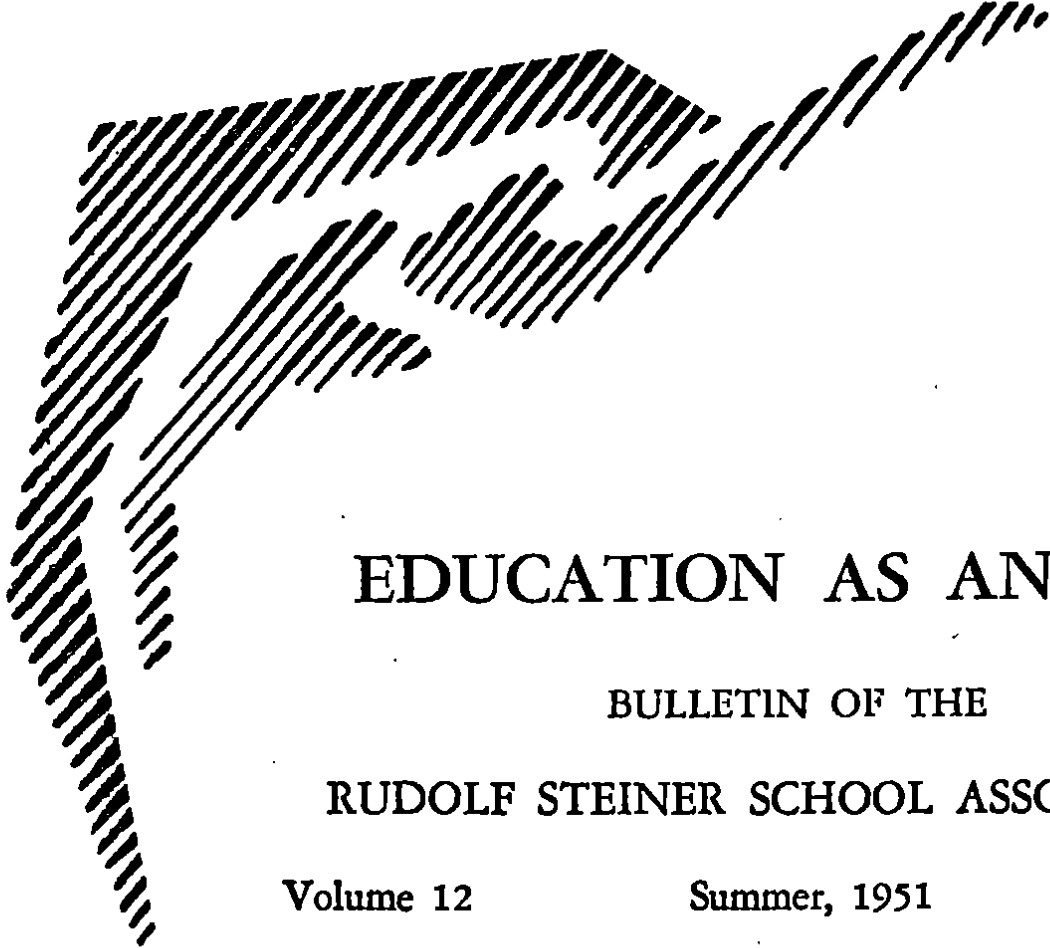




EDUCATION AS AN ART

BULLETIN OF THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ARTISTIC EDUCATION OR EDUCATION AS AN ART?

Modern education is based upon scientific thinking which means that it is experimental in principle. The behaviour of the human beings who are to be educated is studied, analyzed, compared with that of others, and certain behaviour patterns are discovered. Then certain methods of teaching are applied and certain results are achieved. Since new ideas are always popping up, and since the possibilities are unlimited, an unending atmosphere of business and importance is created. The modern educator goes about his task with the same sincere determination with which the scientist goes about working out a new mechanism.

The education based upon spiritual science recognizes the human being as a spiritual entity. To the teacher the child is not a complex mechanism with intricate reflexes; he is a divine creation. He is a creation who if neglected will not survive. He is a creation whose physical manifestation is but a vessel for his soul and spirit. A fine work of art is the creation of a human being. A child is the creation of divine forces or of the spiritual world. A work of art can be compared to a child in so far as it is a creation out of the spirit of man. A machine is a creation out of the pure intellect of man.

The child, therefore, can be considered as a work of art with the world spirit as its creator. As teachers or parents we are destined, or one might say we are privileged, to be the world creator's lowly servants.

If it is true, therefore, that the child is a work of art in the process of being created, education can only be an art and never merely a science. The painter at work at his painting submerges or lives with his entire being in his creation and thus finds harmony and balance of forms and colors; and thus the teacher must live with his entire being in God's creation if he is to be an artist rather than a scientist.

William Harrer

THE NATURE OF A CHILD'S SOUL

The Temperaments And How To Treat Them

BY CAROLINE VON HEYDEBRAND, TRANSLATION BY DAPHNE HARWOOD

(Continued from Volume 12, Number 1)
The Choleric Child

Gertrude is in a rage. Her stolid little figure is trembling and with both her clenched fists she hits out in senseless fury at a boy two years older than herself. She is ten, he is twelve. Her wiry hair stands upon end like the stiff feathers of a bird of prey, the bones of her highly arched forehead seem positively to be growing into butting horns. The big lad tries to defend himself from her fists and teeth, and finally retreats much mortified. For his comrades, looking on, are laughing at him for fighting a small girl and getting the worst of it. Gertrude picks up her howling small brother, innocent cause of the fight, from the dusty street, seizes his hand and hauls him along behind her. She doesn't cry but sobs in great gasps which she vainly tries to hold back. Violently she wipes away tears which come in spite of herself. And as she trudges along she stamps the ground even harder than usual, planting her heels down with fierce energy—as if she would stamp them right into the earth and get strength from it against the wickedness of the world of which her little brother is a victim. One of her hands is still a clenched fist, the other has a firm grasp of little brother's wrist. She has ceased to cry, but her small eyes flash under her beetling brows, and her head is sunk between her shoulders as if she wanted to pull herself together and concentrate her whole being inwardly.

Her brothers and sisters speak of Gertrude's 'bull neck' with apprehension. They are all younger than Gertrude is. When the fourth and youngest child was born their mother died. "Now we are four children, but no more mother" thus she informed her teacher of the tragic happening. She sat down in her place with apparent indifference and listened, without a tear or sigh, to the story with which the teacher sought to explain and deepen for the children the experience of death. Outwardly Gertrude gave no sign of participating in it, or of any sorrow. But at home, when a quiet moment came, she retold the whole story to her father, word for word. At the funeral she stood near her father with a gloomy face and did not cry; but every day she goes faithfully

to the churchyard and tends her mother's grave. Now as the eldest she has assumed dominion over her brothers and sisters. She defends them virulently against all attacks as a matter of course; but she also tyrannizes over them and sometimes gives them a bad time. They fly to her in danger, but how they long for their mother to defend them from her vehemence, as in the old days.

Gertrude knows what she wants, and also how to get what she wants. When she first came to school she heard the voice of a teacher coming from another class and declared: "That's *my* teacher!" From that time onwards she turned violently against her own class and against the school in general; at home she raged, fell into a fever, became ill and finally on the doctor's advice was put into the class of the teacher whom she had recognised by the sound of her voice as having the right to teach her. From that time onwards she was calm and industrious at school and passionately devoted to her teacher. She is not always attentive to lessons. She stares dreamily in front of her, her chin out; she is occupied with herself and has no mind to concern herself with anything which does not rouse her own enthusiasm. She loves heroic stories and tales of derring-do. When she re-tells such stories she unconsciously becomes dramatic; she is an actor with temperament at all times when the part suits her. She steadfastly refused, however, to take the part of a slave in a little historical play in spite of the fact that the slave had a very important part coveted by many of her playmates. But no! "Better dead than a slave," she said. She preferred to have no part at all.

Gertrude is an early riser. At dawn she is awake and active. In summer time she dresses quietly and goes to work on her flower border; or tramps about, pondering her own plans and enterprises. In winter she fetches books, drawing paper and coloured pencils and works until it is permissible to get up. She does her work with concentration and energy. Learning does not come easy to her, and it is agonising to watch her when she clenches her pen-holder between her fingers, pressing her index finger down so that the first joint is nearly at right angles to the second, and jabs the paper with lines as thick as match sticks. She paints with a wild profusion of power but without much feeling for form. Her paintings are a complete expression of her dynamic nature. Her favourite colour is fiery red; but she can also paint in the tenderest shades, if it is to please someone she loves. Everything with her is a matter of the will and she can practise what, for her age, is very great self mastery when she is inwardly convinced that it is necessary.

The moral maxims by which she governs her brothers and sisters are simple if not crude. First and foremost 'Wickedness' must be punished relentlessly, and 'Goodness' must receive a sparse reward. As for herself, a being abounding in force and will-power, she takes herself for granted as a given quantity. It is hard for her father to dislodge her from this position when her misdeeds call for it. When she recognizes that she has done wrong she is not oppressed by remorse and repentance; her nature is rather to set to work to make it good, with set teeth and a flushed face. When for some length of time she has been pleasant and good-humoured, even gentle, with her brothers and comrades they get apprehensive; for one fine day, quite suddenly, she will burst out like a volcano and hurl stones and fire all about her. Curiously enough, ever since a description of Vesuvius from a friend who had travelled in Italy, she loves drawing volcanos in eruption more than anything else. As she is not particularly gifted she generally produces a queer picture of a harmless sugar

loaf from which vermilion sparks shower forth, while brown and dark blue patches disfigure the brilliant blue sky. But it is an expression all the same of her choleric nature.

She needs little sleep and hardly ever seems sleepy; so too she eats little, and is not fastidious. Best of all she likes fruit picked from the tree by herself 'at the peril of her life.' She despises mashes of any kind, and will contentedly gnaw a piece of dry brown bread. She cracks nuts with her teeth, though this is forbidden. She is far from refusing all sweetmeats but has never been addicted to them; her raids on neighbouring orchards come not so much from a craving for something to chew on as from dare-deviltry and a natural hunger which she appeases in her own way. Gertrude easily gets crimson in the face, and she is given to sudden attacks of fever and inflammation, especially of the throat. She has had many childish diseases, including scarlet fever and diphtheria.

The advantages and dangers of her choleric temperament are clear enough. She is not a reed swayed by every wind, her decisions, which are mostly devoid of reflection, spring from the depth of her will nature and are entirely her own. Her parents used to be horrified at the attacks of blind rage to which she was subject as a small child. During these she would yell with purpling face and hit out all about her with stiffened arms and legs. This has improved on the whole since the awakening of her intellectual powers, but on occasion she can still fly into such a rage as to get beside herself and lose her bearings entirely. The day after such an outburst she is quiet and tamed and receptive of any serious words from her father. She keeps to the resolutions taken in such a mood with great strength until her temperament gets the upper hand with her again. And with a strong will like hers this can sometimes last quite a long time.

Treatment of the Choleric Temperament

The choleric temperament exacts enormous patience and a deeply penetrating understanding of the child's soul. It further demands the greatest self-mastery from the educator. For one is only too much inclined to lose one's temper and react violently when confronted by the furious utterances of the raging child. And yet it is of the utmost importance to preserve the calm of a spectator even in face of the worst outbursts and never to get perturbed or act in perturbation. This is extremely difficult, and many teachers come to grief over this temperament; a temperament which—shall we say fortunately or unfortunately?—is comparatively rare in our time. One should not confound nervous lack of self-control with choler. Nervousness in children is weakness; choler is an expression of strength—though, for the moment, undisciplined strength.

The choleric child should always be given the opportunity to unfold his powers and to use them for good and not for harm. Chopping wood, hammering nails, sawing, stone-chipping are good occupations. One should not be too much afraid of children getting hurt. It need hardly be said that the child's powers are not to be exploited economically. In childhood, work such as this which brings activity to the limbs should be done joyfully, without compulsion and for its own sake. The little choleric child also needs a place where he can move freely, roll on the ground and whack about. Choleric children in small

rooms are unendurable. It is a good thing to give tasks a little beyond the powers of a choleric child so that he finds he must make efforts, and realises, a little abashed that he is not the mighty, universal hero he is so fond of supposing himself. A harmonising effect can also be produced by tales of heroic deeds where the child will feel "I would not have dared to do this," or "I most likely should not have succeeded in that." It goes without saying that a child should be left to draw these conclusions for himself if they are to be effective. For a choleric child intrinsically needs to come to his own conclusions. Even as a tiny child he will shout "I do it myself" or "ME do it," when his nurse is offering to help him dress or eat. And he will retain this characteristic of not wanting to be helped but wishing to act morally in independent self-reliance.

If the educator can succeed in remaining calm during the choleric child's outbursts of rage he will have all the greater success when he talks over the incident after an interval of twenty-four hours. The child has then had a night's sleep and is comparatively calm, and secretly ashamed. He can then discuss it quietly, but in all seriousness. No argument and nothing you can say will reach the child in the midst of his rage. But once he has quieted down and been left for a while to himself he will be grateful for any moral help which, while not condoning his outburst, is tendered without trace of irony or smugness. For indeed this poor little 'will being' has a hard struggle with himself. He wrestles and fights in a manner far beyond his years with fiery steeds in his soul which constantly break out and run away with him. How gladly would he rein them in with his own hands. But since, at his age, he has not the power to curb and ride the wild horses of the will, he rightly expects to get a strong but understanding lead from grown-up people.

A choleric child, moreover, (like the melancholic) thrives best when he can passionately adore a grown-up person. He will control his passions best when he does it out of love for such a person. Nevertheless his fiery soul will tend to drive him to extremes in his loving adoration. The modesty natural to all healthy children will make him try to control himself, but where he fails the expression of his warm admiration can take the most remarkable forms. It was the very warmth of her love that drove Gertrude to hit her adored teacher hard with snowballs on the back. How else could she have let her know that she adored her? She would have scorned to bring her flowers, as being childish and in bad taste—*i.e.*, not in keeping with her nature. Just as once when a tiny child, she bit her mother hard in the superabundance of her love, so now as a schoolgirl she expresses her friendship for other children preferably by pushes and punches.

A child's soul cannot endure irony, least of all can that of the choleric child. He can be deeply wounded by mocking irony and driven into a state of abiding opposition. But a gentle discriminating humour is welcomed by the choleric child. For he gladly accepts any kind suggestion not forced upon him, and he transforms it in deep inwardness into self-knowledge, until it becomes part of his own moral insight, a well-spring for his dealings with himself and others.

(To be continued in the next issue of the Bulletin.)

PARENT-TEACHER ACTIVITIES

We are rounding out the 1950-51 school year with a sense of accomplishment. Things seem relatively quiet now in comparison with the feverish activity early in the term when Mrs. Ruth Channing MacFadden, as chairman of the annual fair committee, worked inspiringly to arouse everyone to participate in this major school event. Mrs. MacFadden was indefatigable in her determination to make this the most successful fair the school ever had; that she succeeded was shown by the handsome profit of \$3,300.00, the most we ever raised. Outstanding at the fair was the delicious food served in the restaurant, and the quality of merchandise hand made by parents, teachers and students. In connection with this event, the first Rudolf Steiner year book was issued. It is an interesting booklet, giving a short history of the school, and showing individual class pictures of activities.

In her dual capacities as chairman of the Parent-Teacher Association and the School Fair, Mrs. MacFadden has given unstintingly of her time and energy. We are most appreciative of her efforts. Our thanks extend, also, to all those who helped in this enterprise.

The concert series, inaugurated last year, were continued under the chairmanship of Mrs. Manuel Gottlieb. Through her efforts, we have been privileged to hear delightful concerts by such outstanding musicians as Miss Frances Blaisdell, flautist, and Mr. Thomas Richner, pianist; Mr. Richard Harvey, baritone, and Mr. Richard Evans, tenor; Mr. Gideon Grau, violinist; and Dr. Konrad Wolff, concert pianist. These Sunday afternoon concerts offered us the opportunity to listen to fine music in the company of our children and friends. Our thanks and gratitude go to all these artists who donated their time and talent for the benefit of our music fund.

The Parent-Teacher meetings have been well attended and have been lively sessions where spirited discussions were held on such topics as "Discipline", "Reading as it is Taught in Our School", "Music and Art Program of the School", etc. Individual class meetings, held twice a year, have also served to foster a sense of participation in the school. A group of parents, interested in learning more of the principles underlying the educational methods of the Rudolf Steiner School, have been meeting in a discussion group, with Mr. Barnes.

In their desire to be prepared for all emergencies, teachers and parents are meeting on Wednesday evenings at the school, where they are being drilled in first aid work by a representative of the Red Cross. All these "pupils" are anxious to pass their final test, so that they may qualify as Red Cross aides.

Helen Simon

THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The Association has made strides this year. We are glad to welcome heartily our now over fifty new members. We are sorry to announce the resignation of Mr. Joseph Wetzel who has so long been a faithful and most able treasurer. He has kindly offered to come to our aid in time of need though he can no longer give so steadily of his time. Mrs. Courtney, our Secretary, has been sorry that other duties have kept her from giving as much time to the Association as formerly. Into this breach Mrs. Alfred Barnes has stepped and given almost daily help where it was most needed. We want to thank her most warmly for the great deal of work which she has done. Our files have been reorganized and mailing lists rechecked. We hope that all members will keep us informed of changes of address or failure to receive Bulletins.

At the annual meeting of the Association on April 28th, I was reelected as Chairman, Mrs. John Root was elected Secretary, and Mrs. Alfred Barnes, Treasurer for 1951-52.

Frances H. Walling, Chairman

KIMBERTON CRAFTS EXHIBIT AT TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

An exhibition of craftwork done by children in the Kimberton Farms School was held in the Fine Arts Department of Teachers College, Columbia University, from April 16th through 28th. The showing was arranged through the initiative of Mrs. Froehlich, teacher of crafts at Kimberton Farms School.

The work displayed was done by pupils from the second to the eighth grade and included crochet, weaving, stuffed animals, puppets, marionettes, papier maché animals and figures, movable wooden toys, simple bookbinding and cardboard work, knotting and the cut-outs for a shadow play of Puss in Boots.

All of the work was lively. The horses galloped, the rabbit sprawled, the cats crouched and trembled, even the rhinoceros lumbered along. Among the movable toys, a dog wagged his tail and his head, a horse kicked, a dog jumped out of his kennel and a family of chicks moved in and out on a folding scissor!

Characteristic for the exhibit as a whole was its imaginative vitality and liveliness. Everyone visiting 431 Macy Hall during the last two weeks of April must have felt that this was the work of children who really enjoyed what they were doing.

WALDORF SCHOOLS FUND EXHIBITION

at the United Nations Club, Washington

An exhibition of paintings and drawings by children in Waldorf schools in Norway, England, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and the United States opened at the United Nations Club in Washington, D. C. on April seventeenth and remained on display for a month. The exhibit was prepared by the Waldorf Schools Fund at the request of Miss Agnes DeLano, Chairman of the Club's Art Committee. The paintings were selected from a large number now in the possession of the Waldorf Schools Fund and had been effectively mounted and labeled through the skilled and determined industry of Mrs. Anna Bantzer. The exhibition included works in watercolor, pastel, crayon, and charcoal by children from the first grade through high school. The different characteristics of the work from each country were interesting to observe in the light of the underlying unity of a common striving for purity of color and an inner imaginative experience. The Norwegian pictures had a strong folk feeling; the Swiss were heavier in color and form; the Austrian had an almost oriental richness of dark colors. The English showed a delicate, more dreamy imagination in light, transparent colors. The pictures for New York were also clear and light in color but more strongly formed. The pictures shown were part of the international exhibit being prepared by the Waldorf Schools Fund for showing in this country. A second exhibit is in preparation for Chicago. Two smaller groups of paintings are also on view in Washington, one of them in the Headquarters of the Bureau for Mental Hygiene. Wherever they are shown, many questions are asked about the schools which produce them.

The exhibition was opened on the seventeenth by an informal talk by Mr. Henry Barnes who gave a brief sketch of the development of the international Waldorf school movement and its educational philosophy.

On May fourth Mr. Richard Kroth spoke about the artistic impulse as it runs throughout the curriculum of the Waldorf Schools, in a talk entitled *The Art of Education*. He will repeat this talk later in Chicago when the Exhibit moves to that city.

SUMMER CONFERENCES ON EDUCATION

High Mowing Conference

at Wilton, New Hampshire, from June 20th to July 4th. The emphasis will be upon education at the time of adolescence. Courses in Physiology, Psychology, Eurythmy and Speech will be held. For further information write to Mrs. Beulah Emmet at High Mowing School.

Spring Valley Conference

at the Threefold Farm, Spring Valley, New York from August 5th to 8th. Pre-school education will be stressed. Seminars will be held. Mr. Cecil Harwood of Michael Hall School, England, will be guest lecturer. For further information write to Mrs. Elizabeth Kroth at the Threefold Farm.

Membership in the Rudolf Steiner School Association, including the quarterly Bulletin, is \$2.00 per year. Single copies of the Bulletin, 25c. each.

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

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