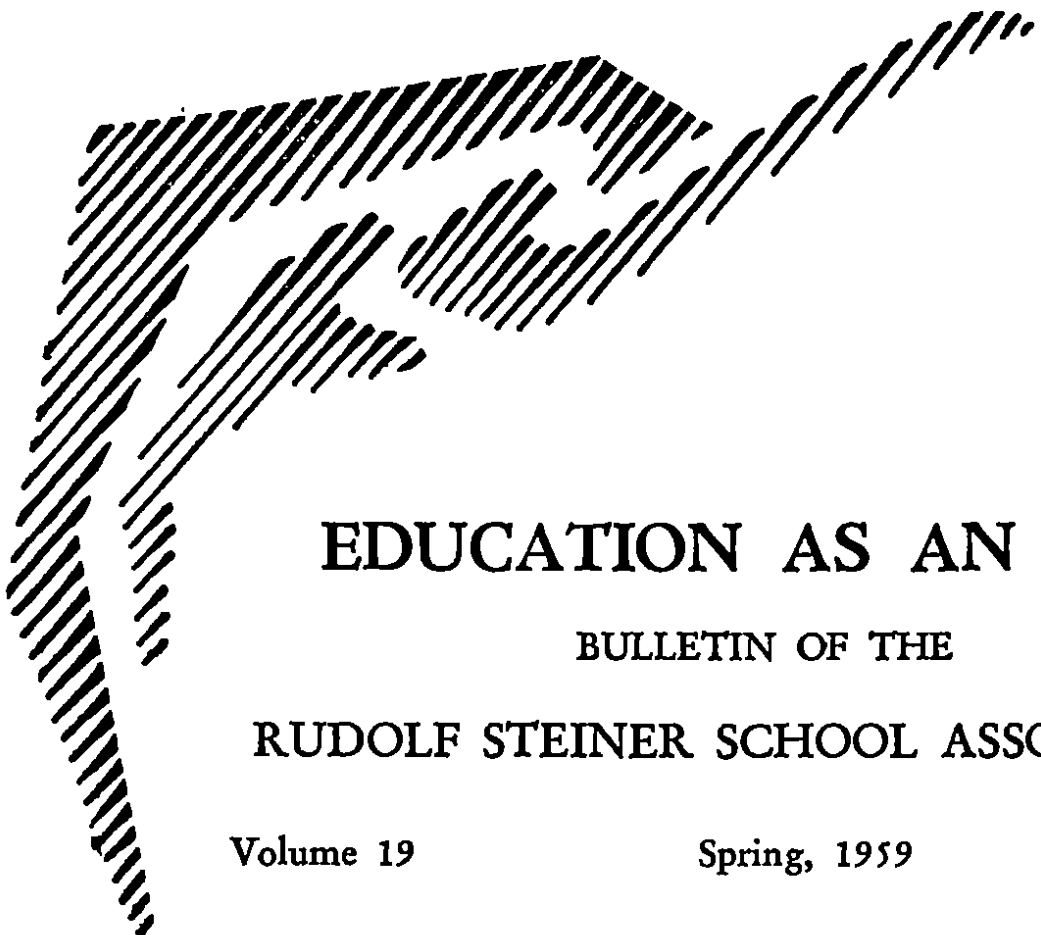




EDUCATION AS AN ART

BULLETIN OF THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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DRAWING: FROM FIRST GRADE TO HIGH SCHOOL

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The following study is an attempt to shed light on the whole complex of drawing as practiced in a Waldorf School. There is no intention to give drawing a preferred position, nor is there any desire to establish a fixed curriculum. It is merely an outline of what is available on the subject.

One of the first and most important impressions of the little First Grader on beginning school is his introduction to the straight and the curved line, and to color. Two mighty streams, one can say, like two mighty helpers, are going to accompany the child through elementary school. One of them bestows on him the flowing world of color; the other leads him to the severe, pure form of the line. Here only the line as an independent means of expression is to be studied.

The straight and the curved line, which Rudolf Steiner proposed as an approach to the first lesson, are the most simple elements of the art of drawing.

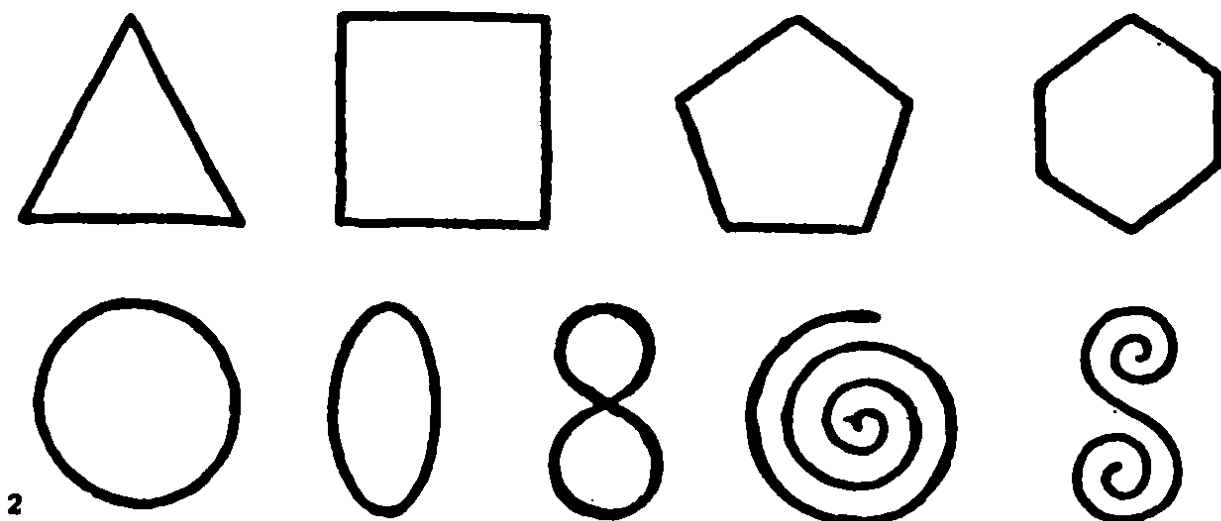


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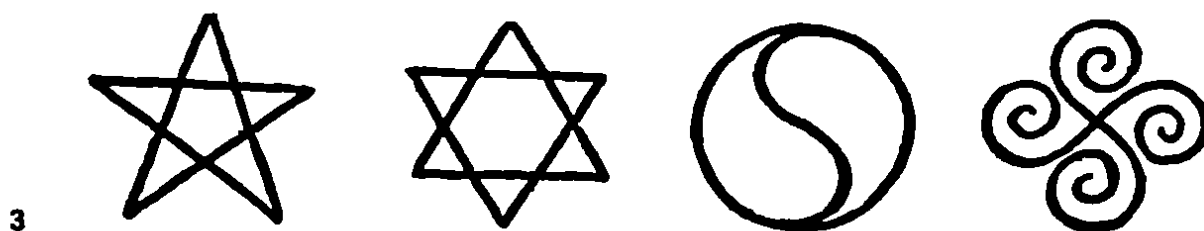
But one should not judge them as merely 'simple' because the grown-up can easily handle and copy them. We should rather ask: what do these two signs seem to express? Anyone who takes up drawing will make the interesting discovery that the two lines represent the archetypal motives of the art. We stand at the fountain-spring. With these two lines, combined and varied, we can represent the whole universe of objects, and any freely imaginative composition as well. Each of the archetypal motives is a whole, and each embodies

polarity. As the strongest opposites of expression, their union can demonstrate complete harmony.

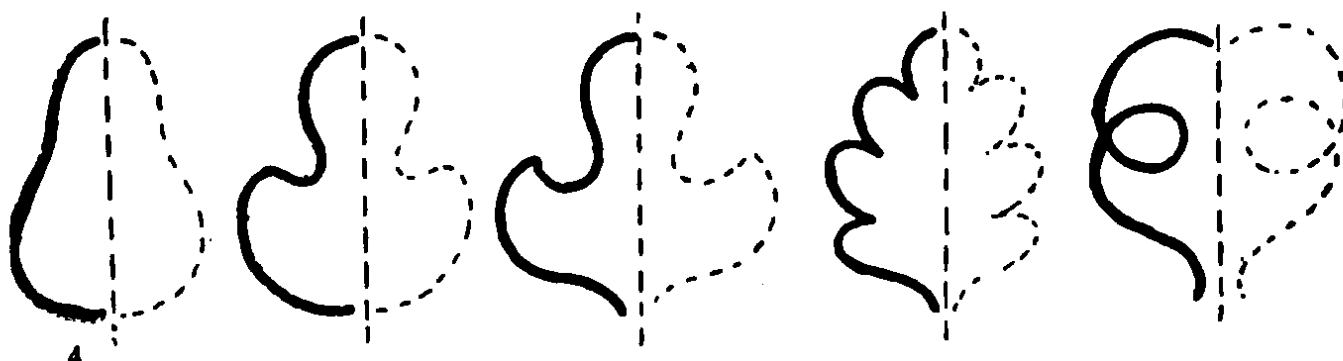
When the child has practiced for a time and concerned himself with these two motifs, he can be led by his teacher toward simple geometric forms. The straight line can be combined with other straight lines to form a triangle, a square, a pentagon; the curved line can become a circle, an ellipse, a lemniscate, a spiral. (Fig. 2)



Out of these fundamental forms, more complicated forms can develop, for example through overcrossing. (Fig. 3)

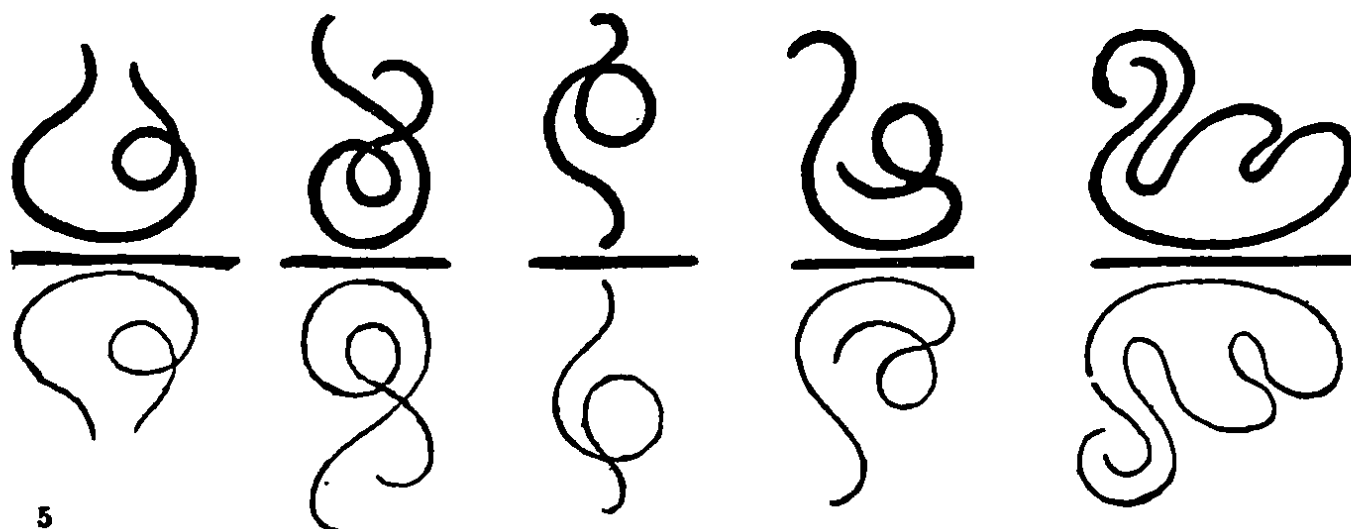


Exercises in which one half has to be completed by the child can also be started. They will assume more and more importance later on. Like all exercises in form, they will not only make small hands more skillful and the eyes more sure, but they actually quicken and strengthen the thinking forces, and help the child in learning to write and read. The fact is, they help the soul of the child to catch hold of its body in the right way. These are forms of which one half is drawn by the teacher; the missing halves have to be completed by the child. (Fig. 4)



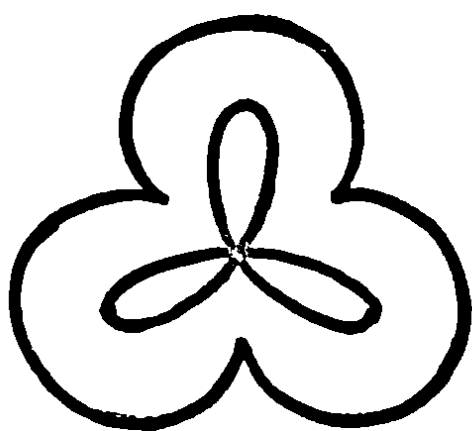
Rudolf Steiner said in the Ilkley Course¹: "We can start even with the smallest children in this way. We draw such a half-figure on the blackboard, put down the center a helpful middle line, and then begin to draw for the child a little of the symmetrical side. We should try to make the child see that the drawing is not finished, but must still be completed. By every possible means the child should be persuaded to finish the drawing all by himself. In this way you awaken an inner active urge to complete something as yet unfinished, obtaining thus a command of the child's own inborn sense for reality. For this the teacher needs a good deal of ingenuity, but this is something a teacher should have in any case! The first requirement of any teacher is a lively, inventive thinking capacity."

Similar to the symmetry exercises are the forms which arise as mirror-images (see the Torquay Course²). A few examples of this are given. (Fig. 5)

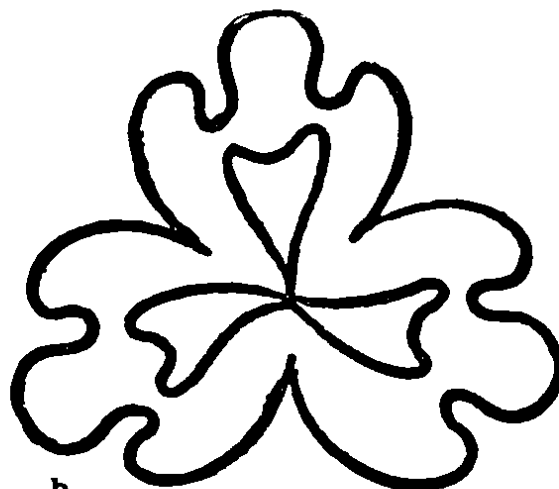


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Besides the symmetry and mirror exercises, one can start to practice—perhaps from the Third Grade on—the somewhat more difficult metamorphosis-forms, which are mentioned in the same lecture. Here too our task is to enlarge and widen the stimulating suggestions given. Designs should be transformed in such a way that out of a harmonious parallel movement, a harmonious asymmetrical counter-movement is created (Fig. 6a and 6b).



6a



b

In the above-mentioned Ilkley lecture, Dr. Steiner continues: "When the teacher progresses to other exercises, he may draw some such figure as this (Fig. 6a) on the blackboard, and then try to awaken in the child an inner spatial idea of it." Here the three arcs constitute an entirely harmonious,

1. Lectures given at Ilkley, Yorkshire, in August, 1923; published as a book, EDUCATION AND MODERN SPIRITUAL LIFE, Anthro. Publishing Co., London, 1928. See Lecture 9.

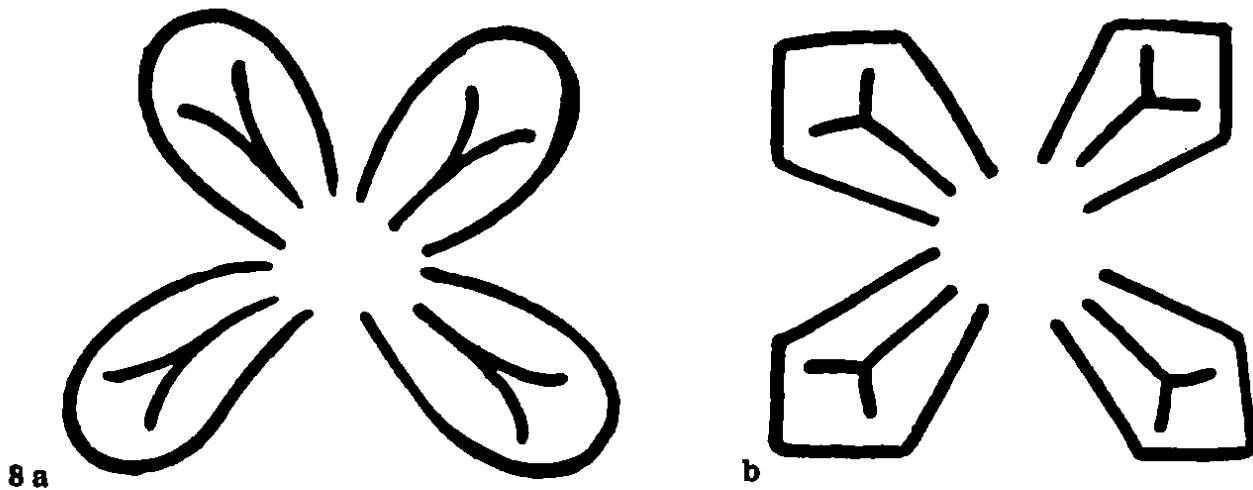
2. Lectures on Education given at Torquay, Cornwall, in August, 1924. See Lecture 4. (Not published in English.)

symmetrical figure, which is filled out evenly in the center by an equally harmonious, symmetrical threefold loop. Now the teacher should transform the three partial circles, so that each one changes into a three-lobed leaf. In this way a free, very flowing, organic form arises. There is no more symmetry in the strictest sense of the word; we have progressed to a more plantlike, living form. The teacher will have to explain to the child that when the outer form is varied, the inner one must also be changed accordingly. What should become of the inner loops of Fig. 6a? In the whole figure we have a harmonious parallel movement of the outer and inner forms. We can say an outer harmony is reigning. In the second figure it should be metamorphosed to an inner harmony. In order to attain it, countermovements have to arise; i.e. where there is a convex movement, the inside answers with a concave movement. Stress arises between inside and outside. There follows a concave movement outside and a convex movement inside. Harmony ensues when they meet and continue together. Instead of the harmonious parallel movement of Fig. 6a, we have now from without and within a living harmony of stress and balance.

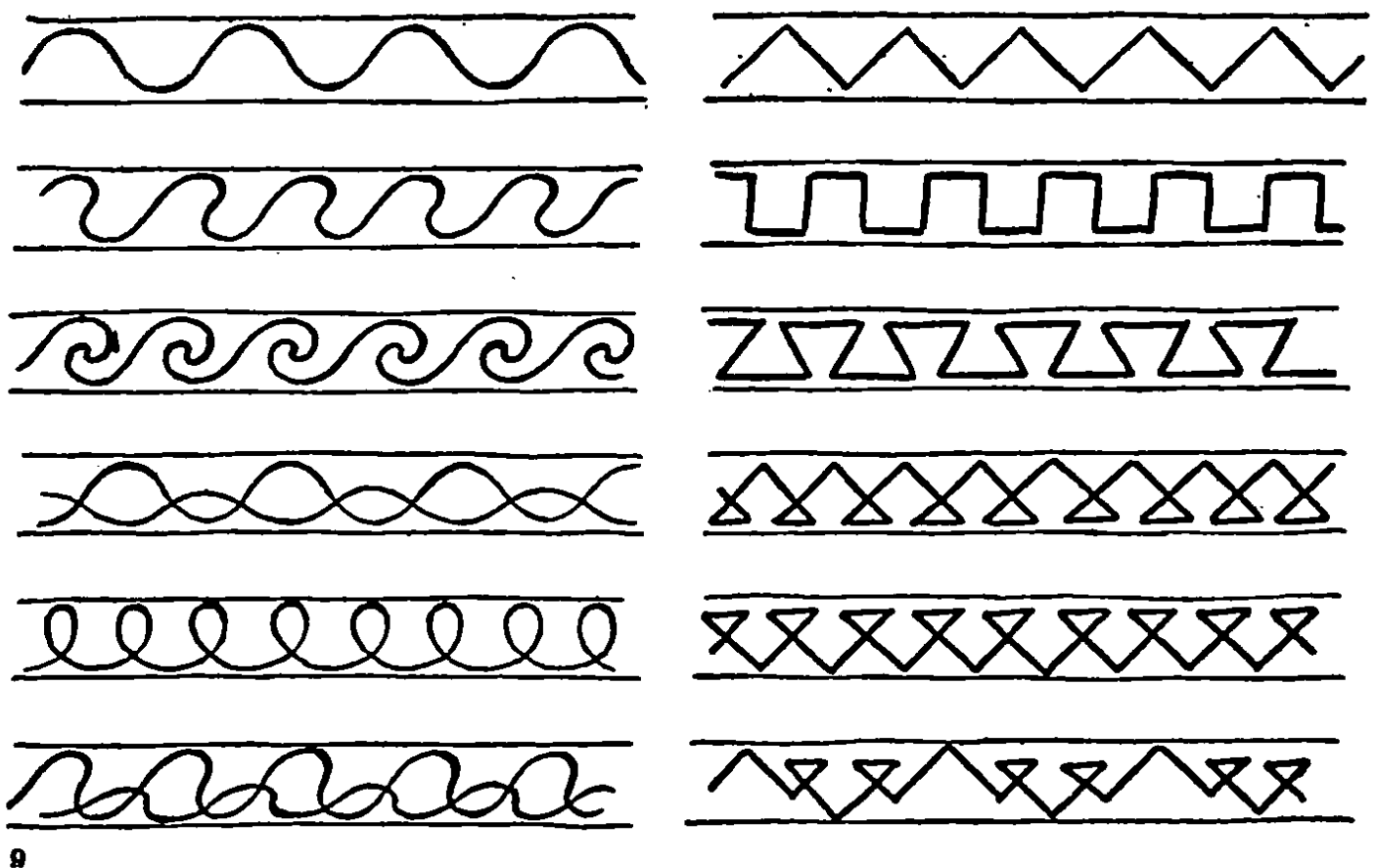


Figures 7a and 7b show still more strongly the hidden metamorphosis taking place. The teacher draws 3 fishlike shapes, which strive toward a center point, and adds 3 outer shell-like shapes. And now we open out the shell forms so that both ends seem to run into indefinite space. The child should be brought to form a lively idea of how, through opening the 3 outer shapes, a strong movement towards the periphery has come about, so that he himself has to run after the lines into infinity. Because of this escaping, there must be a definite counterbalance on the inside, and here the 3 inner forms bring themselves together into an entirely new shape. In 7b a new form has come into being which seems, if one glances at it only superficially, to have little to do with Fig. 7a. We enter here into the working of a metamorphosis, which—if we follow it closely—lets us guess perceptively at the secret of a hidden movement, and even too brings hidden forces and activities into movement in man himself. Inward activity and creativity arise, processes are stimulated which have a strengthening effect on the health of the organism. What the child experiences in his efforts to bring about such forms, he takes with him into sleep. During our sleep we digest or clarify the things we were busy with during the day. Thereby the forms do not come to rest, but continue to vibrate and become more perfect. Out of his sleep then, the child brings new capacities for learning and experiencing. Thus even into the physical body, this method of learning to draw has a quickening and health-giving effect.

In the same category of form-metamorphosis belongs the following motif from the Torquay course of lectures (Fig. 8a, 8b). Here is shown how a change from the outer curved lines, in 8a, to the outer angular lines, in 8b, demands also a change in the inner lines which the child should be asked to find for himself.



Another very rich field for free forms is that of the so-called ribbon motifs, of which Rudolf Steiner gave a few examples for crafts-work. Those shown in Fig. 9 are freely invented and express significantly the difference of the straight and the curved line.



The much discussed "book corners" should also be practiced as free forms, especially when they are going to be used by the children on their notebooks. One starts primarily from the artistic *function*, which should be expressed by a rounding, protecting motion at the upper left, and with more of an invitation towards opening in the right hand corner below, where one turns the page. The printing itself should form an artistic whole with the design. The use of straight lines will lead to severe angles, while the

curved line will show a more dynamic, flowing movement. A certain artistic-architectural strength should be observed, even with the more rounded designs, and it is clear that the corner-form should have an artistic relation, not merely a symbolical one, to the contents of the book. That this is not easy will be noticed immediately by anyone attacking the problem. (Fig. 10)

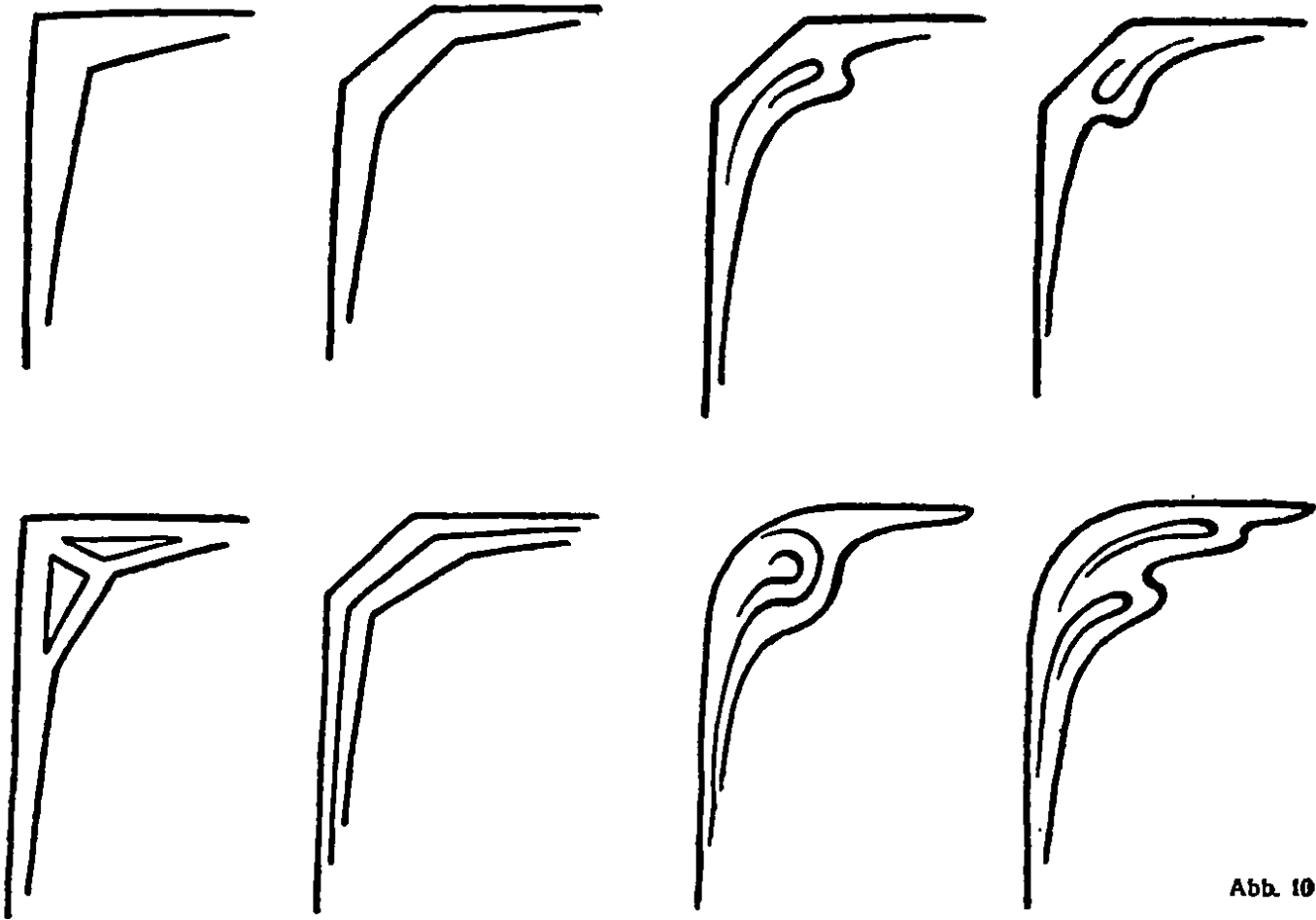


Abb. 10

This kind of free form drawing can be used in various ways from Grades 1 to 8 as it is needed. From what has been said so far, it is evident that in the free form, the line has a significance entirely its own, as an independent means of expression: it should not be confused with a line of contour, or outline. Here the line remains something alive and artistic in itself, even though, in contrast to the expanding character of color, the line is concentrated and one might say, drawn into itself. From this we can see the pedagogical situations where drawing should be useful: it brings about in the child also a concentration, a drawing into himself, which coming from an artistic medium will strengthen the child's moral attitude.

If we have experienced in this way the realm of free form as an absolute unity, the question arises: How can we unite this realm with the drawing of objects, and especially with "copying Nature"? The drawing of chairs, tables and similar objects, with light and shadow, can be taken up in the Sixth Grade, even without any knowledge of perspective, if the above mentioned sense of form has been sufficiently developed beforehand. The child then will not be overwhelmed by the object, but will be able to study the different angles that arise.

Perspective itself should take its start from the geometry lesson, as Dr. von Baravalle has expressed it in the preface of his book, PERSPECTIVE. Let us look perhaps at the question of the importance of perspective. After two centuries of preparation, it was out of the painting of the 15th century that perspective appeared and had its laws formulated. In painting we speak

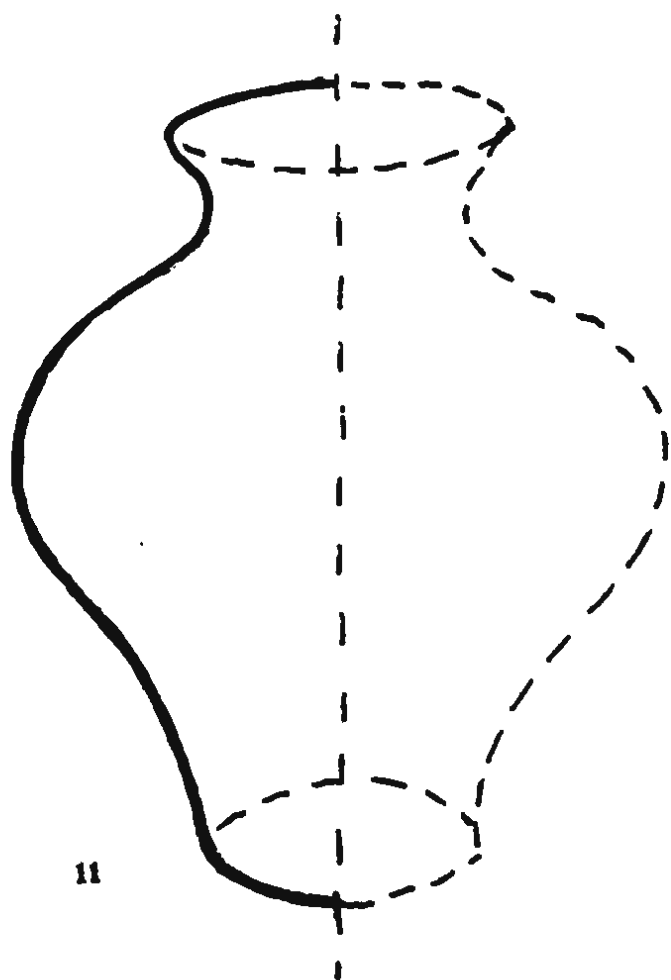
of the birth of naturalism, which climbed to its highest triumph in the 19th century. It is an ever stronger grasp on outer reality. What, however, is hidden behind it? What has been found through perspective, and what becomes visible through it? It is the third dimension of space, that of depth; in the human being, it is the dimension of the will, experienced for one thing in walking forwards and backwards. Graphically spoken, its real nature can not be represented—therefore it can seem like a genial joke of the intellect when the two-dimensional surface is used to bring into appearance the third dimension. When the illusion is there, the surface is so to speak invalidated, annihilated. Something decisive has happened: for in ancient times, was not the surface the medium to represent imaginations? Perspective destroys the surface, and with it the imaginations as well, and drawing lands finally at the imitation of the outer world. One can value this negatively; as in all the spheres conquered by the intellect, old values must be destroyed. But through this a definite step forward towards the freedom of man is made.

We see the child who has reached the age of physical maturity in a similar situation. The intellectual forces have fully awakened and with these the child's urge is increasingly and ever more strongly to lay hold of the world around him; at the same time he wishes to throw off all the restraints and compulsions of childhood. It is of great benefit to him then, and a comfort, to use drawing as a medium of expression. With it the child can approach the world, which is so full of riddles, from a new angle. His feeling for form and a sensitivity for the expression-values of the line have been nurtured and developed. Now he lacks only a knowledge of perspective in order to represent the outer world of objects in the way that will satisfy his intellectual needs. The inherent danger of this step should not be under-

estimated. The quantitative perspective can easily push the child entirely into the physical world, and he will then be given up exclusively to space and matter. But he has one means of protection, and that is color. For years the child has experienced qualitative perspective and the dynamics of color-depth. This should help protect him from being sucked out altogether into the physical world.

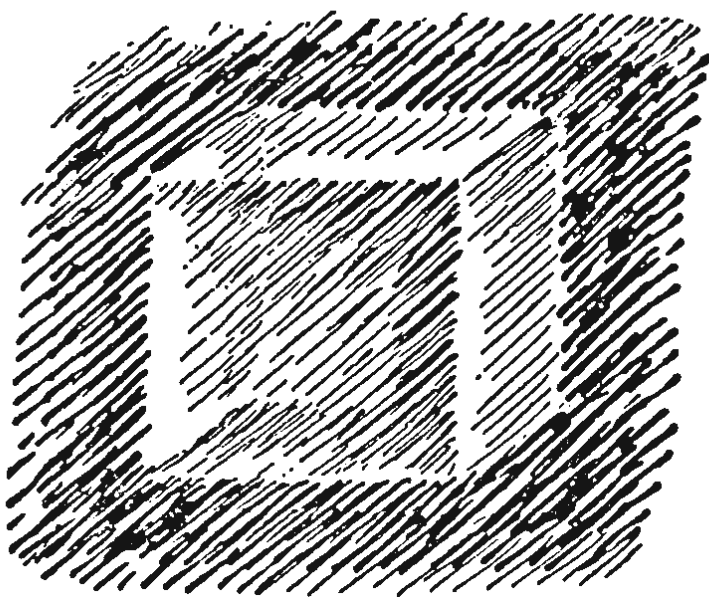
There is another protection for the child, from being overwhelmed by the multitudes of new form possibilities: it is the wealth of expression gained through frequent exercises in free form drawing. In the shape of a vase, for example, the top and bottom will be recognized as flat ellipses, while the outside curves will remind the child of the often practiced symmetry exercises. (Fig. 11)

Thus the drawing of objects will not become painfully difficult, but



will prove a joyous recognition of well-known form elements. The danger that the innocent forces of the child's soul might be violated by the sensational magnitude of the physical world has been reduced to a minimum.

Drawing from nature in the Eighth Grade is by no means, however, the goal of the drawing lessons, but merely a more or less intensive transition study. In Grades 9 and 10 it will be replaced by something entirely new: charcoal or black and white drawing. Now the aim is no longer to realize an object by means of line, perspective, and shadow—instead, the light and dark surface itself will lead to artistic expression without an external model. In this technique, surfaces are formed by a differentiated use of diagonal hatching, and it has two notable characteristics. First of all, while dealing with the three-dimensional object, it remains in the artistic two-dimensional realm, and therefore does not sink into naturalism. Secondly, it remains—even in its depths of darkness — transparent to light. 12



(Fig. 12)

These two things in black and white drawing are most important, the finely artistic quality and the light which is brought about by means of a black crayon. With the help of this technique the child can best bring to objective expression the contrasting light-dark problems of his soul, problems inherent at this age. With its help the strong emotional contrasts and conflicts can be reconciled and overcome.

Summary

- A. The starting point for all drawing:
the straight and the curved line.....1st Grade
- B. Free forms as a basis for drawing
 - 1. Simple geometric forms.....1st to 6th Grade
 - 2. Supplementary exercises (symmetry, etc.).....1st to 6th Grade
 - 3. Metamorphosis of forms.....1st to 6th Grade
 - 4. Ribbon motifs.....1st to 8th Grade
 - 5. Book corners.....4th to 8th Grade
- C. Perspective and object drawing
 - 1. Object drawing without models, simple projections and construction of shadows (see curriculum of 6th Grade).....6th Grade
 - 2. Perspective drawing: geometry to simple pictures.....7th and 8th Grades
 - 3. Drawing from nature (artistically used perspective).....8th Grade
 - 4. Action and object drawing in other classes (botany, zoology, physiology, geography, history, art history)*.....3rd to 12th Grades

- D. Illustrations with colored pencils
 (close to painting) *1st to 5th Grades
- E. Charcoal drawing.....9th and 10th Grades

*Not described in this article.

— *Carl Froebe*
 (Translated by *Rudolf Copple*)

... There is, in sanest hours, a consciousness, a thought that rises, independent, lifted out from all else, calm, like the stars, shining eternal. This is the thought of identity — yours for you, whoever you are, as mine for me. Miracle of miracles, beyond statement, most spiritual and vaguest of earth's dreams, yet hardest basic fact, and only entrance to all facts. In such devout hours, in the midst of the significant wonders of heaven and earth (significant only because of the Me in the center), creeds, conventions fall away and become of no account before this simple idea. Under the luminousness of real vision, it alone takes possession, takes value. Like the shadowy dwarf in the fable, once liberated and looked upon, it expands over the whole earth, and spreads to the roof of heaven.

— *Walt Whitman*

THE BROWN BEAR

The brown bear is the largest and strongest beast of prey to be found in Europe, America or the temperate zone of Asia. It is his enormous bodily strength, not his agility or speed, that makes him so powerful. It is often said that he has the strength of twelve men. He can carry away a dead cow in his arms! A fully grown bear is sometimes over six and a half feet long, and weighs from five to eight hundred pounds. In fairy tales and legends there are many stories of bears who play the part of good or evil beings. This animal, who certainly frightens anyone who meets him in the wilderness, carries within himself two entirely different sides. On the one hand, he is a goodnatured fellow, as so often with physically strong men; on the other, he is a wicked scoundrel. Young bears are trustful and very funny to watch, particularly when they play. Many people know too the dancing bear. But a full-grown one is never to be trusted, even when he is tame. He is not a true friend to man, and can unexpectedly and with treachery fall upon his master.

The strength and fury of this giant, if he is irritated or wounded during a hunt, is terrible to see. Especially frightening is the she-bear when she is defending her young. This powerful animal can stand upright — she raises herself, as the hunters say — and can waddle on two legs towards her opponent in order to embrace and squeeze him with tremendous strength. There are few hunters who would be courageous enough to run a bear through the body with a knife. This seemingly lazy fellow can catch the fleeing hunter. Woe to the fugitive who cannot quickly think up a trick to save his life! Many a hunter has escaped because he has thrown himself down and pretended to be dead. But he must have a great deal of courage to do this—to lie quietly and hardly breathing, while the enraged bear sniffs at him and pushes him about. If the bear thinks that the hunter is dead, he will let him alone for there has never been a single case where the bear is known to have eaten human flesh.

His paws are very dangerous. They have long, dull claws which are as hard as steel and cannot be drawn in when he is walking, as is the case with other cat-like beasts of prey. For this reason they can make hideous wounds. It is said that in battle he uses his claws before he bites. These claws enable him, in spite of his heavy weight, to climb trees and steep cliffs. When a bear climbs a tree he is naturally slow and clumsy, but when he is seen climbing over rocks, his agility is much to be admired.

There are many places that have been named after the bear, such as Bear River, Bear Mountain, and in earlier times he was frequently seen in these localities. Naturally today there are still places where bears are found and towns that are named after them. In thickly populated sections he has long since died out for he does not like to meet human beings.

If he has not been irritated or surprised with his young, he can be cowardly. An old Laplander told a story about meeting a bear who had just killed a reindeer. It is known that such an encounter can be particularly dangerous, but this time the bear disappeared into the woods as if to say, "Starving wretch, you too are hungry!" After the Laplander had cut off a large piece of reindeer flesh, the bear returned. The Laplanders strongly believe that a bear will not do anything to women or children if they make their position known to him. Therefore if a bear approaches a Laplander child, the child will say to him, "Dear grandfather, do not touch me,—I am only a child." The Laplanders give him much credit for human understanding and goodness.

Although the bear, as a fearful, ferocious and crafty robber, occasionally puts entire neighborhoods into fear and anxiety, he is not only a beast of prey. This can be seen from his teeth, which are strong and like fangs, but are not like the flesh-eating teeth characteristic of the animals who live only on meat. Many animal stories tell us how eagerly Mr. Bruin searches for honey. He will break open a beehive whenever the opportunity arises, and rob it of its store. Yet we can never be sure that plant food will keep him satisfied. He will dig with his claws for beetles and the eggs of insects. He also digs in ant hills, and relishes both the ants and their eggs. Even snails make a good meal for him.

When he emerges from his hiding place, hungry and thin after his long winter sleep, even large animals keep out of his way. When he feels well and comfortable, he growls goodnaturedly. It is hard to imagine that this brutal robber grazes on thick grass, or at night slides along in a sitting position through ripening fields of grain in order to eat the spikes as comfortably as possible. He also eats mushrooms or searches for wild berries and sweet fruits. In the autumn he has a grand time adding to the size of his fat belly among the berry patches. He goes about his business like a bon vivant sniffing and tasting his food. No one need fear this peaceful fellow, neither herdsman nor flock.

But if the bear is plagued with hunger or has once eaten meat, he becomes so wicked and ruthless that men must pursue him without pity, and kill him. A thievish bear is the enemy of all herd animals. He chooses a sheep or an ox that is separated from the herd, and worries it with fearful roars until it falls into a ditch or chasm in despair, and dies. He then has an easy time. The nimble animals of the forest, to be sure,—stag, roe and Alpine goat—can escape this heavybodied fellow. It has also been observed that the strongest bulls of a herd courageously oppose him in battle and send him

fleeing. But he can be dangerous to horses. A hunter described how several grazing horses were attacked by a bear, who broke out of a thicket with mighty leaps, captured two of the stampeding horses, knocked them down with his paws and tore their skin. He then roared loudly. Through such reports we learn that he is not always so plump and goodnatured. He shows his daring when he breaks into a cow stall at night in order to catch his prey. Sometimes he will even take the roof off. When he finally succeeds in getting into the stall, he attacks the cow, frees her from her rope, clasps her with one of his front paws while he pushes against the wall with his other foot, and then is strong enough to drag her through the opening. He can then easily carry her away. It has often been observed how the bear, with a strangled horse or an ox in his arms, can climb over dangerous Alpine bridges made of tree trunks that are suspended high over a chasm.

But finally, when the cold weather comes and the first snow falls, the bear makes preparations for his long winter nap. That such a winter sleep is not absolutely necessary for him can be observed from the bears that are in captivity. On warm days or toward the end of winter he will occasionally wake up. But in places where the winter is severe and there is a great deal of snow, 'they sleep through,' as they say in hunters' talk. To begin his nap the bear seeks first of all a suitable place where he cannot easily be found or disturbed. What he likes best is a cave or a hollow tree trunk. If he can find nothing else but a hole in a thicket, he will make himself comfortable with foliage and moss. Many times he will bend branches together to make a kind of dwelling and cover himself with them. His thick hide and layers of fat protect him from the cold.

If he is disturbed during his winter nap, he is very cross and surly. When hunters discover him, they frighten him with poles or loud cries. Many times he is sleeping so soundly that he can be awakened only by the report of a rifle. It must be a comical sight to see a bear suddenly emerge from a hollow tree trunk. Even though his eyes are still blinded by sleep, he knows the danger he is in and tries to break through the hunters' trap. But he is now caught by a pack of courageous, specially trained dogs whom he often hurts with clever blows of his paws and his sharp teeth. A bear, even for large and strong dogs, is a dangerous opponent. The claws of a dead bear are a prize which the hunter can be proud of. The meat is eaten, and the hide with its thick, warm fur is used as a blanket or for clothes and caps. In more than one respect a bear is a welcome catch for the hunter.

Never is a bear so undaunted and so indifferent to death as when defending her young. A she-bear is considered by many people well acquainted with them as a representative of mother love. A cub is not fully grown until he is six years old. In a family of bears there are always children of different ages. The older ones are eventually sent away by their mother, for they must learn to be independent. However, they return when more baby bears are born and help to take care of the youngsters when the mother goes out to look for food. Large bears have been seen carrying smaller ones on their backs through a stream or lake. They are good swimmers and enjoy the water in the summertime.

To many people the bear resembles the human being, particularly when he stands up straight. He can walk on two legs, although clumsily. He walks on the soles of his feet, just as a barefoot man does. Most animals walk on their toes. His bare foot reminds one so much of the human hand and foot that it is difficult to eat his flesh.

Like human arms too he uses his strong, flexible forelimbs, wherein lies most of his strength; in battle he uses them before he bites with his teeth. His paws are so clever that he can make use of them almost as though they were hands. When this powerful, bulky animal trots along with his heavy limbs, sunken head and gently swaying body—for he is an ambling horse, moving both legs on one side at once—he appears to one like an enchanted being. For that reason, certain peoples of North Asia, such as the Giljaken and the Ainus, were so troubled with a bad conscience when they had killed one that they originated a solemn Bear Festival, which they held every year. They sang and danced around a dead and adorned bear, which hung in the middle of the circle. Through these festivities, an apology was made to him, and thanks rendered for his flesh and fur. In this way the entire bear species was repaid for everything that had been done to it.

When the wildness in his nature breaks out, the bear is a brutal plunderer. This is what happens when great bodily strength is not directed by reason and goodness. Instead of being helpful and doing good, as strong men can do, the bear causes fear through his evil destructiveness. Fortunately the bear has a friendly and even lovable side too: we can sometimes admire and like him.

—Gerbert Grohman

(Translated by Anne S. Barnes)

ANNOUNCEMENT

* * *

Christy Barnes has been the editor of "Education as an Art" for almost 14 years. Pressed by exacting duties as teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School—and a writer too—she has decided to resign her post. Ruth Pusch, who has edited the last Bulletins while Mrs. Barnes was abroad, has kindly agreed to take over the duties as editor. We are grateful to her, and welcome her heartily.

I am sure that all members of the Rudolf Steiner School Association will join me in telling Mrs. Barnes how much we regret—even if we understand—her decision. She has brought to our Bulletin the delightful imagination of a born writer. She has made it alive with ideas and pictures. Every issue was a small treasure for those interested in the Waldorf education. We hope that she will continue to contribute to it.

We all thank her for the work she has done and wish her the best of luck in her other endeavors.

Sonia Tomara Clark

President of the Rudolf Steiner School Association

THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

15 East 79th Street, New York 21, N. Y.

President: Sonia Tomara Clark

Editor: Ruth Pusch

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