the children write the lowest row first, making the odd numbers blue and the even numbers red. Then, directly over each odd number they write 1 in blue, as a sign that it is an odd number. Next they write 2 in red over every even number, to show that it is an even number. Then working from the lowest row, they are asked to put at the top the answer to the questions:

1 is 1 plus what
 2 is 2 plus what
 3 is 1 plus what
 4 is 2 plus what

and so forth. In writing their answers they continue to use red for even numbers, blue for odd. They enjoy finding that the whole top row, except for the zeros, appears in red and in a definite sequence of 2's.

0	0	2	2	4	4	6	6	8	8
1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Dictation: Numbers can be dictated singly with the children writing them in blue or red according to whether they are odd or even. Later simple examples can be dictated and the children told to write the numbers in blue or red to show the odd and even.

In conclusion, as the children grew more and more independent in their written work they became likewise more successful in mental arithmetic. The result of having used such a combination of forces in teaching arithmetic was to avoid mere memorization and to go toward active thinking.

Dorothy Jeffery

GIVING THANKS

The sun has kissed the apples red
And turned the pumpkins yellow,
The gobbling turkeys are well fed
And purple grapes are mellow.

The squirrels' nests are full of nuts,
The farmers' barns spill over
With ripened corn and wheat and oats
From fields the snow will cover.

The little birds find each dried pod
Holds food in coldest weather;
So man and beast give thanks to God,
Who feeds them all together.

Margaret Peckham

Written for the First Grade

RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL BAZAAR

Saturday — December 8th — 2 P.M.

The Fair comes once a year and is always such a gay, bustling, exciting event for all who make it a date and come. But, to make it the usual success, and even more we hope, we need not only your continued patronage, but also your very substantial help as well.

In past years we have offered fancy work, flowers, books, pottery, works of art, toys, and a resplendent food table filled to overflowing with cakes, cookies, preserves, and candy. There will be story-telling and perhaps a puppet show for the children and when our shoppers and browsers are in need of rest and refreshment, we will offer them our most convivial Tea Room.

Donations for these tables will be heartily welcome, as will also be any suggestions which may add to our success. Donations and suggestions should be sent to the School in care of Mrs. Margaret Sarepera.

It should not be forgotten that at our Fair one will find many practical as well as fancy and artistic gifts to supplement that ever elusive *Christmas* shopping list.

Please do come everyone and bring all your friends!

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Rudolf Steiner School Association is willing, this winter, to act as a clearing house for all contributions toward the relief and rehabilitation of the various Rudolf Steiner Schools which are being re-opened in Europe. During the coming months the needs of these schools will become more and more apparent. Already several individuals are in touch with the schools and are anxious to do what they can to help. The Executive Committee of The Rudolf Steiner School Association feels that in this emergency the Association should do what it can to co-ordinate the plans of groups or individuals and to bring about a workable connection with an established relief agency, through which school supplies, food and clothing can reach those schools which are in the greatest need. Anyone who has suggestions, information or questions pertaining to this plan, is asked to get in touch with us immediately. All communications should be addressed to Miss Vera Leroi, Rudolf Steiner School Association, 15 East 79th Street, New York 21, N. Y.

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.

Edited by Mary M. Cross.
