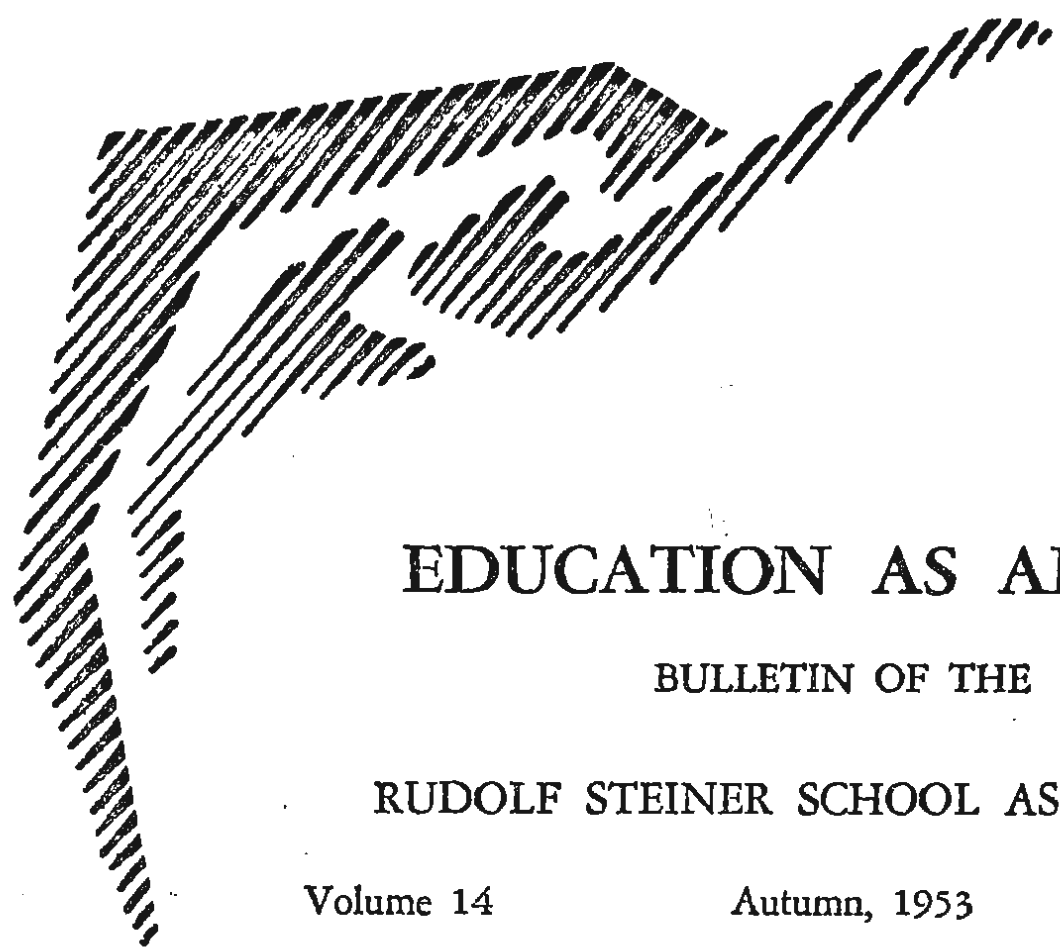




EDUCATION AS AN ART

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*There lives in us an image
Of all that we should be.
Until we have become it
Our heart is never free.*

Angelus Silesius

MY FIRST PAINTING*

Can one write about children's drawing from the point of view of psychology and theory of art? Can one justify oneself in the face of those who are already right — I have often done it and it does not tempt me. There are a great many good and enlightening books about the first awakenings of the child's pictorial powers. I am simply going to tell about my first picture, about my first paint box and of old Elizabeth, my grandmother, who was perhaps responsible for the fact that all my life I have, in my own way, been so passionately interested in children's drawings in which are recorded the adventure of their adapting themselves to the world.

* Reprinted with the kind permission of the Swiss magazine *Du*, March, 1953.

I was seven years old when I received my first paint box. "My paint box!" I exclaimed and held it up before me. At first I only gazed at it. Six colors lay there: red, yellow, blue, green, silver and gold. There were also two tiny dishes of white porcelain and a camel's hair brush that could be slipped onto a little stick. I packed and unpacked everything over and over again, arranged the lozenges of color in rows, arcs and circles. That was work enough. Like jewels I turned the little pieces from side to side.

O joy! — color, pure and shining! Why paint? Why disturb the existence of the little round wafers? Red like my rocking horse, yellow as lemons, blue like the heavens, silver, gold and green as though it were Christmas! Each color was a story, a whole book of stories. A ray of sunlight fell upon the box. I remember exactly how it was. Happiness filled my heart. It simply ran over with delight.

One day the decision to paint ripened. I brought water, took some paper, plumped myself down at a little table, dipped the brush into the water and wet one of the colors. First red, as though red had the first claim. It is true that I had already drawn with colored pencils on the back of old bills, on envelopes and discarded calendars. I had drawn trees, houses, animals, people, trains and ships. There was nothing I had not been able to draw for myself in my own way — little sketches for the conquest of my own world. No one bothered me. But to paint! That was something quite different. That was like music when I was allowed to go along to rehearsals in the town theater. And I painted red! No tree, no house, no animal, only red, nothing but red! I can see it as though it were today — a great shining red circle upon a white background, expanding in a rotating great surging swirl, welling outward in rings. Red was the most beautiful color in the world. In this red was all the red that I loved: the red of the poppy blossoms that burn like tiny fires in the waves of wheat, the red of flame when the autumn wind fans it to fury, the red of the sun when in the west it kindles to a bloody star. Red — that was blood-color! Slowly I spoke the word aloud, "Blood-color" — as though it had never existed before. My circle was now the sun, the real sun — of blood-color, and I drew broad rays to the edge of the paper. O joy, to live in a world in which you can paint a sun, a red sun upon a white background! First there had been an empty, cold nothing on the paper. Then suddenly, with the help of my own hand, with the help of one single color and a brush, a sun sprang forth, and everything all around, pencil tray, pitcher, boxes, chest and table, the room, everything had a center and was arranged around it, totally transformed.

I took a second paper and painted a tree, a red tree rising upward from below in a broad river, twigged above in bare, slanting, outraying shoots. I held the page up before me. My tree looked like a signal, but it was nevertheless a tree. I was proud. There were still other colors, dumb, dead, not as yet called into life. I washed the brush, took new water and gave my tree blue leaves, oval spots on either side of the twigs, pairs in rows, symmetrical! I thought of berries, of pearls, of lanterns. Blue and red! How those words sang, beckoned and called! New water! I took yellow and, where there was room, set fruit, large and round, on the long bare stems, and in the center of each fruit a red dot. The yellow discs cried out to have something put inside them.

A glowing eagerness held me. Like a fever it ran through me. The tree rose out of blue-green grasses above a wall of long pointed daggers. Again

water! I moistened the silver and gold and painted curves, great awkward curves that looked like birds on the ends of the twigs. On the left I painted a moon, opposite it a star and above, the sun, great and gold, and golden spots on the blue leaves, on the grass on the red branches. Golden rain, pure golden rain! Enough — I leaned back in my chair.

That was my picture, my first picture, a wonderful, many-colored, shining world. I cleaned up the table and piled all the things around as though they must be the first to see my picture. That was the most wonderful moment. I stood up and went to Elizabeth who was in her room ironing.

"Grandmother! Do you want to see?"

"What?"

"My picture?" I gave her the paper. She held it before her, looked at me and said, "Did you paint that?" I nodded and felt how the joy in my heart grew small and timid.

"Yes, I painted it — with my own paint box." I looked at the paper anxiously. She was silent. Were the colors growing pale? Was the red turning brown, the yellow orange, the sun blind and the birds grey specks? I hesitated, looked up and repeated slowly, "I painted it. It's my first picture." I wanted to take it back, sad and disappointed. She held it fast, smiled and said, "A tiny paradise!" And then my picture began to shine as though light flowed into a transparency. That was an unforgettable word, that slow "A tiny paradise." So God spoke when he had created the world as he leaned over the earth full of joy to see one of his trees in the sunlight with its ripening fruit, gold shimmering leaves, the birds that lived there and the stars that rose over it day and night.

"A tiny paradise." It was there. It was really there and had life! Yes, I was a child and yet more than a child. I could create out of myself a new existence that never had been before. My tree was no tree out of the visible world, and yet I felt it grow, saw it spread itself out over the land. I heard the wind rustle in its leaves, heard the great yellow fruit fall fragrant and ripe. The birds picked them up and carried them away. New, more beautiful trees grew upon the earth, gardens and forests, and all were drenched, were flooded in glimmering, flickering gold.

"A tiny paradise!" Dear and positive words! It is you I have to thank that I believe in the dignity and freedom of man. You fell like a seed into the kingdom of my life as a hope, a certainty. Now you have reappeared and your truth towers over my life. Often it is only a word, a gesture — and a whole life raises itself into balance, takes on meaning and goal and awakens into trust.

Hans-Friedrich Geist

CHILDREN'S TEMPERAMENTS (A Selection from Lectures to teachers)

At the close of this lecture Dr. Steiner spoke about the different kinds of temperament. It is only possible here to give the briefest summary of his remarks on the peculiarities of children.

The melancholic child is particularly influenced by its physical nature. And this nature makes it introspective. Moody, subject to ups and downs, always preoccupied with its own condition, it appears in the highest degree inattentive to its environment and even to what the teacher tells it.

The phlegmatic child is still involved in those forces which have shaped its body, in the "formative forces." Only in a dim sleepy way is he aware of the outer world, and on this account it is difficult for him to take an interest in things at hand. He has always to be aroused. Had he happened to be, said Dr. Steiner, not on the earth, but outside in the universe, he would participate in everything with the greatest intensity, he is made for wide prospects. This is why things which are close to him make so little impression.

The sanguine child is all soul. He really lives outside space and time, in a higher world. He grasps the present moment but does not hold it firm. He takes no care for it to stay. He flutters on to the next thing. This gives him a certain superficiality.

The choleric child has his being centered more than others, in his own ego. His ego is apt to enter life aggressively. His very build and his movements show that he wants his will to penetrate everywhere.

Naturally there are combinations of these temperaments. The teacher must cultivate a fine perception of their different signs. When he has got an idea of his pupils as a whole he should place them in groups according to similarity of temperament. This works in a very salutary way.

When, for example, the melancholic child notices that his neighbors are just as sullen and depressed as he is and just as self-absorbed he involuntarily compares himself with them and ceases to be quite so pleased with himself. And he begins to try and change.

The phlegmatic child will sooner or later get bored by companions of a similar nature, he will become impatient and so shake off his lethargy.

The sanguine child, always on the look-out for new sensations, will find the disturbance on both sides of him upsetting. It is as if he had to keep brushing away flies.

And the bruises which the choleric give each other in their more or less clandestine skirmishes are the best corrective they could have.

And thus through homeopathic treatment a social element is brought into the class.

It must be part of the teacher's educational method to endeavor to treat like with like.

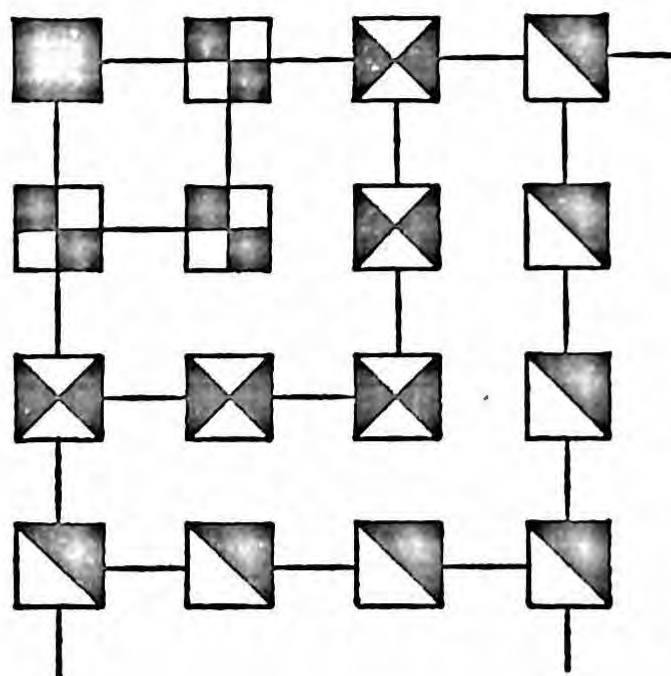
If in his treatment of the melancholic child he can enter with interest into his moods this will have a very healthy influence on him in the long run. If, in spite of real sympathy, he treats the phlegmatic child with apparent indifference he will make efforts to distinguish himself. If he stimulates the susceptibility of the sanguine child, his impressions will lose their frivolous and superficial character.

As for the choleric child, cried Dr. Steiner, I prefer to send him into the garden, let him run about, climb trees, shout until he is tired out and can't do any more.

But one thing is necessary for all of this, he added, a thing that every teacher must have: humor.

And with a joke about morose schoolmasters who grow old before their time he brought his lecture to a close.

*Rudolf Steiner, as reported
by Albert Steffen*



SQUARE NUMBERS IN THE SECOND GRADE

"Square numbers in the second grade?" exclaimed the third grade teacher who saw the above drawing in my classroom. "You must have a class of geniuses!"

The drawing was done on the blackboard with colored chalk and I was not appealing to genius as much as to the fond delight with which the children in the class explored number relationships. One only had to say to them, "What patterns can you find in these numbers?" — and the hunt would be on. Step by step, as they would discover how numbers combine in beautiful rhythms, their satisfaction and joy would become more and more climactic.

We began this particular exploration with the drawing as such, starting with one square and systematically adding the other squares to form squares of squares. Using solid colors, rather than the black and white patterns necessary in the above diagram, the added squares in each extension of the drawing were thus distinguished by a common color. Each child worked from the drawing I made at the board, and the faster workers soon got ahead of me having quickly caught on to the rule we were using. We took time and pains to make the drawings carefully, though free-hand, and everyone developed his own color scheme.

At length the drawings reached various stages of completion and, when we looked at them again the following day, I asked, "Who can find a number pattern in this drawing?" The first discovery made by the children was by counting the number of squares of a single color: 1 — 3 — 5 — 7 — 9 — 11 — . Someone called out, "Those are the odd numbers!" This created a flutter of excitement among the others who hadn't thought that far. Now the odd numbers were written down, as far as each drawing had progressed. The next question was, "Can you go on, writing down correctly the number of squares you would add each time if you could make your drawing larger?" So, with the same delight that they have in the rhythmic process of jumping rope or bounc-

ing a ball, the children methodically wrote down the odd numbers, some as far as 101, while the younger ones who did not know how to count by odd numbers, soon found that they could get the next number correctly by adding 2 each time. The lesson ended with the promise that there was still another secret about the numbers in our drawing which we would try to find out "tomorrow".

When tomorrow arrived and we took out our drawings again, the whole class was in a strong mood of anticipation. We began to hunt for the secret and there were many wild guesses until a girl began counting the little squares in relation to the squares of squares. Soon many others caught on and began to write down the numbers that came to light in this way: 4 — 9 — 16 — 25 — 36 — , as far as their drawings showed them the way. Their next task was, again, to continue to write the numbers of small squares they would have in the squares of squares if they could enlarge their drawings. This was slow work for them, but as I checked their results I found that most of them were progressing correctly — 49 — 64 — 81 — 100. I also discovered that some of them were laboriously counting what they visualized in added small squares while others were adding by odd numbers according to the number pattern we had discovered the day before, and I considered this no small achievement.

Telling them to stop when they reached 100, I praised them for their effort and accuracy, but told them that they had all worked too hard. I told them there was an easier and faster way to do it by knowing the secret of these numbers. Now we had to search for the secret, the key that would unlock the way.

At first no one made much progress, and I finally had to give them a hint, "Just think of your tables, they will help you find the secret!" Now there were signs of a lot of furious mental work as each one reached for what he knew. The moment of discovery then dawned. First one shouted, "4 is 2 times 2". Then from one or the other came joyous announcements, "9 is 3 times 3" — "16 is 4 times 4" — until all that had been hidden was laid bare. The climax was soul-stirring. Joy, joy, joy! "Each number is another number times itself!" someone called out.

Then utter satisfaction settled over the class when I explained that these numbers were called "the square numbers".

Many readers of this description, who do not teach arithmetic or who have never learned to enjoy it, probably feel like one of the boys in the class who had not, as yet, learned all his tables. The excitement which his friends expressed had been unimpressive for him, as he had not been able to follow the trail, let alone rejoice at reaching the end. While the others were still exclaiming and laughing over their discoveries, he tip-toed up to my desk and with a tremulous look asked me, "Mrs. Harrer, will you tell us a story now?"

Dorothy Harrer

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE IN CALIFORNIA

Several teachers and others associated with the Rudolf Steiner School made a long hop to Los Angeles in July to take part in the second annual California conference on Anthroposophy. Last summer's conference had been held in charming Santa Barbara and was devoted, appropriately, to Anthroposophy's contribution to the arts. This year's conference, with over two hundred participants, was devoted to the general theme Anthroposophy: Education for Modern Man.

In his opening address, Norman Macbeth, Los Angeles attorney, sketched the predicament of modern man, who finds himself uprooted from the soil, indifferent to blood ties, skeptical toward religion, who is, in other words, largely a figure standing alone, dependent on his own resources in finding a meaning and direction for his life. Mr. Macbeth compared the contributions of Walter Lippmann and of Rudolf Steiner in analyzing this predicament and describing the possibilities of man's self-education toward the ideal of "the mature man" in the case of Lippmann, and "the free man" in that of Rudolf Steiner.

Giving a broad view of Dr. Steiner's approach to knowledge of the human being was a series of lectures by Paul Marshall Allen of the Anthroposophical Society in New York, and Dr. Sigfrid Knauer, Los Angeles physician.

Other public events included a lecture on eurythmy by Lucy Neuscheller of New York, and two eurythmy performances arranged by Hanni Schlaefli, in which Kari Lunde of the Rudolf Steiner School took part. Bettina Kroth and Leo Neuscheller, also both from New York, read for these performances. This was a pioneering activity in which it was thrilling to participate, as it was the first time such performances had been given in California. Hollywood provided the beautiful stage, with suitable lighting effects, which was a thrill to the performers, and the audience was most appreciative of the performance. (A special fillip was lent to the second evening by the presence in the audience of a certain world-renowned conductor).

The heart of the conference, however, lay in the day-time classes, led by three teachers from the Rudolf Steiner School. These began with Kari Lunde's morning eurythmy class (so large it had to be divided into sections), continued with Henry Barnes' seminar on education (planned for about eight people but actually attended by from 40 to 50 daily), and concluded with Alstan Lippincott's afternoon painting class. (Miss Lippincott was associated with the School last year, but this year is owner and director of Highland Hall, a private school in San Fernando Valley, where she hopes to put Dr. Steiner's educational ideas into practice).

In the educational seminar and in two public lectures besides, Mr. Barnes accomplished a double task. To those not familiar with the education, he described how the first Waldorf School came about, 34 years ago, in answer to problems not so different from those of today. He told how Emil Molt, one of Europe's leading industrialists, recognized the dangerous pressures, resulting from the threat of Bolshevism which had grown out of a misapplication of Darwin's theories, in the East, and from the West's involvement with an impractical idealism unable to answer this challenge. Mr. Molt saw the need of an education which could develop the capacity to see through such critical problems, which could restore to the workers an understanding of their place in society, and which could so strengthen the individual that he could find his place in the world as a human being, resisting those impulses which make it easier to become either an unthinking automaton or an amoral animal. And because he was convinced that Rudolf Steiner possessed a deep knowledge of the forces at work in modern man and in his environment, Mr. Molt asked him to direct a school for the children of his factory workers, there to develop an education capable of satisfying the pressing needs of the time. The first Waldorf School was the result, and since then many others have arisen, independently, patterned after the first one by educators who are convinced that the ideas embodied in it have proved themselves to be practical and fruitful. These schools are spreading in

many countries, as Mr. Barnes told us, in spite of all the difficulties that beset the path of a private school anywhere, and especially one whose chief assets are educational rather than financial.

Besides this general view of the schools, Mr. Barnes had the task of deepening an understanding of the ideas on which they are based, among a very mixed audience that included newcomers to these ideas, for instance a college student of teaching and a public school principal, as well as teachers and parents who had been studying Rudolf Steiner's education for some time. The picture of the truly "artistic" teacher which Mr. Barnes developed for us in such a vivid and memorable way was not of one who tries in vain to pour assorted contents into supposedly empty vessels or to command automatons to answer foolish questions. Rather he is a person who has learned to read in the book of the human being. To him the child's temperament, his skin color and texture, his posture, his very rhythm of breathing speak of the kind of person the child is and what his needs are. In presenting a lesson, the teacher must be aware not only of the subject matter, but of the way to make it live for each child's nature, to awaken a response in feeling and will as well as to stimulate thinking. The lesson must move livingly between loudness and quietness, between speaking and listening, between group and individual activity, even between mirth and sadness, to bring both the dreamers and the restless wigglers into harmonious participation. And its goal, whatever the subject, must be to help the child learn where he stands in the world as a human being, how he is related to nature, to the animals, to other human beings. A child educated in such an artistic way has, besides integrated knowledge, a basis for moral values and a sense of direction in his life.

An exhibition of notebooks from all grades of the Rudolf Steiner School pointed up Mr. Barnes' word picture of the methods and their results. These spoke volumes to both parents and teachers who had to painfully admit that their own children are not being so effectively educated.

Another highlight of the conference was a dramatic reading by Mechthild Johannsen, former pupil of the Rudolf Steiner School (who was then Mechthild Neuscheller) of scenes from Albert Steffen's drama *Pestalozzi*. This pioneer educator, not as well known as he deserves to be, tried in the days of Napoleon to institute a form of education that would develop the whole human being rather than just his intellect. Miss Johannsen gave a vivid portrayal of Pestalozzi's struggle, in the scenes she read, which she had translated from the contemporary Swiss dramatist's work.

Barbara Betteridge

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