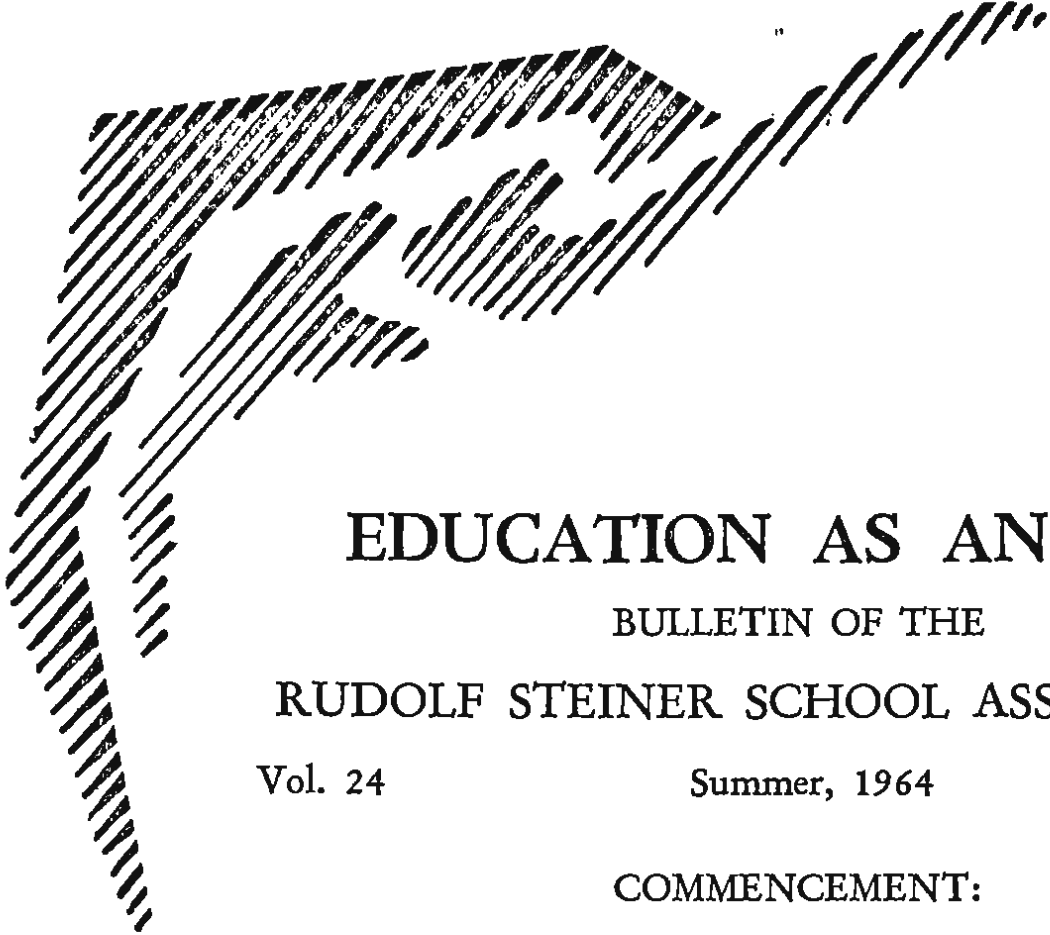




EDUCATION AS AN ART

BULLETIN OF THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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CATERPILLAR CAPACITIES

Address to the graduating class by its first teacher.

Dear Seniors,

Just nine years ago, as you reminded me the other day, some of you were acting in a play on this very stage. You can still quote lines from it. Some of the boys were gnomes, the girls flowers, but Colin was the hero; he was Mr. Caterpillar! We had, at that time, been studying botany and the extraordinary parallel development of the plant and butterfly as they each make climactic changes from one form to another: from the seed-like egg, the sprout-like worm, the bud-like chrysalis to the flower-like butterfly. Toward the end of the play the gnomes came to look for their playfellow, Mr. Caterpillar, and found him, apparently dead, wrapped in a beautiful white shroud. Just at the height of the tragedy, as they were chanting, "The caterpillar's dead; we'll make him a bed, lay grass at his feet, a stone at his head," Colin with a mighty gesture burst straight through his white paper cocoon and appeared in his full glory as a most gorgeous butterfly!

What is it that happens silently and invisibly inside a cocoon? Scientists have delved into countless secrets of nature and put them to human use. Perhaps there are few secrets as mysterious and magical as this power of changing something ugly into beauty, something primitive into a wholly new and perfect form. What might we not be able to accomplish in the world if we could discover and make use of the laws which are at work in such a process?

Is it possible that man, like the caterpillar, already has such laws at his disposal? Yes, to some extent, for he can turn a desert into a garden, a stone into a statue, and with metal he can make music or a machine. The caterpillar, however, accomplishes a more difficult task. He exerts these forces upon himself. Do we also do this? Do we all our lives, perhaps, weave our experiences into the great cocoon of death — and then?

But I would like to ask whether man can accomplish similar transformations during his lifetime. Again, yes. We often say of some gifted student as he grows older, "His talents have blossomed." This is a very welcome but comparatively natural and easy development. The matured ability bears strong resemblance to its earlier, infant stage. Can man, however, go still further and change one form of soul into one of a quite different kind? An example of this more distinctive kind of transformation, taken from history, is the courage of the war-loving, young Saint Francis which changed into love of such vitality that it took him into the midst of the lepers in order to care for them. This is a change of one kind of strength into another.

A question which we all ask ourselves continuously, either consciously or unconsciously, takes us a step deeper still, into another level of ourselves. Is it possible to descend with this power into that region where our actual inabilities and weaknesses are lodged, where there is an unpleasantly soft and caterpillar-like formlessness, even evil? This question may remind you that it was the weak-voiced Demosthenes who became one of the greatest orators of Greece. I myself went to school with a girl who was older than the rest of us. In high school she still read very slowly and with difficulty. Today she is a greatly admired science teacher in one of the best private schools in New York. This autumn you read *Man and Master* by Tolstoi. In the end it was not the willing, unselfish servant, but the egotistical master, absorbed in his own gains as a merchant, who, by some strange alchemy, brought about in himself the desire and will to give his life for the man who had served him.

These are all examples, at various levels, of that kind of transformation which comes to such classic expression in the life of the caterpillar. What is the law at work here? Of what importance is it today? What is its source in ourselves? Here I would like to make a seeming digression in order to approach the answers to these questions from a new vantage point.

As you look today at the extraordinary brilliance of our modern civilization, you can realize that we owe a large share of its greatness to the incisive, clarifying powers of analytical thought, the ability to break down and divide things into smaller and smaller components. Never before have there been such advances in science, such speed of progress. The marvels of modern surgery, for which we can never be grateful enough, are based upon the analysis and dissection of the body, psychoanalysis upon the analysis of the soul. At the very same time we have to see that we are confronted by other divisions: the division between races, the cleft between East and West. Schizophrenia, the disease of the divided soul, increases: we have split the atom.

This modern world, in which analysis is such a prevalent and admirable trend, is not the world which you have formed. It is the result of the past and of other generations. What will be characteristic of the next epoch of civilization? We must not abandon analysis, but a strong counter-force is necessary if we are to bridge and heal those divisions which accompany it.

Now the caterpillar does not merely break down its own substance. He leads one form or expression of himself over into another, in continuing growth. This kind of change is called metamorphosis. Rudolf Steiner, the man whose methods of teaching we are trying to carry out here in our school, often spoke about the law of metamorphosis, and he made use of it. He applied it, for instance, to the architectural forms of a great building, the Goetheanum in Switzerland, which he designed; and he gave a particularly decisive illustration of it when he said that whenever anything evil can be turned into something good, then goodness of a very special kind comes about, goodness of a particular quality and strength. Perhaps we have all experienced this kind of goodness to a small degree when, after a quarrel with a friend, we have made an effort to reestablish the relationship and found that through the work and determination which we have exerted, the friendship has become realized and cemented as never before.

What is this artist in ourselves which descends into the unformed, incomplete, even weak and primitive parts of ourselves, but also into creative, mysterious, inexhaustible depths of our being and forms and re-forms us? Isn't this giant caterpillar our own individuality? It weaves what is undeveloped or deformed into a cocoon with the threads of clear thought, but then it broods over it, warms it and hatches it in the heart. Then certainly a very special kind of goodness comes about. This human caterpillar constantly makes over what is lower into something higher, the unconscious into the conscious, the purely racial into the individual, lifting man above nation, race and creed to a vantage point from which he appreciates rather than deplors the wealth of diversity which they create. Where individuality is at work, it is possible for men to work together and to work out their differences. Communion and community come about. When the individuality ceases to function, mankind becomes mob, and destruction and chaos result. It is interesting to note here that when people strive merely to be "different", a dreary kind of uniformity and mediocrity result, as in "personalized" Christmas greetings and so many dress design "originals", for instance; but when they exert themselves toward the same high goal, the good of their fellow beings, this effort proceeds, and can only proceed from the kernel of the individuality, which then stamps itself on every gesture and deed, as in the case of a Lincoln or an Emerson.

The thought that one phase of life, nature or a human being can change into another quite unlike what it was before, is a thought so human, so universal, that it is capable of bridging even the gap between East and West.

We had a striking example of this recently when we read together in class *The Bar of Shadow* by Laurens van der Post. You remember how, at the end of the book, the former inmate of a Japanese prison camp speaks to the man who had guarded and tortured him. After the war the Japanese guard — on the day before he is to be hanged — has sent for his onetime prisoner, who has already tried to intercede for him at his trial.

"I do not mind dying," says the Eastener, "Only please tell me what I have done wrong that other soldiers have not done, and I shall die happy."

And the Westerner tells him, "You can try to think only with all your heart that unfair and unjust as this thing which my people are doing seems to you, it is done only to try and stop the kind of things that happened between us in the war from ever happening again. You can say to yourself as I used to say to my despairing men in prison under you: 'There is a way of winning

through losing, a way of victory in defeat which we are going to discover.' Perhaps that too must be your way to understanding and victory now."

And the condemned man answers, with the indrawn breath of recognition, "That is a very Japanese thought!" . . . It actually was neither a Japanese thought nor a Western one, but a purely human thought.

So for a moment this recognition that the power of the individuality can change a thing even into its very opposite united the two men, the two races, the East and the West.

And now, at this joyful moment when you are about to burst the cocoon of your school days and try all kinds of flight on your wings in a world of a thousand new experiences, my wish for you is that you will take with you, and that you will never forget, your caterpillar capacities.

—CHRISTY BARNES

VALEDICTORY

High School Commencement, 1964

Here we are, seated before you in our white robes and blue robes; only a few days ago we were in the country, shoveling dirt and building stone walls, and yesterday we were sitting and singing together with our guitars. Memory puts before us pictures as contrasting as these; they flow together into the whole that is "our class."

This year we have been aware that we were growing into a unity within the school. It was not always so. In the sixth grade when I entered the school, I remember my classmates at different levels of maturity, with interests as diverse as the lindy, baseball, and practical jokes. The seventh and eighth grades were times of transition, feuds, and cliques. However, as we entered High School, we became aware not only of our differences, but also of common elements.

But I think it was in great part our teachers, who by many means brought out in us the sense of unity that pervades the spirit of the school. In the curriculum, for instance, the beginnings of each week are defined by assemblies, of each day by a verse spoken by the class; main lessons of various subjects interrelate and repeat motifs in definite cycles. The teachers, each in his own way, have tried to awaken the best in us and to give each of us a sense of his individual worth. They have given us tools of self-discipline. For example, in geometry we were shown steps, axioms and diagrams, but we had to reach the final proofs ourselves; the process was thereby more rewarding. Most important, they instilled in us the sense for the responsibility of the individual which accompanies his freedom.

In the world today, the individual is exploited, but individuality is weak. Whenever I travel by subway, which isn't often, I am struck by this picture: a pressing crowd of strikingly different faces and bodies, which nevertheless wear the blankest possible expressions, every one. The same sort of faces can be distorted by the anger of mob frenzy which threatens and annihilates the individual, as at the recent Brazilian soccer game or in racial riots in this country.

Our age has seen the breathless advance of technology, something that we take in our stride. Man is measuring unimaginable distances in space, and also inventing machines for his own comfort. A few weeks ago, at a friend's house, I followed a most enticing smell into the kitchen: there was a turkey being cooked in a stove by sound-waves! (It was delicious.) Energies of great magnitude are being harnessed for useful and destructive purposes.

Yet, in another sphere, in that of human relationships, man is woefully unadvanced. At this very moment wars are being fought and men are being senselessly killed. There is misunderstanding and mistrust between countries, races, and neighbors.

It is said that man has outgrown religion, that he is "self-reliant". But he is obviously still insecure; he still has the need, that religion once fulfilled, for something greater, more infallible than himself to look up to. Superstition associated with religion has only been transferred to a concept of Science which is blinding and which annihilates the will of the individual. Science, which springs directly out of man's nature, can be a wonderful tool, but when abstracted from himself, it can be dangerous. "For the sake of science" men, scientists or not, will do anything, regardless of its morality. If a product's label carries the phrase, "Scientific tests have shown . . .", the product is as good as sold. There is definitely a great gap between man's moral and his scientific advances. John C. Greene, in his *Darwin and Religion*, said:

Whatever his origin, man is a very peculiar creature, whose inmost being eludes the abstractions of science. For science, since it adopts the point of view of the detached observer, has no access to those aspects of reality which can be known only from the point of view of the actor. Yet, ultimately, the scientist himself is an actor in the difficult human situation, and science becomes pointless and even destructive unless it takes on significance and direction from a religious affirmation concerning the meaning and value of human existence.

It is noticeable, especially in the big city, that individual responsibility is being denied. "I am my brother's keeper" is a notion of the past. "Let someone else do it": how many of us have not said or thought this? But when thirty-eight people hear the cries of a woman being murdered, and not one of them takes action, then something must be radically wrong. The recent Broadway play, *The Deputy*, has a similar message; it tells how a man in high office refused to speak out against the murder of millions of Jews in Nazi Germany. It concerns itself with one particular man, but it speaks to all of us who are silent or blind to moral wrong, thereby giving consent to it. The play is set during World War II, — but has the human situation improved so much in the last decade?

Luckily, we can point to a few people who still have confidence in the influence of the individual. Such a person was Rachel Carson, who died just this year. In her quiet way, she pointed out an obvious matter: man's exploitation of nature through the use of chemical insecticides. Perhaps had it not been for her, this awareness might have come about too late. But now states are beginning to revise their laws to control the use of such chemicals. — Camphill Village for mentally handicapped young adults, where we spent our four-day class trip, and where we shovelled dirt and built stone walls, is perhaps not spectacular in the eyes of the world. But the co-workers there devote them-

selves to bring others, who in the petty, pushy pace of society would be otherwise totally rejected, to a sense of their own worth and of their usefulness within a group.

The understanding and exercise of individual powers are, then, of paramount importance today. Our education at Steiner has given us a share of this understanding and practice, so that, in our sick society, we may *do* something to change it. For ideas mean nothing until translated into action; ours has been an active education, keeping all our senses alert, for each of us in a different way.

As a class we are no more, although friendships may continue. But from the experiences we have lived through together, we may carry on to other relationships something of value.

—ANN FINKEL, '64

VALEDICTORY

High School Commencement, 1963

On July 16, 1945, eight hours after I was born in a New Rochelle hospital, the people of Los Alamos, New Mexico were startled by a faraway flash of light and a rumbling tremor in the earth. I, and my generation, are literally the children of the atomic age. The mushroom cloud is our birthright and it will be up to us to determine whether we will be swallowed up in it or can govern and control it.

The familiar dangers spawned by atomic energy are, in addition to the horrors of nuclear warfare itself, pollution by fallout of the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink as well as a vast increase in hereditary diseases, stillbirths and embryonic deaths.

Terrible and unspeakable as these conditions are, the world faces other problems of almost similar magnitude — overpopulation, insecticide poisoning, racial discrimination, and urban deterioration. All these problems have several important factors in common. They are complex; they involve millions of people of different faiths and political persuasions; they involve enormous sums of money; and their solution would encroach on many vested interests. These problems pose an overwhelming challenge. It is possible for the intelligent citizen to respond to them in one of two diametrically opposed ways. He can throw up his hands at the complexity and immensity of the problems and claim with apparent justification that they are insoluble and that the only sensible course of action is for the human being to separate himself from his troublesome world and live a life of individual virtue. Or he can face up manfully and courageously to his grossly imperfect world and determine to change it.

Both reactions assume a certain knowledge of the problems, but only the responsible attitude incorporates feeling and action, and only in this attitude lies hope for civilization. At the Rudolf Steiner School the emphasis is not centered merely on mental activity, but the individuality which the teachers have tried to encourage us to develop involves all three processes of thinking, feeling and willing. Morality is inextricably linked with individuality and no moral being can refuse to take action on the great problems of the world.

Some of the same factors that foster the development of these problems also militate against the growth of human individuality. Some examples of this are dogma, ignorance, chauvinism, mass media, and dead traditions. Fortunately these influences have never been a part of the Steiner School and their absence in each case is noteworthy. Although many of us have been in Steiner schools for ten or more years, at no time did we ever receive the slightest inculcation of Steiner philosophy. As for ignorance, our class, I hope, stands as a tacit refutation. Neither the school nor the class has ever been chauvinistic and we have students in our class who have been born in China, Germany, France and England. The Steiner school stands for the antithesis of impersonal education, and classes have been small enough — there were five in one of my French classes this year — so that our teachers could have much more than a superficial rapport with each student. Special attention is often paid to our individual desires and interests, and for my part, I will always be grateful for Mr. Franceschelli's devotion in teaching me mathematics. We often met at school before 8 in the morning for a session in analytic geometry and calculus, two of my particular interests.

Our high school is only five years old and many programs are still in the experimental stage. Two of our undertakings this year, which are unlike anything in the curricula of other high schools, are our senior history paper and the senior project. Both provide valuable experience in study and independent work in a subject of our choice, and from some of the fields of endeavor, you can get a picture of the variety that has always characterized our class. There were essays on the American Negro, theatre lighting, Existentialism, and Jazz; and the projects included sculpture, a van de Graef generator, woodwork, music and a one-act play. In the senior year especially, the independence and individuality which began for most of us in the last years of elementary school reached its height. But through all our years at school our teachers have never forced us to fit in any special group or category. Instead they have tried to make the whole class aware of the particular gift that each student had to offer.

Thus at Steiner, the particular problems of our generation have not been aggravated. Rather, the faculty has worked long and lovingly to help us develop our own unique selves. It is this quality of individuality which is necessary for intelligent thinking in a world beset by the automatic response and the conditioned reflex. But the words "atom" and "individual" are derived from words meaning "indivisible." The atom has been split with destructive results beyond man's imagination; we must keep our individuality intact if we are to survive the nuclear age and move on to higher levels.

—DAVID LIPPMAN, '63

THE CLASS TEACHER'S ADDRESS TO THE EIGHTH GRADE

June, 1964

Dear girls and boys of the graduating class:

On this day, which is an important occasion for you, it is appropriate to recall a brief history of the class.

We are most happy to have with us here today the teacher who started you off on your road through the elementary school. Those of you who were here in the early grades remember Miss Patrick, who guided you with great

love and care through those first formative years of schooling. Then as it happens so often in the natural course of life, Miss Patrick became Mrs. Rettig and had to give up her class at the end of the third grade. That was a difficult time for you, as you missed her as much as she missed you.

In the middle of the fourth grade I became your class teacher, and I remember very well that first day. There was great expectation, all those questioning eyes expressing uncertainty and maybe hope. What would he be like? Is he really as strict as they say?

Well, ever since that day we have learned to know each other very well. Together we have fought many a battle. Some we won and some we lost and had to try again. And in all this battling and striving we learned an important fact: we learned that a battle lost, a failure, a mistake, need not be a loss at all, as long as we don't give up but try again and turn a defeat into a victory.

Now instead of recalling some of the many adventures we experienced during those 4½ years of working together, I will put into a nutshell what we were striving for.

I will use an analogy and trust that you will understand.

All through these years we have been engaged in building houses, unusual, highly individualistic houses. Although we used the same or similiar building materials, each house turned out to be quite different from every other.

When one builds an ordinary house, one starts with the foundation, builds up the walls, and finally one puts on the roof. Our houses, however, were no ordinary houses. When we started building, the houses were already there and yet they were not, and that is a riddle, a mystery. Each house had a foundation, walls, and a roof. Yet the foundations had to be rebuilt, strengthened, transformed, the walls needed to become strong pillars to allow large windows so that lots of light could flow into the house, but also strong enough to carry a beautiful dome for a roof.

Now that we have built the houses, each with its own individual architecture, the riddle remains: the house is there, and yet it is not. It will have to be rebuilt and metamorphosed all over again.

From now on, however, in the rebuilding of your house, you will have to become more and more your own architect. Of course, you will still receive a lot of help, advice, guidance, from your parents and teachers throughout your high school and college years, but the master architect will be you.

There is one piece of advice I would like to give you on your way. When you rebuild your house again, in reshaping the roof of your house, it is of the utmost importance in our modern age of space travel that you put into your dome a skylight: a skylight through which can flow starlight, wisdom of the universe. But of equal importance is that you also install shutters which you can close at will. This again may be somewhat puzzling to you, but you see, if you had only a skylight and all the wisdom of the universe flowed in, not much would be gained. The wisdom of the universe shines upon every stone, but the stone can't comprehend it. The human being is different. He can comprehend but not by mere exposure. He comprehends by contemplation

and meditation. He needs to receive, but what he receives is not his own until he makes it so. And if you don't install shutters, you will be all the time on the receiving side, and thus you will have no time to become a creator. The world expects, however, something from you, and that something you can gain when you pull the shutters closed and enter with your whole being, not only with your thoughts but with your whole being, into that which you have received, transform it, make it your own, and then you can offer it as a creative and moral force to the world.

Modern man has become extremely able intellectually. He has received tremendous gifts of power, of energy, which he can put into man's service or unleash for the earth's destruction. It all depends how man will answer the challenge with which he is confronted. Intellect alone cannot solve the problem, but *intelligence* coupled with the forces that originate in man's heart can.

The thought of annihilation is fearful, yet fear cannot solve a thing.

I would like to tell you how three elderly gentlemen of long life experience look upon this matter.

Robert Frost, the distinguished American poet, was asked by a journalist on the occasion of his 80th birthday celebration, "What is the most important thing you've learned in life?"

Robert Frost answered with great confidence just three little words: "Life goes on." Then he elaborated and said, "I am like the old Chinese of 90, I don't hold with the people who say, 'Where are we going from here? . . . What's the use?' I would not get up in the morning if I did not think there was a direction to go in. The direction is different in each of us, but direction is there and continuity, even if we think we are lost. — In spite of fears and worries, life continues . . . *It goes on* . . . These three little words I have learned above all in my 80 years of life."

Albert Schweitzer, a Central European, the great humanitarian who has dedicated his life to the service of men who are ill and helpless, spoke with confidence of the future of mankind, in this manner:

"Because I have confidence in the power of truth and of the spirit, I believe in the future of mankind. Ethical world- and life-affirmation contains within itself an optimistic willing and hoping, which can never be lost."

And if I may add a personal note — many years ago I met Albert Schweitzer on a train travelling from Basel via Strassburg to England. He travelled third class and occupied the compartment next to mine. When he arrived in Strassburg, I gave him a hand with the many pieces of luggage he had with him, and I will never forget the expression on the face of this great man when he said thank you. It was the kind of thank you you might be blessed with when you have saved someone's life.

Boris Pasternak, a Russian, a recent Nobel Prize winner for literature, expressed himself in this way:

"In this era of the Atomic Age, values have changed. We have learned that we are the guests of existence, travellers between two stations. We must discover security within ourselves.

During our short span of life we must find our own insights into the relationships with the existence in which we participate so briefly. Otherwise we cannot live. This means, as I see it, a departure from the materialistic view of the 19th century. It means a reawakening of the spiritual world of our inner life."

These three people speak out of long life experience and express in their individual way confidence and certainty of direction.

There is one other who in her way expresses what she thinks is of greatest importance in life. Her words you have learned and it would be kind of you to recite them for us.

Rachel Carson, the author of books on natural science, such as *The Sea Around Us*, *The Edge of the Sea*, and *Silent Spring*, was deeply impressed by the writings of the English essayist, Richard Jeffries. We will recite a brief quotation from him, which Miss Carson said had become a kind of creed she always lived by:

"The exceeding beauty of the earth, in her splendor of life, yields a new thought with every petal. The hours when the mind is absorbed by beauty are the only hours when we really live, so that the longer we can stay among these things, so much the more is snatched from inevitable time."

And Miss Carson's own thoughts on the beauty of the earth:

"There is symbolic as well as actual beauty in the migration of the birds; in the ebb and flow of the tides, responding to sun and moon as they have done for millions of years; in the repose of the folded bud in winter, ready within its sheath for the spring. There is something infinitely healing in these repeated refrains of nature, the assurance that, after night, dawn comes and spring after winter.

It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again to the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know the sense of wonder and humility. There is modern truth in the ancient wisdom of the psalmist: 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.' "

Now remains only one more thing for me to say to you. Looking at the balance sheet of our mutual encounters in these past years, it was a pleasure and privilege to work with you, and my most sincere and hearty wishes accompany you in your endeavor, rebuilding your house. And — don't forget the skylight and the shutters.

—WILLIAM HARRER

THE REPORT CARD REVISITED

A "Letter to the Editor" discovered recently in a suburban newspaper

Dear Sir: The report cards have now received a second look, the searching look . . . evidently educationwise a hopeful osmosis is now at work. Before this mama climbs into her July and August mental hammock, she'd like to toss out — for fellow parents' digestion — some musings that have hovered during the time of the homework monsoon.

Socrates is said to have put to Protagoras the proposition: "I wish that you would, if possible, show me a little more clearly that virtue can be taught." Are the fonts of higher education conveying the virtue of virtue, or is Socrates' challenge still being skirted? A hunger seems to abound for the symbols of shiny material success.

Do the youngsters receive a liberal education or a liberating education? Will the magna cum laude be proud of how much knowledge he has accumulated, or will he wisely be humbled by the actuality that he knows little more than that which he absorbed in the pursuit of his degree?

Ideally, every teacher should possess this dual attribute: enthusiasm and curiosity. Enthusiasm and curiosity make a perfect bond between pupil and teacher, but this condition cannot come to fruit in overcrowded schools or in stepchild schools whose board is but part of a political machine.

Can humor, like virtue, be taught, encouraged? It's a little frightening, the present scarcity of kindhearted humor. Too many beautiful but humorless young people, too tense too much of the time . . . Above all, I nurture the hope that every science teacher can remember Alexis Carrel's admonition that even science must be spiritualized if it is to serve the best interests of humanity.

Hammock, here I come.

(Mrs.) D. G.

THE BUTTERFLY

On a bright, warm summer day a little caterpillar crept out of its egg and from behind a green leaf peeped astonished at the world.

How beautiful the world was, how beautiful! On every side were flowers of all colors: shining sunflowers, red roses, bluebells, white stars. And deep blue sky over all. But the most beautiful was the sparkling light that made everything shine forth.

"The light is the most marvelous of all," he said to himself. "I will gather as much light as I possibly can."

And now day by day it crept, ever in the course of the sun, from East to West, from above to below, and again above. By night he dreamed of shining light, and by day he crept after it, from one tiny leaf to another, wherever the light was the warmest.

And behold! the summer through he gathered so much light that he wove a little house about himself of pure threads of light. And the little house appeared as though its walls were mirrors, in which the light broke itself, and it shimmered and shone in all colors. Within it now sat the little caterpillar and could never weary of seeing the shining wonder. No king in the whole wide world lived in so splendid a palace as the little caterpillar had woven out of pure sunlight.

And as he marveled more and more over all this splendor, it was as though he must stretch himself and expand, as though he would burst from pure joy and happiness. We human beings never burst, no matter how much we rejoice. But imagine! In the midst of his sun palace the skin of the little caterpillar broke for pure joy! Just as in the fairy tale the handsome prince steps out of his enchanted bearskin, so out of the caterpillar's crept forth a beautiful, shimmering butterfly. He had wings woven of all the shining colors in the world, and how wonderful he found his beautiful, beautiful wings! For pure joy he began to wave them, and the light and air that had fallen upon the wings were carried from flower to flower and far into the blue sky. And all the shining blossoms greeted and loved the butterfly, and each one bestowed on him a tiny sip of honey. Ah! how the flowers longed to fly forth into the sunlight as he did. But because they had become earth children and wanted to make the earth beautiful, they remained sitting still and waited until their little brother, the butterfly, kissed them and told them tales from the length and breadth of the shining, beautiful world.

—MAYA SURKAMP
(translated by Virginia Field Birdsall)

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