

EDUCATION AS AN ART
BULLETIN OF THE
RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Vol. 26

Summer, 1967

No. 3

CONTENTS:

Reports, reflections, parables, a speech and a play, from
THE WALDORF SCHOOL, GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK
THE WALDORF INSTITUTE
MOHALA PUA SCHOOL, HONOLULU, HAWAII

OUR IDEA OF EXCELLENCE

An appeal to new parents, September, 1965

Any parent choosing an independent school wants to feel that good fortune and his own good judgment have brought him to the very best. We all seek excellence.

We believe the Waldorf School will not disappoint you. Indeed, we think there is a likelihood it will prove even better, more helpful, than you at first expected. Though nowadays we scarcely dare hope for any gifts from the gods, many parents of the Waldorf School, and certainly all our teachers, have found this educational method to be just such a gift.

The wisdom lying behind our curriculum and methods continually instructs and refreshes the teachers. It has also quite changed the lives of the parents who have been able to lay hold upon it. This wisdom is indeed, we feel, a divine gift, great in historical significance. Its faithful teacher was Rudolf Steiner. It is he whom we must thank for finding a modern way to insight that ennobles every aspect of education.

Rudolf Steiner was himself a teacher *par excellence*. We have everything to learn from his example. What he was trying to do, through education and the methods he used to his end, are the things a new parent most needs to know

if he would understand the Waldorf School. This is not because our school is run by principles, or for ends, other than those of its own faculty, but because our faculty finds its own idea of excellence best exemplified in the teacher whom it regards as friend and colleague. Rudolf Steiner made the very breakthrough, he forged the very tools that we (and a great portion of mankind who as yet know nothing of his success) have longed for but could not accomplish for ourselves. The greatest deeds at the most critical times in history are reserved for heroes. We see in Rudolf Steiner such a hero of the cause of right education.

In welcoming you as new parents I urge you to make the most of every opportunity to learn more about the spiritual science inaugurated by Steiner. He says clearly what we teachers only stammer. Whether or not, however, the founder of Waldorf schools becomes accessible to you, you should seek opportunities to press towards the center of the particular ideas of excellence that guide teaching in this school. If you are to *understand* the school we are sure you will be proud of, if you are to develop home policies that supplement and reinforce the school's, and—importantly—if you are to criticize us as we hope you will, you must observe, study, raise questions. One book that will especially reward your study and which I take pleasure in recommending to you in the strongest terms is Dr. Franz E. Winkler's *Man: The Bridge Between Two Worlds*.^{*} In my opinion, every parent of the Waldorf School should own this book, and should read it—preferably more than once.

A further word about criticism. It is the friendliest thing you can offer us. We ask you for it, along with praise, and we want you not to mince words. But let your criticism come directly to the teachers and to me. Have the courage, the love, to be direct. Your criticism must recognize, of course, that there is no use complaining when a dog is not a cat, or a cow a horse. There is no use asking the Waldorf School to serve ideals which it does not in fact honor. But in the light of its own idea of excellence it deserves criticism, it invites criticism, and it requires criticism. The more you know about what we aspire to, the more helpful you can be in calling to our attention the many ways in which we fall short. For there is no doubt that we as teachers are unworthy of the shining new ideal of excellence which hovers before us. All too often we are muddle-headed and conventional. We admit it. Help us to improve! The ideal is fully as much yours as ours, remember; and in the hidden recesses of your being you know it just as natively as we do.

You must forgive me for making no attempt at all to be explicit, in the abstract, about our idea of excellence. One of our chief aims is to overcome abstraction. We prefer to start with fact and see what can be drawn forth from it by creative alchemy. I should like therefore at this point to turn to the concrete questions that may have arisen for you in the first weeks of school. Considering them together we may be able to show how Waldorf School principles shed light on practical problems.

On the other hand, before we come to your questions, perhaps I can offer a single picture that summarizes the nature of our Waldorf School.

Two ideals of man stand in contrast to one another. The first prevails in many schools today; the other is distinctive of our own school. Those who hold

^{*}Harper & Row, New York, 1960. Available now in paperback at \$1.75.

the first ideal see man, alone of all creatures, standing upright. Their attention is drawn to how his head crowns his body. Since the brain is highest, they regard it as best, and they conclude that a first-class brain is of first importance. Thus it has come about that the student of exceptionally high IQ is looked up to with something like awe and great things are expected of him.

The second view of man was best known by the Greeks, who advised "Nothing too much!" and who sought virtue always between extremes. This view finds excellence in no single part of a man but only in the balance, harmony, and proportion of his parts. It honors feet, for instance, but does not believe that because ordinary-sized feet are good things, feet a yard longer will be better things, unless the whole rest of the body is proportionately grandiose.

What strikes those who observe man from this second viewpoint is the fact that although the brain tops the human body, it is for that very reason placed in an extreme position. It represents not the perfection of human nature but simply one pole. Opposite the cerebral aspect of man is his other pole, the visceral. Both of these polarities have much to contribute, but both must be mastered by the nature which mediates between them: the heart. The heart is central. The heart represents man himself, who is always the bridge between any two worlds that can be mentioned.

We in the Waldorf School do not decry intelligence. We aim to foster it. But intelligence for us, as the organ of truth, is not mere rationality and intellect. Intelligence is the kind of thinking that is rooted in and guided at every step by intuitions coming from the heart.

—JOHN F. GARDNER

(Chairman of the Faculty, Waldorf School)

PARABLES

Written by teacher-trainees at the Waldorf Institute, 1966

* * * Water has no will of its own. Whatever it does it does under the direction of someone else. And once put into motion, it reflects perfectly the forces which move it. A gentle wind makes a gentle wave. A steep slope makes a fast flow. A drainpipe leading from roof to barrel makes drinks for a barnyard cow.

—Lynn Haberstock

* * * A long time ago I went with my grandfather to the vineyard where he was to prune the vines. He sat on the ground with his legs embracing the vine plant. In his right hand he had the pruning tool, and with his left hand he would feel the plant. Moments of silence prevailed at frequent intervals. He would cut at a certain spot, and then he would taste the watery substance emerging from the cut. He would then look at me and say: "My boy, you must show reverence, respect and love to the plant, and the plant will tell you where to cut."

—Arthur Englis

THE WALDORF SCHOOL OF ADELPHI UNIVERSITY

Our school is soon to come of age: we are now in our 20th year. We have 14 classes, nursery through 12th grade. Enrollment is, and has been for several years, around 325 students. In June, 1967, we graduated our eighth senior class. Our faculty counts 32 full-time and 14 part-time members.

Alumni are becoming a real factor in the life of the school, visiting us often, attending yearly alumni meetings, telling high school forums of their experiences, contributing to the financial support of the school.

Our high school was evaluated in 1965 by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and received official accreditation.

Of special significance, outside the daily life in school, are:

—The monthly parents' meetings.

Usually a teacher is asked to speak on a subject of his choosing. Last year, Steiner's *Education and Modern Spiritual Life* was discussed at these meetings.

—Adult education courses.

These were a new offering this year. We have had two series of three classes meeting for four evenings. In November, parents had a choice of Astronomy, History of Language, and Geometric String Designs. In January, we offered Physics, Sculpture and Heralds of the American Spirit (Emerson and Whitman). Each series was attended by about 75 parents.

—Weekly chorus rehearsals.

The Waldorf Choral Society is now in its third year and has about 75 members, consisting of parents, faculty and some older high school students. Concerts are given twice a year.

The attractive grounds around our school are slowly developing a richer and healthier soil through extensive compost application. Students, faculty, and this year parents, also, have been actively engaged in building compost piles and spreading the finished product.

An addition to our gym is being made which will finally relieve our halls from the necessity of serving as storage rooms for gym equipment.

What are our hopes for the future? Most of all, that we may develop more strength, insight, and ability in our teaching.

—GERHARD BEDDING

(Class Teacher, Waldorf School)

A FIRST GRADE PLAY

Chorus: (with eurythmy)

By the sea a fisherman set out every day,
Casting forth his fish line into cove and bay,
Slowly bringing home his daily catch of fishes,
To his little pig-stye house, the least of his wife's wishes.
Then one day from water clear, a golden fish he hooked.
It had a man's voice, he could hear, but like a flounder looked.

Fish:

Hark you, fisher, let me live, I am not good to eat.
A prince of royal blood I am, enchanted head to feet.

Fisherman:

Have no fear, I'll do no harm to any fish that speaks.
You may be free though poor we are, we've naught to eat for weeks.

*

*

*

Wife:

Husband, have you brought some food, some sweet and tasty fish?

Fisherman:

No, my wife, the one I caught, enchanted prince was he.
With royal voice he ordered, "Throw me back into the sea."

Wife:

You fool, he could have helped us, and granted us a wish.
You must return and call out, a hut you ask of him,
We need a nicer place to live, to shelter life and limb.

Fisherman:

That is too much to ask for,
It will displease the fish.
But if I have to ask for more,
Let it be your last, last wish.

* * *

Chorus:

Down went the fisherman, and stood beside the sea;
No longer calm and clear the water's colors be,
But green and yellow it became, with ripples passing by;
Alone stood the fisherman, and called the flounder nigh.

Fisherman:

Flounder, flounder in the sea,
Come, I pray thee, here to me;
For my wife, good Ilsabil,
Wills not as I'd have her will.

Fish:

You called me from my watery den;
Well . . . what does she ask for then?

Fisherman:

A hut she wishes at this hour;
Please grant her wish with all your power.

Fish:

To your wife return right steady;
You will see she's there already.

* * *

Fisherman:

Now, wife, you must be satisfied,
With cozy hut and fireside?

Wife:

Hark you, husband, this hut's too small;
A castle of stone would be far better.
Go to the sea and give a call;
My wish be granted, to the letter.

Fisherman:

That is too much to ask for,
It will displease the fish.
But if I have to ask for more,
Let it be your last, last wish.

Chorus:

Down went the fisherman, and stood beside the sea,
No longer green and yellow the water's colors be,
But blue and purple was it now with wavelets passing by;
Alone stood the fisherman and called the flounder nigh.

[Verses are repeated throughout, except the following:]

Fisherman:

Now my wife, you could want no more;
A castle of stone, with locks on the door!

Wife:

A castle of stone is a nice place to live,
But kings live in castles, and orders they give.
I want to be king with scepter and crown.
Go to the flounder, and make my wish known.

* * *

Chorus:

Down went the fisherman and stood beside the sea;
No more blue and purple the water's colors be;
Now quite dark grey, and heaving up and by;
Alone stood the fisherman and called the flounder nigh.

* * *

Fish:

To your wife go on right steady;
You will see, she is king already.

* * *

Fisherman:

Ah wife, and now that you are king,
The fish has given you everything.

Wife:

Now that I am king, the emperor I must be.
Go to the flounder, and wish this wish for me.

* * *

Chorus:

Down went the fisherman and stood beside the sea;
No longer dark and grey the water's colors be;
Now quite black and thick, and boiling from below;
Alone stood the fisherman and called the flounder low.

* * *

Fisherman:

Wife, are you the emperor now?
Be content, if you know how.

Wife:

I am the great emperor but have one more hope,
To rule the whole church, and be the Pope.

* * *

Chorus:

Down went the fisherman and stood beside the sea;
Still more black and thick the water's colors be,
But up above, there still remained a patch of clear blue sky;
Alone stood the fisherman and called the flounder nigh.

Fisherman:

Now that you are Pope, higher you can't go;
Church and nations follow you, both powerful and low.

Wife:

God rules the circling sun and moon;
Like unto Him I would be soon
And cause the sun and moon to rise,
To be Lord of All, in all folks' eyes.

* * *

Chorus:

Down went the fisherman and stood beside the sea;
Black as pitch with white crests the water's colors be,
Mountains trembled, trees lay fallen, black too, was the sky;
Alone stood the fisherman and called the flounder nigh.

* * *

Fisherman:

Like to God she'd be this hour;
Please grant her wish with all your power.

Fish:

To your wife return right steady,
In the *pig-stye* she is already.

—ALAN LOMBARDI
(For his First grade class,
Waldorf School, 1966)

THE WALDORF INSTITUTE FOR LIBERAL EDUCATION

This September the Waldorf Institute for Liberal Education and the Education Department of Adelphi University are collaborating to offer a teacher education program leading to the M.A. degree at the end of one year of study. The Institute's course, accredited last spring by the University, has been in operation for the past three years at the Waldorf School in Garden City. It has attracted not only prospective teachers, but other professional people who wish to bring the leaven of Rudolf Steiner's thought to their own fields of endeavor.

The curriculum of the training course views the art of education evolving in Waldorf schools in the light of what is elsewhere being thought and done. A year-long seminar in philosophy brings Steiner's empirical idealism into juxtaposition with the instrumentalism of Dewey, the existentialism of Buber, analytical philosophy as represented by Scheffler, and so on. A course in educational psychology compares the findings of Steiner's intuitive research with the basic concepts of Freud, Sullivan, Fromm, Piaget, Montessori, and others. The curriculum and methods seminar examines current trends, together with Waldorf school practice, in such a way that they illumine one another. In addition, the Institute students have daily practice in the arts: eurythmy, speech and drama, sculpture, painting, music, and crafts.

Each of the Institute's courses is taught by a team composed of a representative of the Waldorf School and of the Education Department of the

University. The staff includes four Adelphi professors and the Waldorf School faculty as a whole. Occasionally a teacher from the Rudolf Steiner School or the Kimberton Farms School leads a seminar in curriculum and methods. Experts from this country and abroad, such as Dr. Georg Unger, A.C. and Marguerite Harwood, Magdalene von Gleich, Olive Whicher, Jan van Wettum, and Dr. Konrad Sandkühler, are invited when available to conduct seminars and offer demonstrations.

One of the privileges most enjoyed by Institute students is that of sharing in the life and activities of the Waldorf School, with its 325 students (nursery through twelfth grade) and 40 teachers. In addition to scheduled observation and practice teaching, the student attends school assemblies and festivals, taking an active part in them whenever possible. Often he attends class meetings and monthly evening meetings of the parents, learning about parent-teacher, as well as student-teacher, relationships. He studies how a faculty maintains its vitality and gives direction to itself in faculty meetings and study groups. He also becomes familiar with some of the administrative and financial aspects of the school: student tuitions and scholarships, teacher salaries and retirement, the care of building and grounds. He will be given duties in the school: playground duty, bus duty, or cafeteria duty, gaining experience with children of all ages.

Besides being introduced to new principles and methods of education and acquiring the graduate degree, those who wish to teach in Waldorf schools will profit from a second year of apprenticeship or in-service training. The Institute has gladly accepted the Rudolf Steiner School's offer to provide such an opportunity.

Teachers in public as well as independent schools may find the Waldorf Institute a rewarding way of spending a sabbatical year. It hopes to open new possibilities for all who would like to bring spiritual values into modern life.

A detailed description of the Master of Arts program may be obtained by writing to the Institute, Adelphi University, Garden City, N.Y. 11530.

—JANICE KREITNER

REFLECTIONS ON THE CONCEPT OF PURITY

Each year in June, after school is closed, the faculty of the Waldorf School of Adelphi University gathers for a week to deepen the study of some aspect of its curriculum. History, mythology, science, evolution have been topics in recent years. Such varied "arts" as speech, singing, writing, drawing, gardening, throwing the javelin and discus, have been practised alongside the main topic.

In June, 1966, we focussed on these two questions: How can a teacher, starting from a simple, maybe quite uninspiring fact, present this so that it acquires life and meaning? How can an abstract concept be brought down from sterile, intellectual heights so that it receives the breath of life and feeling?

Rudolf Steiner wrote: "Our civilization is calculated to make men cognize everything with their heads. Ideas rest in the head as upon a couch . . . They are asleep: they only "mean" this or that. We carry them stored up in us as in so many little pigeonholes and with the rest of our being we are unconcerned with them."

In our conference, interesting perspectives were opened onto such prosaic facts as a flower pot, an eraser, a table. Each day, we all wrote for 20-30 minutes on the topic of the day, which was usually a concept. The following sample quotations may give some idea of how our teachers searched for the deeper meaning of the concept of *purity*, one morning's topic:

"Pure: untainted, unadulterated, pristine, first-created. Purified: after the extraneous has been removed."

"Purity: perfection of form and substance; what a thing is in its essence; unmarred by the extraneous, the irrelevant."

"To be pure is to embody perfectly the intentions of the maker."

"Purity is harmony; it is not singleness, sameness. Pure water is not the same the world over. A sparkling mountain spring contains a marvelous blend of minerals and sometimes it is even carbonated. A clear wood-bound lake can hold an entirely different world of ingredients within it. Rain water is slightly acid and yet highly prized for its purity. Well water is usually basic (alkaline) and yet considered by many to be the best of all. All are different, but the ingredients associate harmoniously within the water. Should the acid nature of rain grow out of proportion, as it does over industrial areas, corrosion and destruction of stone and metal occur, and plant life suffers. Should the alkaline nature of water inflate itself, brackish pools, such as the water holes of Death Valley, nearly poison all life. Harmony is the key."

"Purity alienates rather than befriends . . . is more forbidding than inviting . . . it shares with prudery too many sounds . . . Purity is coldly beautiful . . . Chastity rises above purity. It is a warm and perfect representation of its own, outgoing nature. Purity represents the unaffected, withdrawn, self-contemplating picture of self."

The contrast and variety of thoughts seem at first baffling. But when one reads and rereads all the papers, some clear patterns begin to take shape. Seeming contradictions solve themselves.

First of all, purity can be seen negatively, if it is confused with sterility. Pure, distilled water is lifeless and tastes flat. Similarly:

"Pure, white sugar, flour, and rice have had most of their life, which is part of their integrity, removed. The sugar is pure white, but not pure sugar. It may be pure $C_{12}H_{22}O_{11}$ but it is less than the integral virtue of honey, or

cane essence, or maple sap. Purity, when defined in purely physical or chemical terms, will exclude vitality and quality. It will be less than the full-fledged essence. To pursue this kind of purity is to make war upon life, soul and spirit, not resting until they are all expunged."

This type of lifeless, abstract purity, which may also exist in the human being, was probably in the mind of those teachers who saw something alienating, cold, forbidding, withdrawn, in purity.

As we have seen already, purity in nature is the central theme of many papers. Here are some more examples:

"We are in a secluded garden, surrounded by trees and plants. It is evening. A fine drizzle is falling. It is a bit foggy. There is no wind. We inhale the moist, "green", earthy air. We are alone. There comes to us, almost through our sense of smell, as we breathe, a harmony, a peace, a purity from the still plant life."

"Clean, pure water flows forth from the sky, from wells and from springs. It picks up sand and soil on its way down from the mountains. It is used and polluted by human beings. Finally, it becomes salty when it arrives in the ocean. Yet, when the sun shines, it lifts up into airy heights only the pure essence of that water, leaving behind salt, soot and soil.

High in the blue sky fleecy clouds condense, reflecting the sunlight in brilliant white. Heavier and darker they become. The voice of the gods is heard in thunder and their thoughts light up in lightning. Then, the blessed rain streams down—pure water reborn.

In the severity of winter, the purifying powers send down images of their formative, disciplined strength: perfectly white, hexagonal crystals descend as their signature at that time."

"Purity manifests itself in all realms of nature: in the mineral world as shape (crystal) or substance (pure gold); in the plant world as life; in the animal kingdom as soul. It manifests itself in man in the way his lower nature serves his spirit."

With the last contribution, we arrive at the meaning of purity in man, a concern of almost all papers:

"What is purity in the life of man? There can be "pure" ambition, greed, fear and selfishness in man, but these are not the man himself. They are foreign impulses that invade and obsess him. A man acts purely when he acts out his very own will . . . Love is that which purifies a man in his deeps and desires, because love insures that his integrity is active, uninterrupted and entire. A man is pure in any idea, feeling, or behavior which he loves. (What is loved for its own sake is truly loved. If the love is for my sake, it is not love but desire.)"

Several papers bring out a very important distinction between conscious and unconscious purity:

"The call of the phoebe before sunrise, the mountain spring, the unclouded eyes of a young child—this is to me purity in its primeval state, unconsciously compliant with higher cosmic laws. This kind just *is*, it cannot be achieved, striven for. It is the first kind of purity. The second kind of purity man can achieve by denial of willful self-expression, of the lower self. This can only be achieved through suffering."

"There are two kinds of purity—one of youth, given; the other, coming at a later time, achieved or regained. The water next to the spring is clean, transparent, shallow, it flows quickly. As the stream gets broader, deeper, it becomes more useful . . . but it gathers impurities of all kinds."

"A small child was given a shimmering white garment as he was born on the earth. As he began to crawl, grab, investigate, touch the things around him, the garment took on color . . . "

One paper ends with these words about purity:

"It starts out to be ignorant, but it is wise.

It starts out to be plain, but it is beautiful.

It begins by being less, but it is far larger in the end."

—GERHARD BEDDING

MOHALA PUA SCHOOL

Seven years ago the idea of a Waldorf School was conceived in the islands of Hawaii. Out of the Anthroposophical Society in Honolulu, a small group of professional and business people was chosen to take responsibility for the forming school. And the first teachers were invited from Germany to start the Kindergarten. Within that year a large tract of valuable suburban land was leased—nestled in the valley heart of two looming mountain ridges, a short walk from the blue, open sea. With deep faith and good giving the group of selected trustees began to build Mohala Pua—"the blooming flower".

First there came what is now the Kindergarten building: large, colorful rooms, opening always invitingly to the rich green outside. Flowers and fruits, vines and vegetables quickly cloaked the building's newness. Six noble giant monkey pod trees, their wide-spanning limbs shading all in green-leafed domes, stand watch over the young school. And round about the trees, the many children climb and swing, running, laughing, celebrating their childhood. The abundance of green growing nature provides a force of great good when it is thus gladly welcomed.

Quiet, careful Japanese children, lightstepping, quick with joy; the steady fulness of the Chinese; the rhythmic moving and bubbling laughter of the island folk; and the thoughtful, mediating force of the European background; these and so many other roots come together in the school. And all the separate

pasts are brought to new and fuller flower in the light of the one Hawaiian sun.

The volcanic forces of the islands have also taken part in the forming of Mohala Pua—when such violent activity is finally considered as a birthing and not a destructive force. Teachers have come and gone and come again, so often suddenly, with the deepest guiding of destiny.

Always close to the school, oftentimes sharing in its difficulties, and generously giving to build it, the group of trustees have now managed to erect the big main classroom building. It spreads low, under the great old trees, concealing its size with new green plantings; protected in its center is an open courtyard of bright flowers. Thus the school, at present with five grades and a Kindergarten foundation of three groups, has been given an ideal home, thankfully adequate for the eight grades.

And now with seven years, Mohala Pua is coming into its own in a new way. The trustees stay a bit behind and the teaching faculty now must find its own path. To help those who have been struggling for years, new teachers, well-trained and experienced Waldorf teachers, have come, some to take charge of classes and others as visitors to guide and establish the school in its values. It is now as if a new sun has dawned in the life of Mohala Pua, one of strong inner growth, that can meet and greet the present world in the special, crucial land of Hawaii.

—OWEN DE RIS

CORRECTION: In our last issue, Spring, 1967, on page 6, last line, "Conchoid of Nicodemus" should read "Conchoid of Nicomedes."

Two new reprints of helpful material have just been published. Dr. Hermann von Baravalle's *Introduction to Physics in the Waldorf Schools: the Balance between Art and Science* (\$1.50) and *The Teaching of Arithmetic and the Waldorf School Plan* (\$2.25) may be ordered from Waldorf School Monographs, 25 Pershing Road, Englewood, New Jersey 07631.

THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

15 East 79th Street, New York, N. Y. 10021

President: Sonia Tomara Clark

Editor: Ruth Pusch

Treasurer: Rose Richter

Membership in the Association, including the quarterly Bulletin,
is \$3.00 per year. Single copies of the Bulletin, 35¢ each.