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JULY 1976

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CHILD AND MAN

A JOURNAL FOR CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

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CHILD AND MAN is a medium for the expression and discussion of the ideas underlying what is known as Steiner or Waldorf education, and for contributing to their wide application.

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Editorial

BY RATIFYING THE two International Covenants on Human Rights the British Government has at last undertaken to respect the liberty of parents to choose their own schools apart from those established by public authority. This is a powerful reassurance to those who feared rigid state control, for no government of whatever party can now contravene this agreement without losing the right to nominate a member to the Human Rights Committee.

There have lately been other signs of a more enlightened attitude toward education. Dr. Bennett's publication of the report by the Lancaster University research team brought some sharp responses. It was widely felt that to put forward methods as the all important consideration was confusing the issues. More fundamental is the relationship between teacher and pupil. Children who are regarded as inferior make little progress, while those who feel themselves understood and have confidence in their teacher can develop well beyond the promise of their I.Q.

In the confusion of aims and methods so apparent today more attention is being given to human considerations than probably ever before. Well-qualified teachers have been known to become dissatisfied with academic methods and have found fulfilment in deprived areas where their sympathy and understanding are more in demand. In this number Christopher East's account of his experiences in a multi-racial neighbourhood is an illustration.

In 'Comment' our attention is drawn to the views of Sir Alex Smith, Chairman of the Committee of Polytechnics and of the Schools' Council, and of Pat Martin, President of the Headmasters' Association. Both are aware of the failure of education to provide true values. Pupils need to feel that what they learn is not merely utilitarian but that through their studies they can find answers to their questions about the meaning of life.

When Rudolf Steiner gave indications for the course of study in the first Waldorf School he did not envisage that every school should be run on these lines. He hoped that the Waldorf School could work as an inspiration so that new ways of thinking and teaching could penetrate the world of education. Many of his ideas which seemed revolutionary in 1919 are now widely accepted. Governments in several of the continental countries have recognised the valuable contribution of the Waldorf Schools and given them financial support. There is no sign of this yet in England, but a knowledge of the educational ideals is becoming more widespread. We are including an article by David Mollet, lecturer in philosophy and education at Preston Polytechnic, who is able to give courses on Steiner education in a State Training College.

We deeply regret to announce the retirement from the Editorial Board of Dr. R. Lissau. He was one of the most active of the initiators of the new format of *CHILD AND MAN* as it appeared in 1964, and his keen interest in current affairs and in new developments in education has been of great value.

* * *

This is not the place for an obituary of A. C. Harwood, who died last December. Many readers of this magazine will be aware of the many facets of this powerful, charming and profound man. Here we wish only to think of him as the founder of *CHILD AND MAN*. It was he who gave the magazine its name, and could there be another to describe so succinctly the twin pillars of Steiner Education, the intimate study of childhood and the profundity and dignity of man? Harwood founded the journal before the war when there was only one Steiner School in Britain, the New School at Streatham in South London. After the war he had to make a new start. By then there were already a small number of schools in this country and his own school had become Michael Hall at Forest Row. From then on he strove to make *CHILD AND MAN* the mouthpiece of Steiner education in Britain and so widened the scope of the journal. From the beginning he insisted on a high intellectual standard and himself contributed some remarkable articles, impressive by the felicitous use of his beloved English, by their charm, the profundity of their contents and the width of his vision. About 15 years ago Mr. Harwood relinquished his editorship and altogether withdrew from teaching. His successors are aware of the high standards he set which they would be happy indeed to emulate, and grateful that they have been able to continue, sometimes in difficult circumstances, a work which this great and lovable man had begun. R.L.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher East was educated at Michael Hall. He has had ten years teaching experience in L.E.A. schools and had a year in the Vienna Waldorf School and one in Kings Langley Rudolf School. He is at present Deputy Head of a primary school in North London.

David Mollet is lecturer in philosophy and education at Preston Polytechnic. He is able to include a course on Steiner education for his post-graduate students and has sent some for teaching practice to Steiner Schools.

Preparing to become a teacher

By a tutor at Emerson College, teacher and Chairman of Steiner Schools Fellowship

RON JARMAN

LAST SEPTEMBER there assembled in the Education Room at Emerson College 38 keen people ready to embark on the year's course designed to help them to go out and become teachers in schools. Fairly equally divided between men and women and with most of their ages falling in the 25-35 range, as many as 12 different nationalities were present. Most of the group were well qualified with teaching diplomas and degrees and a wide range of pre-teaching careers were represented too (industry, social work, etc.). Essentially a post-graduate course in Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf) educational methods, a large variety of talents and options have to be satisfied in it.

Although specialisation has to be properly catered for—class-teaching, handwork, literature or science for 16-year-olds, kindergarten teaching, to give a few examples—it is vital for all would-be teachers to gain a comprehensive insight into child development, and the curriculum needs springing from it, over the whole age range in school from four to eighteen.

The first term is mainly devoted to this. Before anyone can develop skills in helping children gradually to gain mastery in their growing bodies, their awakening intelligence or in their social or artistic life, he needs to know above all what man is. What does it mean to be a human being? Over how wide a field—physical, psychological and spiritual—do men's capacities and potentials extend? What does the growing human being owe to his environment and to his parents? And on the other hand whence has come that growing inner fire in him which we call his individuality? For this does not and cannot come from either his mother or father or from the district and general surroundings in which he spends his childhood or from any of the adults or children with whom he associates.

The way in which the gradually incarnating individuality of the child takes possession of the bodily form which is evolving and being moulded by what is 'full of life' in him—and the way this individuality becomes more and more aware of the world where he will become active as an adult—these are things a teacher must know. He must begin to learn them in detail for each chronological age of childhood and adolescence.

But you just can't learn about these crucial secrets with your head alone. The climax of Tolstoy's story of Ivan the Fool is a delightful illustration of the limitations of the human brain-filled

head. Education based on a merely intellectual analysis of child development can only produce conditions in which children rebel and destroy their classrooms much as the final achievement of the head of Tolstoy's 'old Devil' was to bash itself against pillars and steps. A would-be teacher has to develop skill in his hands, quiet strength in his voice, grace in his gestures, rhythms in his life habits and enthusiasm in his breast. Half of the Emerson student's time is devoted to practical artistic work—in clay modelling, music, painting, speech and voice training, eurythmy and various crafts. Children respect and learn from teachers who can think with their fingers, speak from the heart and strive to become artists with their whole being.

To be able to stand and move properly before a class of children, tell a story that grips them and encourage creative discovery in them through one's own example—these are the things a teacher has to learn.

Education as art, not just a science—this was Rudolf Steiner's dictum. But this means becoming an artist not merely in art lessons. How do you become an artist in ideas when introducing thermodynamics to a class? A real artist must always compose out of the experience of wholeness. A symphony arises from more than an arrangement of tones. A sculpture is nothing if it fails to call up in the observer experiences in his soul. Wholeness must always include man himself. Heat processes in physics lessons can be related to what takes place in human will and feeling (warm enthusiasm for example or cold apathy) and in the human body. How warmth is differentiated in the blood and various organs can be described; also the nature of fever. Yet one can only do this effectively if one learns to treat education itself as a medium—a medium in which one works as an artist.

Artistic creativity stimulates much activity. In Emerson College it awakens a demand for more and more periods in the timetable. Not by the staff, but by the students. The timetable is formed, by the way, through joint discussions by students and staff. However, a free period in a day is at once swallowed up by students' requests for instruction in (at least) one new subject. The day is supposed to run from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. with a two and a half hour break for lunch and manual work. (The cleaning of rooms and corridors, washing up, laying and serving of meals, gardening, repairs, etc., is all done by students.) But most evenings are also taken up with concerts, meetings, lectures, discussions and so on. Not only that. In this third term (this article is written in May) the students have prevailed upon members of staff to give something more each day from soon after 8.30 a.m. A criticism which might with some justification be levelled against this state of affairs is that the timetable is much too full and there is no time set aside for private study and research. However, trade union practices operate neither on the staff nor on the student side, so modifications would have to be found by other means. It must not be forgotten, though, that

a teacher in a Steiner school tends to work a 24-hour day (what he carries into sleep is an essential part of preparing his lessons and has considerable effect in the classroom next day). So perhaps it would be somewhat inappropriate to discourage this rather voracious appetite which our students seem to be afflicted with.

During the year students are away for two periods of up to four weeks each doing teaching practice, mainly but not exclusively in Waldorf schools. There is also a two-week observation period in the first term. Whilst our schools in most cases commendably restrain a wish to persuade the students to sign on as teachers for the coming year during these unchaperoned excursions, it must be acknowledged that the recruiting demand far exceeds the number of students available. For very few failures as teachers have been subsequently recorded among former students who have completed the Emerson College Education Course. Many former students have gone out to help pioneer new schools in the English-speaking world. Although the staffs of all the well-established schools in this country contain several of our former students (over 30 per cent in some cases), a sad state of affairs in the present and previous year has become evident. Owing to the relatively small number of students in the Education Course (the second of two years in the college—the first being a Foundation Year) and to our country's sorry financial straits, the college receives no monetary aid from the state. Also only a few local authorities make grants to students. It is now very difficult for students from this country to afford the year's fees. In most cases they have to earn enough money in the years prior to entering the college to find the wherewithal. A fund will have to be established if the number of British students in the course is to return to its right proportions.

On the other hand, as probably most training colleges would agree, the best teacher trainees are mature students. Experience of life itself—as engineer, nurse, businessman or woman, farmer or, of course, as mother—is of far more real value as prerequisite for preparing to become a teacher than paper qualifications. The old cycle—school to university to training college to school—which so many teachers in state schools are processed through, contains the obvious in-breeding dangers. To what extent is the modern trend towards increasing apathy in schools a result of this?

Children need teachers who are 'full of life' too, who have humour, who can call on life's experiences outside the academic world, who regard teaching as an art and who hold the key to learning more and more about what a human being really is. CHILD AND MAN issues contain sufficient about the last-mentioned matter to obviate further elaboration in this article. Although Emerson College's Education course is far as yet from being what it might be and although it is in no way being suggested that excellent teachers do not also come out of state training establishments, experience has shown that the ideals and practices being developed in our course are leading to very positive results.

A Community School

Experiences in a neighbourhood of widely different cultures

CHRISTOPHER EAST

MANY URBAN AREAS lack a sense of community and are particularly susceptible to the rapidly increasing pressures of modern life.

The concept of the community school has arisen as a result of the growing awareness that education has neglected large portions of the community and that schools could serve more fully the needs of a whole neighbourhood. I am basing this article on the school where I teach and describing its efforts to develop links with the community. I shall also mention some general trends around the country.

The Primary School where I work has a large number of children whose parents come from different countries, mainly the West Indies, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and West Africa. A few come from Pakistan, India, Mauritius and European countries. The majority of these children were born in England and if asked 'Where do you come from?' would probably answer 'Tottenham'. But most of their parents have experienced the emotional and physical upheaval of leaving their countries of origin and settling in a new land. Integration into the host community has been difficult for some. They have met differing degrees of prejudice and hostility; suitable housing and work have not always been easy to find; social contacts may have been limited to others of the same nationality.

Families with a different mother tongue usually continue to use it in the home. The children are expected to become fluent in English at the same time. Some parents, especially Asian and Cypriot mothers who stay at home, learn little English and use their children as interpreters when necessary.

Most of the children of immigrants have grown up with, and are still experiencing, one or more of these stresses and as teachers we must always bear this in mind, and not rely on the specialist 'English as a Second Language' teachers to provide all the language help and counselling.

One aim of our type of school is to encourage immigrant families to keep their cultures alive and help all children to appreciate the variety of customs and festivals which can greatly enrich the life of the school. All children enjoy a chance to help prepare and eat the foods of different countries, for example, and parents can be invited to explain the significance of different religious festivals. Literature and music as well as history and geography of the various countries can be brought into the normal curriculum.

In our school we organised a Trinidadian-style carnival. All the children and many teachers and parents toured the neighbourhood in fancy dress, making music and dancing along the streets.

Our school building and its physical and social environment are typical of many in North London. The school was built around the turn of the century and has a cramped tarmac playground. A main traffic road runs right by. It is surrounded by rows of terraced houses, many of which have been divided and house two or more family units. There is also a new council housing estate nearby, imaginatively designed yet with a far greater density of population than the older areas. The families that have been rehoused have come from all over Haringey. They bring many problems and lack the support they might have had among friends and relations in their previous neighbourhoods. At present there is much friction between families on the estate and this sometimes erupts in violent scenes. We hope that the school can play a part in helping them to integrate harmoniously in the local community.

Our catchment area has a high proportion of one-parent families and families suffering from emotional stress. Often the workload and working hours of both parents are such that the children are left on their own a good deal.

In general our children are full of vitality and humour and enter into all aspects of school life with enthusiasm. Some, however, do show signs of stress which becomes evident in attention-seeking and disruptive behaviour on the one hand or extreme withdrawal on the other. This calls for great understanding and caring on the part of the teachers.

Often a visit to the home can help the teacher to appreciate the background to the child's difficulties and to develop an imaginative and sympathetic approach to each problem.

Susan, a ten-year-old, usually comes to school late and tired. She has to get her younger sisters dressed and give them breakfast. Her mother leaves home at 5.30 a.m. to work as an office cleaner. When she arrives at school, Susan is often enveloped in a cloud of melancholy, refusing even to take off her coat. She can be helped to forget her self-pity if her sympathy is aroused for another child.

Mike is one of a family of five brought up by the mother on her own in overcrowded conditions. He would arrive at school moody and aggressive. He would need to do some hammering or woodwork before he could communicate or settle to work.

It is an important feature of class organisation that the flexibility leaves the teacher free to spend some time with one child or a small group. Children can be involved in a variety of activities, without disturbing one another.

It is now widely agreed that if a school is to be at all effective in developing a sense of community in its area then the rigid barriers between school and neighbourhood must be broken down and this is a slow process. For a long time schools have been institutions where parents were discouraged from entering the gates without

prior appointment. Many parents of our present children remember their own schools as repressive places where they met with little success. This has left a legacy of mistrust and hostility.

Many inner city primary schools are trying to overcome these barriers by giving the schools a more friendly and informal atmosphere, welcoming parents at all times and involving them wherever possible. Ironically this very informality is often criticised by parents and the new progressive teaching methods can be a source of misunderstanding. Teachers must first make friends and gain the confidence of parents, then create opportunities to discuss educational questions and win them over to an appreciation of the school's approach. Once they feel at ease, parents can help in many ways in the primary school.

Language can be another barrier so in our school all letters to parents are now translated into Greek and Turkish, and a recent exhibition of teaching materials and children's work had comments in Greek and Turkish as well as English. We are hoping in the near future to be able to offer classes in English for non-English-speaking parents.

The school has recently opened a nursery class for three- to five-year-olds. Before the scheme started the nursery teacher visited the home of each prospective child. When it opened the parents were encouraged to stay with the children for the first few days and indeed are welcome at any time. This has built a good relationship between teacher and parents which we hope will continue to develop as the children go through the school.

At about this same time we fitted out a room near the nursery as a parents' room with comfortable chairs and facilities for making tea. Sewing machines, typewriters and other school equipment are available for use. The room is open throughout the day providing parents with somewhere to meet one another and the teachers and to use as they wish.

Like most schools we have a parent-teacher association with elected members. Its main activity is to organise social and fund-raising functions but it has also arranged talks and discussions on education and other subjects. About six years ago a suggestion was made by our P.T.A. that the school premises and facilities should be available one evening a week for general use by the whole community. It was envisaged that it should cater for young people and adults as well as children from the school. Application was made to the education committee and permission was given to use the building as well as an annual grant of about £200 to buy equipment and materials.

This 'Club', as it is now called, takes place each Thursday evening from 7.00 till about 9.00 p.m. Its major role has become to provide a place (without TV) where children can come and follow some interest or recreation and let off steam. The activities offered each week vary according to the talents of the parents who turn up to

help. We have four table-tennis tables and some other table-top games which are always in use. Ball games are played in the hall and playground. Cooking is one of the most popular activities and the children often bake small cakes and biscuits for the tea break. Many children are keen to learn to type and use the sewing machines. Other activities have included painting, stamp collecting, leather and raffia work, macramé, mask-making, drama and music. Small children can use the nursery equipment.

The evenings are run by parents and teachers with help from a few friends and students. We try to share the organisation and responsibilities among all adults on an equal footing. The commitment is voluntary, with no pay. During its six years it has been through many changes and crises. One of the main benefits of the scheme has been the fact that children and adults can meet and talk in a relaxed atmosphere and six-year-old Debbie feels free to beat the headmaster at tiddlywinks. Also some talents have come to light among parents which have enriched the life of the school.

While welcoming the community in the school we also aim to go out into the community and we encourage children to study and appreciate the neighbourhood, digging up interesting objects from demolition areas (clay pipes, Victorian pottery), making rubbings of coal-chute covers, visiting the fire station, observing wild life, talking to shop keepers of different nationalities. I recently took my class on a boat trip down our local canal, only ten minutes bus ride away, and found that only two children knew of its existence. School visits further afield can also be adventures full of wonder and excitement. Every child has the opportunity to spend at least one week living in the country.

In 1973 the Inner London Education Authority produced a working paper entitled 'An Education Service for the Whole Community' which discussed various aspects of deprivation and stated:

'There is surely need for fuller understanding, among all those involved, of the education service as a whole; for a strengthening of associations between its parts and movement towards closer integration, and for a more organic relationship with the whole community and its many different manifestations.'

It went on to suggest many ways in which both primary and secondary schools might develop as community schools and to propose that a large sum of money be made available for this. Many other local Education Authorities up and down the country are moving in similar directions, initiating pilot schemes in selected areas and appointing teachers in schools with special responsibilities for strengthening links between school and community.

One of the I.L.E.A. proposals was for much greater provision for children in holiday periods. The use of school premises for holiday play-schemes run by paid teachers, parents and students, offering constructive play and craft opportunities, has become very widespread. These are obviously of great value in areas where

both parents go out to work and where houses are overcrowded. The streets are dangerous places to play and spirited youngsters are bound to get into trouble if offered no real alternative.

Some L.E.A.'s have designed buildings with the dual role of school and community centre in mind—Countesthorpe in Leicestershire is an example which has aroused much controversy. Another idea which has been implemented and can be suited to more traditional school buildings is to organise the school on a three-session day basis so that most of the teachers participate in evening activities, working either morning and evening or afternoon and evening instead of all day. This means that the wide range of art, craft and recreational facilities of a large secondary school are available for more general use by the community. The teachers can also benefit greatly from this opportunity for closer contact with all ages in the community.

Colleges of Education are becoming aware of the part they can play. For example Urban Studies is offered as a course option and students are encouraged to spend part of their course time in urban schools with the specific task of exploring school-neighbourhood links.

I have only had space to mention a few developments but the overall trend is for schools and other educational institutions to become focal points of urban communities. I have tried to show how they are beginning to realise the role that they can play in revitalising the neighbourhoods they serve, fostering harmony and greater understanding among the various elements of the community.

Class Four were hearing the story of Belshazzar's feast. The teacher told how God had caused a hand to write on the wall: 'Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin'. The children asked what it meant and the teacher explained, adding: 'I think it must be in the Persian language'. Katie: 'Oh, but I thought that God spoke English'.

Two Kindergarten children are drawing side by side:

Sandra: 'What are Eskimos?'

Sarah: 'Don't you know what Eskimos are—they go in an aeroplane'!

Class Seven

Children's Development

PETER BARK

HOW WONDERFUL it is to receive one's class again after the long summer vacation. Fresh, lively, talkative; yet inwardly quiet and expectant; bright and healthy, the children sit, waiting. What to start with? Will they be changed? are questions that face the class teacher beginning a new year. A unique time it is, this beginning again; and unique it is to Steiner Schools, that such a beginning is once again handled by the familiar, friendly figure of the class teacher. For the past six years this person has seen many of those faces beaming back at him, at the beginning of each new school year—six unique times. And when all is change around the children, and now, especially in their thirteenth year, within them, how important it is that there is something stable in their lives.

So what is it to be from the almost bewildering amount to cover in the syllabus, and what is going to be the keynote for the year? Will one be able to meet, enthuse, interest these children of 13 in the same way as last year, or will the onset of puberty demand something new? Well, they look the same. Some have grown a bit, but Class Eight children look much older, and they seem no different from last year.

I started with Physiology. These children were entering their teens; they would slowly discover the world within them in a new way. So what better than starting with a detailed lesson on nutrition and the wonder of digestion. And the health and hygiene of the body can be dealt with, as a certain objectivity remains that would not be there in class eight. They are intrigued by the difference in nourishment—the intake of oxygen; airy, unseen: yet we are fellow breathers of the same air (smokers beware!)—the nourishment through the senses; even more intangible: what is pleasing to the eye? What is discordant to the ear?—then the eating of food, our most solid form of nourishment, and yet it too must be etherealized before it can pass into the bloodstream to give energy and growth. How fascinated the children were with the story of Helen Keller and how their imagination was stirred by a life without sight or sound, especially when they heard also of the incredible compensatory senses of Jacques Luseyran.

With puberty one can say that the children are really present on earth. So by 14 they must be brought up to the modern age. Thus in history the Age of Discovery, the Renaissance and Reformation are dealt with: the world expands and offers new wonders and great hope. Joan of Arc epitomized the triumph of individualism over feudalism. Just when the children have left the age of childhood and are about to enter an age when they want to judge for themselves

and act from themselves, when they yearn to know more about the world, they will live into the experience of individuals and their discoveries, like Henry the Navigator, Christopher Columbus or Sir Francis Drake who expanded Man's knowledge of a "New World"; or those who discovered new laws of physics: Tycho Brahe, Galileo; or those who rejected old authorities like Leonardo, Michelangelo or Martin Luther. They are poised before "the fall"; shades of childhood linger on; puberty has not plunged them so far into themselves; revolutions are not necessary to redress the evils that follow the wonder and hope of the new discoveries. Revolution will be the theme for history in Class Eight.

It is this that one sees developing in the children in Class Seven: a deepening and stronger soul life that needs to find expression. The teacher discovers it in the historical essays, he sees it in the paintings, he experiences it in the relationships with the children—woe betide anyone who commits an injustice, particularly with the girls. Stronger inward desires arise: a wish for themselves, for a personality, for the world; and a stronger sense of wonder and reverence is awakened. Now is the time to discuss this, to make it more conscious. What is a wish? What kinds of wishes are there? It is seen how personal a wish is, how it comes from deep within. Examples from literature are brought before the pupils so that they are helped by seeing it beautifully expressed. A sense of wonder arises from an inner feeling for an outer object or event, and many poems give expression to this. A surprise on the other hand comes completely from outside and impresses itself on the individual. By doing a lesson on "Wish, Wonder and Surprise", these new experiences are recognized and find fruitful expression, and are not dissipated on the transient "Pop" world.

Class Seven is a time when children realize that subjects can be broken up into specialized departments so it is important to present everything comprehensively and keep in touch with a unity. In chemistry the subject of combustion is taken along with lessons on lime, acid and alkali, water and the metals. There are many opportunities to expand the children's thinking by taking polarities or by bringing the phenomenon back to Man, the ultimate unity of knowledge. Sulphur is found in the depths of the earth coming from the chaotic volcanic forces and needs heat before it burns with a blue-white flame. Phosphorus is man-made, it glows in the dark like a star. It burns with an orange flame and is combustible on exposure to the air. But carbon is found relatively near the surface of the earth having been formed from vegetation. Its blackness glows when burnt and both red and blue-white flames are seen. Is it not sulphurous in our metabolism and phosphoric in the brain with its flashes of thought? And does not the breath mediate?; the carbon being expelled and the oxygen absorbed?

Almost anywhere in the world could be chosen for the geography lesson if the Age of Discovery has been studied, and it provides a wonderful opportunity once again of drawing so many subjects together, as well as expanding the children's knowledge of how

different peoples live. It also gives the possibility of much individual work in the form of projects and model making.

Because of their desire to know more about the world and how things work, a popular subject with Class Sevens is mechanics. Not only do they see how the lever, pulley and wheel are found in all manner of machines, from the simple nut-cracker to the motor car, but they learn to bring about a balance. The balance of the simple weighing machine is extended to the law of levers and pulleys. A seesaw in a classroom and builders' pulleys in the gym create much amusement (especially if the teacher gets stuck at the top of the rope), but the experience of balance is never forgotten.

In this expanding world of the Class Seven age it seemed ideal for the youngsters to tackle the mathematics of area, to learn how to use the different formulae for working out the area of the various quadrilaterals and their combinations. And area leads on to the Pythagorean Theorem. By using a number of different proofs a feeling can be engendered for the special quality of geometry: here thought is self-supporting and self-sufficient. The children needed considerable concentration to work through the proofs, and this helped when it came to working out square roots when the theorem was applied. You cannot stop to chat in the middle of working out a square root. And when the height of a triangle has to be found before the area is calculated, then the attention has to remain throughout the whole process. Further abstractions in maths are encountered in algebra, and with some children it revives their interest in arithmetic again; it gives them a new start.

With all this looking out and seeking within, it is no arbitrary decision that an astronomy lesson is taken with children of this age. Here again Man can be the unity in the universe so that the vast cosmos means something and is not just a collection of facts and six-figure numbers in light years. Already they might have had their attention brought to the old method of linking the bodily organs and the seven ancient metals to the planets, and all would have dabbled in speculations about the signs of the zodiac. Something that is so familiar to us all—the starry sky at night—should not remain the uncharted space that it is to most.

This is a very important time in a child's schooling because there is the opportunity for a teacher to utilize the new, vital interest in the world, the stronger inward desires awakening as puberty approaches, before the somewhat deadening, critical time of puberty itself. It is another opportunity to ensure that the forces about to be acquired will be directed to right activity, that the child will not become a prey of fashion or be tormented by passions. One sees the girls becoming more forward, more free in manner, seeking recognition, yet not in the main going to the extreme of coquetry or vanity. It is natural on the other hand for the boys to draw back, but they nevertheless also need to be recognized. It is a time when a teacher must read the barometer of his class carefully and regularly to maintain the balance and poise achieved by Class Six, and prepare for Class Eight and the end of the class teacher period.

The introduction of a Course on Steiner Education in a State Institution of Higher Education

Preston Polytechnic

DAVID MOLLET

THE TRAINING and educating of teachers in this country has undergone a rapid, and in many ways a painful, change during the last couple of years. These changes will occur in this sector of higher education with at least equal rapidity for some years to come. The main change that has taken place is the drastic reduction in the general provision of training facilities.* In the face of threatened closure, institutions have been forced to re-examine the content and standard of their courses, and have to be prepared to justify attitudes which up until the present time were perhaps accepted without question.

Consequently certain attitudes in Colleges of Education, which up until the last few years were of a generally conservative nature, have become far more radical in their outlook. One of these attitudes is the way in which those in authority are now far more sympathetic to major as well as minor changes in method and content of teaching material. I have mentioned the foregoing because I hope the reader may appreciate the kind of ethos which has developed in colleges, and in particular appreciate the opportunities which potentially exist for (among other things) the introduction of new courses within the new structures now being established.

In September 1973 I took up a post as Lecturer in Philosophy of Education at Poulton-le-Fylde College of Education. For some years prior to this I had been committed to the work of Steiner complementing my study of philosophy with a study of his work. I developed the belief that a large number of young people, once they had come across Steiner's work, would find a depth and breadth of academic competence rarely if at all equalled. Early in 1974 I realized that there might exist the opportunity to introduce Steiner's work on education in the college, and in fact this opportunity did present itself in the form of a post-graduate course for

those students spending a year at the college to gain their post-graduate certificate in education. The course was started in the beginning of the 1974/75 academic year and, although the group of students was small, the response, as far as commitment and serious study were concerned, was encouraging.

It is perhaps necessary to elaborate here on a point of view held by many people committed to Steiner's work, and one which I hold myself; and that is that there is very little provision for those people who might wish to study the work of Steiner but who do not wish to become involved to the degree of membership of a society. Of course there are weekly study groups, lectures, conferences and the full-time courses of study at Emerson, but many more people would, I feel, be interested in Steiner's work but would not wish to commit themselves to this level of involvement. What I hope to do at Poulton is to provide the opportunity for a study of Steiner's educational work to students who can pursue a course in the same manner as they would if studying Piaget, Bruner or any other educationalist.

The course content was therefore of an introductory nature, discovering the basic principles that lay behind Steiner's writings on education. The method of study avoided the lecture system, in the belief that this method is inappropriate, and that tutorial groups were a far more satisfactory way of study. Students were requested to prepare themselves beforehand by reading recommended literature and handouts so that they arrived at tutorials with a knowledge of Steiner's concepts, and consequently a rigorous and critical examination of these concepts took place. This, I believe, was beneficial to the students as they had to relate such conceptual data to their own experience and individual viewpoint.

It is at this point I should like to make it clear that it was not the task of the course to provide the students with any kind of practical knowledge of Steiner's educational methods. The purpose of the course was to enable students in the first instance to have access to Steiner's educational work, but more important to provide the opportunity to examine this work by the method of conceptual or linguistic analysis. One of the main (if not the main) schools of thought in Philosophy of Education uses this method, whereby the student is made, through his own conceptual apparatus, to abstract knowledge from particular concepts. This assumes that the student will abstract only that knowledge which is personally meaningful to him. In other words the student studying Philosophy of Education has to examine particular concepts concerned with education, and work out why information and knowledge that he regards as valid or meaningful is in fact valid or meaningful.

This involved the student in the task of giving reasons in some depth to support the concepts, or, to be more accurate, the principles behind such concepts that he holds. This is my main commitment in the teaching of Philosophy of Education. What I hoped to achieve in the Steiner course was that the student who

*It might interest the reader to know that the government is now planning for an upper limit of 480,000-490,000 teachers by 1981, a reduction of 20,000-30,000 on the previous target; 21 of the 152 colleges will now be closed by 1978 making about 1,400 college lecturers redundant. About 100 of the remaining colleges are to be merged. For example, the college at which I teach is, from the first of September, to become, with Chorley College of Education, the School of Education of Preston Polytechnic. The total number of students will be reduced from around 1,550 at the present time to around 650 by 1978.

would be exposed to Steiner's ideas would have to make a similar examination. In essence the method provides opportunities for the student to bridge the gap between knowledge which is based on observation and perception and the individual's own inner moral conception.

The response both to method and content was critical but constructive and, although difficulties were encountered with some of the concepts (for example the relationship of karma to the development of the child), the views expressed were of a serious and involved nature.

The response was encouraging enough to bring me to believe that an expansion of this course would be looked upon favourably by the college and would also be attractive to a number of students who might otherwise never discover the wealth of Steiner's work. With these factors in mind it is hoped next year that four courses on Steiner's philosophy and educational work might be offered to different groups of students in the college and one hopes that the response will be at least equally favourable and constructive.

BACK NUMBERS of most issues of this magazine are available and can be ordered from CHILD AND MAN, White Heather, Dale Road, Forest Row, Sussex, price 17½p plus postage.

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Further Considerations on the Role of the Free School Part I

Discussion of article by R. Livesey and R. Lissau July 1975

DAVID MOLLET

IN THEIR ARTICLE "A Free School System in our changed social climate" Livesey and Lissau (1975) point out and elaborate on the arguments that are put forward in justification for government intervention and state control of education. They mention social equality and economic efficiency as important arguments for the justification of such intervention and control of education by the state. They go on to point out, quite rightly, in my opinion, the disadvantages that would accrue if such an important area as education was left to the forces of the open market. Even so they consider that, when education is administered by the state, certain weaknesses and deficiencies become apparent. They also say, if I have understood their argument correctly, that the Free School movement contains elements, at both a theoretical and practical level, that to an extent overcome these disadvantages which occur within the state system.

On the question of weaknesses and deficiencies I certainly agree that they exist; however, one would have to state that any system of education will contain some unwanted elements. Therefore what one needs to be concerned with is the size, extent or degree of such an element. At the same time I believe that the alternative does not lie in the ideology, or the educational practice, of the free school movement. This is not to say that the free school movement cannot in many ways be a constructive and worthwhile venture; and that it can and does contain elements of both educational theory and practice that may be lacking within the state system. It is, however, quite another matter to regard it as any kind of practical alternative to the state system, and I would now like to elaborate upon why I think this is so. I hope at the same time to indicate what are, in my opinion, crucial differences between the education that occurs in the Waldorf Schools and education that occurs in the free schools.

There can be no doubt that there exists an overwhelming mass of evidence that supports the view that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction with what happens generally in our schools (Bantock 1968; Holt 1969, 1970, 1971; Illich 1971; James 1972; Lister 1971, 1974; Postman and Weingartner 1969; Raynor and Harden 1973; and Reimer 1971, to name but a few). Much of this evidence is, unfortunately, phrased in vague and general criticisms and, because it is expressed in this form, is difficult to answer. Again many of

these educationalists see no future in any form of education which exists within an institutional framework, of whatever size and function. I do not propose to deal with either of these schools of thought but to concentrate on those people who are unhappy with some of the things they see happening within our present schools, and who yet at the same time regard some sort of institutional framework as inevitable. These people can be divided, for the purposes of this paper, into two schools of thought.

On the one hand there are those, who while they are dissatisfied with the state system on a number of accounts, are of the opinion that only by setting up alternative methods of education such as the free school movement can children grow up well balanced and adjusted. On the other hand there are those who criticize the state system, but who wish to see changes made within the framework of state education. Such notable and well respected figures as Lord James and Professor Bantock can be included among the latter critics. As James (1972) points out in the report on Teacher Education and Training:

"The Report's argument for fundamental change is not based upon any false assumption that the present system has, in some total sense, failed or is in imminent danger of doing so. Nevertheless there is abundant evidence that the system is no longer adequate to its purposes . . . Changes must be made if the needs of the schools and of society over the next 20 years are to be met, and the system cannot be expected to reform itself as rapidly and as fundamentally as the situation requires."

Bantock (1968) too appreciates these weaknesses but examines the difficulties within the broader context of what is happening in society. Many of the criticisms of the state system can be described in terms of a type of functional analysis of schools. In other words a questioning of the purposes of schools and whether we have arrived at the right aims and objectives on which to base our educational practice. Two well-known proponents of de-schooling (Illich 1971 and Reimer 1971) describe the main functions of the schools as custodial care; social-role selection; indoctrination; and education/learning. I propose to conclude this paper with a discussion on the first two functions, those of custodial care and social-role selection. In the next part (to be published in the next edition) I shall discuss the third function of indoctrination and also attempt to evaluate the free school movement in a wider educational context.

As far as the functions generally are concerned both Illich and Reimer are of the opinion that the functions of custodial care, social-role selection and indoctrination frustrate the development of the child that would occur in a proper education/learning situation. The free schoolers too are of the same opinion, and are also of the view that in their educational framework such constraints on the child's development would not occur. There is no doubt that custodial care does not occur in a free school in the usual sense

of the phrase and that such children have the open choice of whether to attend such a school or not. Such custodial care does of course occur in both state schools and Waldorf Schools.

One can only relate to one's own personal experience in this context but, in my opinion, if such freedom was given to children of school age the result would be chaos. Children are not capable, and in terms of maturity not ready, to take responsibility for making such a crucial decision as whether to attend school or not. The child may therefore make a decision which from his viewpoint is to his short-term advantage, but which would certainly turn out to be, in the long term, to the detriment of his development. The vast majority of parents fully appreciate this and one has only to look at the recent example of the William Tyndale School to see the results of what happens when the instigation of the learning and educating process is left to the child.

Such a view is in direct conflict with what happens in a Waldorf School where the teacher is regarded as an authoritative figure (this of course is quite different from being an authoritarian in the classroom) working to a recommended curriculum. There can be no doubt that because of the structure of our educational system we do, to a large extent, determine the social role of our potential adult during his or her childhood. This structure has been determined (some would say dominated) by present, but in particular past, economic considerations and not by any sound, well-thought-out theories of child development. Again this structure is probably now under greater pressure to change with the ending of selection based on academic achievement measured when the child leaves the junior school. It is true that within the free school movement there is far less emphasis placed upon the school's influence on the child as far as social role development is concerned.

On the other hand it would not be true to say that, within the state system, the emphasis, in terms of measuring a child's capabilities, is concerned with the child within a particular social context. In other words within the state system there is a gradual and welcome movement away from categorizing the child as though he or she should fit a particular social role in adult life.

The same is true of the Waldorf Schools as envisaged by Steiner and indeed as set up by him in the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart in 1919. It is perhaps unfortunate that the majority of Waldorf Schools in this country have had no option but indirectly to emphasize the social role of the child through their selection on a financial basis. This in my opinion is to be regretted and is not of course what Steiner intended. It is hoped therefore that the brave and courageous attempt that is occurring in Bristol at the present time to create a school where no such constraints are imposed will succeed and be followed by similar ventures elsewhere. In the next part I shall, after discussing the third function of indoctrination, attempt to describe what is, in my opinion, a) the value of the free school movement, and b) the danger of viewing such a movement as if it is providing solutions to important educational problems.

The Vancouver Waldorf School Steps Out

Its history

NOEL AND DIANA BELL

IT WAS IN the year 1954 when two families, each with two children, gathered with some anthroposophical friends in the Fraser Valley near Vancouver, B.C., to talk about starting a Waldorf School.

Unbeknownst to them, on the same West Coast farther south, a group of teachers had joined together to make Highland Hall, a then operating school, into a true Waldorf School. As the Rocky Mountain chain stretches north and south, so there must have been an impulse reverberating in a positive way up and down the west coast of North America.

The families and friends had frequent meetings in those early days. Francis Edmunds came to B.C. for the first time to talk to groups of interested people. A kindergarten and a Michael Hall-trained teacher arrived. How close the beginning all seemed. But, in spite of all the activity, it was evident that the time was not yet ripe. Those two original families left to put their children into other Waldorf Schools.

The fire had died down but a spark still glowed, and this spark was kept alive by a number of people interested in activities connected with Rudolf Steiner's work. Then, just 14 years later in 1968, the Waldorf School Association was formally registered. This had followed a year of renewed activity by several young families and some active members of the Anthroposophical Society.

In the three ensuing years the "Friends of Waldorf" grew. In 1970 the Vondruska family entered the scene. Their son Ferdi, who had himself been to the Zurich School, arrived in Canada as a representative of his father's steel company. This brought a new impetus and much-needed financial backing to the venture.

The Waldorf School Association, now with a strong Board of Directors, had plans: they would open the school in 1972. But somehow matters came to a head more quickly; this little spark had been fanned for many a long year, and now it was ready to burst forth into flame. Events began early in 1971 when Francis Edmunds found a strong working group ready to receive him; this group in turn prepared a spring conference with Werner Glas. The tremendous enthusiasm generated at this conference spilled over into the following week, and it was decided to open the school that very autumn. But—where were the teachers?

Caught up in the excitement were two professional teachers, Colin Dutson and Betty Hill. Before Werner Glas left, he had interviewed them and secured them as the class teachers for grades 1 and 2.

Then followed months of intensive training with many friends who were able to inspire Colin and Betty with the ideals of Rudolf Steiner education.

In the summer of that year Jeanne Bailey arrived and joined the staff. As well as bringing eurythmy to the school, Jeanne was able to bring a wealth of wisdom and many years of teaching experience which sustained the school in its beginning.

The school opened in September 1971 with 12 children.

While all this had been going on, two Waldorf Kindergartens had already opened in 1970. And who were the teachers? None other than the original two teachers who had come to Vancouver in those early days. Their ways had been circuitous, but together again in the same area Ann Dreihuyzen and Joyce Schild started their kindergartens at either end of the mountain range that stretches along the north shore of the city. How deeply lie the deeds of men: in the very centre of that same mountain ridge had been the first anthroposophical reading when three people had met to study together during World War II.

Now the school was started, the problem was to keep it going. The fees were not enough. So there was no respite for those founding families. They organized every kind of fund-raising activity; dances, raffles, bake sales, craft sales, everything that would raise money. And for two years while the classes were small it was the families that kept the school solvent.

In the second year Marilyn Arnold came from the Detroit Waldorf Institute to take Grade 3. In 1973 Colin and Betty left, Colin for Emerson to further his training, and Betty to return to University to complete a degree. Their places were taken by Madalyn Klein from Adelphi College (Grade 3) and Noel and Diana Bell (Grades 1 and 2). The Bells were one of the families which had been part of the '54 impulse, and had subsequently become Waldorf Teachers. Joe Reuter, one of the guardians of the spark during the in-between years, joined the following year after taking his Steiner School Teacher Training in Stuttgart.

Now it was time for the school to stand on its own feet. 1973-74 resulted in a deficit, so it was decided to increase the fees by 50 per cent for the next year. In spite of some dire predictions of a drastic drop in numbers, the enrolment actually increased by 50 per cent. Grade 1 started with 19 children; now in Grade 2 there are 27 children.

The school occupied church premises close to the Kindergarten in West Vancouver in the first year. In 1972 more suitable quarters were found as the school moved along the same mountain ridge to a church school building in North Vancouver which was its home up to the middle of February 1976. Then with enrolment up to 90

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children in the grades alone, bursting at the seams—the Faculty Room was one end of a landing—a three and a half year lease of an empty residential school was acquired. While the teachers went off to their annual mid-semester Teachers' Conference at Sacramento, the "Families" came in. With plans in hand, they snatched down old walls, put up new ones, cut doors through, re-wired, painted and cleaned; within a week the school was able to continue in its new premises. And with what joy the children, teachers and parents gathered together on the first Monday morning assembly in our hall! The children's reciting of "To Wonder at Beauty" came out with warmth and feeling.

And now in our fifth year, with six classes housed in our new building, and facilities which include a fully equipped kitchen, a workshop with every kind of power tool and an indoor heated swimming pool, we have room to expand into an 8 or a 9 grade school. If we should one day own the property we may well be able to develop it further. As it stands now we enjoy the play space on our two-and-a-half-acre lot.

The families and friends in the form of the Waldorf School Association still stand firmly behind the school. The business affairs are handled by a Board of Directors chosen by Association members and the faculty. The faculty deals with all internal matters.

There are still two kindergartens. Dot Olsen and helpers have been running the kindergarten now that Ann Driehuyzen has retired; there are 54 children enrolled, while Joyce Schild has 20 children. Many interviews are going on: our enrolment is now up to 107 in the school; we are trying to grow organically without bringing in too many disturbed children. We have frequent visitors; students from the University, visitors from abroad, other teachers from other schools who come and look into the classes in operation; while at our first Open House in our new home some 300 people crossed our threshold to look at children's work, to buy books, to talk and talk with teachers and parents, and to listen to a superb lecture by Alan Howard.

Exhausted we are, but happy! For it is the combined effort of the many families who not only send their children, but are ready to pitch in and help, that keeps the school flourishing. Would that space allowed to name them one by one.

Words and Rhythms

Their therapeutic effect

DANIEL BITTLESTON

'FULL TIME TEACHER wanted . . . Young man or woman to teach between 30 and 200 children a week, of varying ages; must be qualified, physically and mentally fit; must be expert practitioner of child, teacher, parent and education office psychology; quick learner, capable of independently initiating a curriculum development project in 45 minutes in company of large critical audience; conciliation, citizens' advice and social casework skills essential; some evening and weekend work inevitable . . .' This full-page N.U.T. advert in *The Times* drew attention to the small salary accorded teachers compared with the large area of responsibility which they receive. But the list given is very conservative. Teachers are expected to exercise, at least to an elementary degree, the skills of actor, scientist, father confessor, handyman, poet, mechanic, therapist, orator, diplomat, community relations officer, sportsman, psychologist, policeman, guru, nurse, ombudsman . . . the list is endless. One skill that a teacher certainly must have is that of listening, providing the kind of spaces in which children can learn to express and question their experience. This is the role assigned to teachers of the 'New Education' as propounded by Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner in their lively *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* (Penguin 1975).

An important aspect of this topical ideal is the provision in schools of the kinds of context that will make it possible for the language used by children to be "rich, varied and confident". This is admirably documented in Connie and Harold Rosen's *The Language of Primary School Children* (Penguin 1973) and also in *Understanding Children Talking* (Penguin 1976).

One tentative conclusion reached by the latter is that progress in talk depends ". . . upon the development of what one might call humanity, and certain social qualities and skills—concern, generosity, courtesy, humility . . .".

This approach coincides closely with that of the Waldorf Schools where, in particular, poetic language is felt to be one of the most potent means of helping a child to overcome the difficulties that prevent him from achieving these social qualities and skills. Concern or courtesy are not easy for an agitated child to achieve; how can one best counteract, for example, the nervousness that is so prevalent today? One way is through rhythms. Young children are very obviously responsive to rhythms, and many a Waldorf teacher has blessed the short-short-long anapaest for its calming influence. The Fairy's speech from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* "Over hill, over

dale, thorough bush, thorough briar . . ." has such lively imagery that one might have expected it to have an exciting effect, but time and again one's experience is that, when children speak it, step it or even just hear it they become more peaceful, and the effect is deepened to a therapeutic level through daily repetition. Of course, it does make a difference how it is spoken by the teacher. When one is able at will to vary one's speech from epic to lyric to dramatic, then there is a greater likelihood of anything spoken by the teacher having a therapeutic effect.

Classteachers in Waldorf schools are expected not only to develop their own speech to a fine art but also to write helpful and encouraging verses for each of their children. Sensitive attention has to be given to the effects of rhythms, vowels and consonants. A particularly nervous child, for example, may be helped by a verse written in anapaest rhythm and using warm clear vowels such as 'ah', 'oh', with perhaps reassuring consonants such as 'b', 'l', 'w'. The imagery should be full of movement to begin with, and gradually grow more peaceful. On the other hand, for a child who is too drowsy, the teacher will seek out rhythms that waken and rouse, such as the long-short trochee. He may try to fashion a sequence of vowels that moves from comforting 'oh's' to awakening 'a's' and 'e's':

"All along the flowing river
See the trees arrayed in green!"

It is generally accepted that children write verses for their teachers, but there is growing evidence that verses written by teachers for their children are not only helpful at one particular stage of development, but can be valued well into adulthood and even felt to be a source of strength at times of stress. Class teachers are expected to write a verse for every child as part of their annual report; quite a step forward from beta minus or 'could do better'! (See *Zeugnissprüche* by Heinz Müller, in process of translation by Jesse Darrell.) Here in conclusion are two poems written by a classteacher for children between their seventh and tenth years. The rhythms of the first are based on the rousing long-short trochee, inwardly invigorating us at a time when nature around us is dying down. The clear vowel 'e' predominates, stimulating our consciousness; the predominant consonants 'r', 's', 'l' are full of movement.

RUSSET LEAVES

Russet Leaves! Russet Leaves! Triumphant on high,
Touched by the crimson summer's sky,
Embers aloft, as the dragon's wide eye,
Russet leaves, fear you, fear you to die?

Nay child! Nay child! to die fear we never,
We fear neither besom, nor blast of the weather;
We rejoice when the scowling squall snips our frail tether:
Nay child! We'll pelter down, pelter together.

Russet Leaves! Russet Leaves! Stout oak's trumpet choir,
Shrink you not from the clay and the dung of the byre,
To be muted and choked in the smouldering fire;
Russet leaves will you bow, bow as deep as the mire?

Yea child! Yea child! We'll gladly be tossed,
And rotted and ditched, or crunched by Jack Frost,
Or sandwiched 'twixt layers of kitchen compost;
Spring's green voice will proclaim:
We never are lost!

R.B.M.

The second poem, 'Song of Brock's Triumph', is based on the short-long iambic rhythm: this helps sanguine or easily distracted children to pull themselves together; the chorus is based on the enthusing trochaic and the even more strongly rousing long-short-short dactylic rhythms, calculated to stir the most apathetic or phlegmatic of children. The alliteration also strengthens the will—there is something deeply satisfying in a concord of consecutive consonants:

SONG OF BROCK'S TRIUMPH

1. In mountain depths we bide
Where neither sun nor moon
Their shafts of light vouchsafe
On chasms, boulder-strewn.
There darkness dwells . . .

CHORUS Mounds of metal to smelt and mould
Glittering silver, gleaming gold
Iron wrenched from its rocky bed,
Wakening copper, deadening lead.
Facing the flickering flames as they flare
Heaving the hammer high in the air
Bellowing the blaze, beating bending,
Sousing, sizzling, steam upward sending.
With might we have striven
With craft we came
With triumph return
To our cool, coiling caverns again.

2. Within those vaulted caves
A glimmering gloom prevails:
The silence velvet-shod,
Its veiled procession trails
past mist-filmed veins . . .
3. There hearth and anvil stand
Beneath the grime-caked wall:
The leaping shadows play
The thickening echoes call
through endless ways . . .
4. Above the embers' glow,
Like phantom fronds unfurled
The clinging smoke ascends,
By crag and crevice curled
in that crude dome . . .

R.B.M.

Comment

IT IS RARE to read a statement like 'it is time to take the debate, for example, about comprehensives or grammar schools out of the arena of local or national politics and set it within the context of the ultimate nature of man'. The writer is Howard Marratt, chairman of the BBC education committee, and the quotation comes from his article Education in Need of a Theology in the *Times Educational Supplement* of 12.12.75. 'The ultimate nature of man': do we know it? It is characteristic of our age, and totally uncharacteristic of previous ages, that there can be no agreed answer to this question. It is equally characteristic, and much more unfortunate, that instead of groping towards some answer we prefer to forget the question altogether. This is largely due to the pragmatic, anti-metaphysical tradition in Anglo-Saxon philosophy and in the history of universal education in this country. The ruling classes had their public schools. There, their sons were educated. The rest was to be taught in order to play a useful part in Britain's developing economy.

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Evidence of this lack of an educational 'metaphysics'—thoughts on 'the ultimate nature of man'—and of the historical dichotomy in English education—is provided by two articles which happened to be printed on two consecutive pages of the same number (26.3.76) of the *Times Educational Supplement*. Both contain advice on how to improve our educational system and both are reports of speeches made by men in positions of great standing. Sir Alex Smith is chairman of the Committee of Polytechnics and the Schools Council. He blames our educational policy for spending too readily money on economically useless studies while at the same time neglecting the increase of practical skills, particularly among those who are already earning their living. The number of graduate and post-graduate courses had increased, but students switched from the pursuit of science and technology to art courses. In particular, sociology, and business and commerce studies, had increased at a tremendous rate. But the number of students on day-release courses had declined. There are 50,000 fewer of them compared with eight years ago. The result is that a country capable of building Concorde 'has to go to Germany or Switzerland or Japan to buy the machine tools to equip its factories'. We still have two cultures, the arts and the sciences, and—Comment adds—there are still too many people who partake in neither.

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It would be difficult to find fault with Sir Alex's criticism. Or with Pat Martin's prescription which advises us to move in a totally

different direction. Mr. Martin is head of Warwick School and this year's president of the Headmasters Association. He speaks up for education in the best meaning of the term. Schools today are geared to provide material for the examination boards and therefore unable to educate pupils to appreciate the qualities that make for a good life. His remedy is simple. Let there be a common system of examination at the age of 16, but restrict it to no more than four subjects: English, a modern science, mathematics and a foreign language. These four should occupy half the school time of a pupil—which in the experience of Steiner Schools is much more than adequate—and the rest of the time be spent on physical, practical and artistic education, and on the study of traditional subjects like history and geography. These latter should be treated entirely as cultural subjects, in the way Steiner School teachers are used to look at all their main-lesson material. 'Thus the study of history would show what is important and what is trivial in human life. Geography lessons could give attention to the physical beauty of our world and to the conservation of the best in our natural environment.' At the highest level such lessons would concern themselves with value judgements while they would also prepare young people to deal with tax forms, elections, railway timetables and other complexities of modern life.

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The interesting thing about these two divers statements is that given an educational metaphysics such as Steiner Schools, for example, possess, they are perfectly compatible with each other. Once we have given young people a common education which deals with the quality of life and the dignity of man there is nothing to hinder us from giving them after the age of 16 or 18 the most specialised and meticulous technical training we can devise. With one proviso, however: that they are also taught to see the technical skills and their application within the framework that has been built up before. What is the social significance of the technical skills we are now acquiring? What are their dangers? What are their limits? What are their relevance to possible future developments? What is their economic importance for the country? In this way we could go farther than Mr. Martin envisaged. He sees education in a pioneering role which could help the new generation to 'put quality of living first and standard of living second, and draw in parents, politicians and media to support the change of direction'. We can go beyond this. If successful, such an education would go a long way towards bridging the gulf between Snow's Two Cultures, and more important still, closing the gap between Hoggart's 'Them' and 'Us'.

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Among the direct grant schools which recently decided to become totally independent a number have chosen to charge flexible fees.

This is the most sensible thing to do in the case of schools with a high academic reputation such as King Edward's School, Birmingham, or its sister school for girls. Once such schools chose to go independent any other policy could not possibly ensure the continued influx of the academically most gifted pupils. While it is obvious that the selective principle is fundamentally opposed to the practices of a Steiner School it can be hoped that the financial policy of these schools will be a spur to British Steiner Schools to do likewise, or even better in the way of a social scale of fees. In this country Steiner Schools with the exception of the Bristol Waldorf School have followed the traditional policy of private schools and charged a fixed scale of fees which in special cases could be reduced by bursaries. However, the whole idea of fees is alien to Steiner's social impulse. Fees imply that a monetary value can be put on education. How much is class vi 'worth'? How much Mr. X and his main lesson? Such questions are absurd. The reality is: the cost of running a particular school happens to be so-and-so much. There are so many pupils. How much can a particular parent contribute to keep the school functioning? This will depend on his income and his other obligations. Can he, in addition, help to raise the standard of equipment and facilities? To make such individual arrangements is time consuming and demands a good amount of social skills. But the alternative is to rank education with soap powders and cars, and this contradicts all that Rudolf Steiner stood for.

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We commented once before on the experiment with school vouchers in California. Parents give them to the school of their choice and the school then claims from national funds the total value of the vouchers received. At first sight this seems the answer to the demand for parental choice in education. Unfortunately, if crudely used such a scheme would also perpetuate the cycle of deprivation as the best parents would obviously make the best choice, and so their children would be doubly fortunate while others would be doubly penalised. Various possibilities exist to mitigate this shortcoming. Meanwhile there is now a paper by Alan Maynard, published last October, which describes eight different models of how such vouchers might be handled. Mr. Maynard, an economist at York University, deals only with the financial aspects of the problem, but even so comes to the conclusion that, rightly handled, vouchers could produce greater efficiency, lead to greater devolution of power, and help reduce inequality. The paper is called *Experiment with Choice in Education*, and was written for the Institute of Economic Affairs.

Book Reviews

Child and Man Extracts, published by Steiner Schools Fellowship. Price £3.90 plus postage from Rudolf Steiner Bookshop, 35 Park Road, London NW1 6XT.

These are reprints of articles published in earlier versions of *CHILD AND MAN* between 1947 and 1960.

For anyone wishing to gain an impression of how subjects are tackled in a Steiner school this book offers a rich store of information, for an already practising Waldorf teacher a great stimulus to one's own imagination.

Behind the introduction of each subject stands the question in the teacher's mind: 'How is this related to the stage of development of the child in the gradual incarnation of his soul and spirit into his body?'. To take a few examples: grammar at the age of nine can help to strengthen the growing self-consciousness of the child. The teacher describes her lively handling of the subject reminding the children of stories they have heard—Adam naming the animals (nouns), the three norms of the Norse Myths (tenses) and so on, and always at the back of her mind is the remembrance that Grammar was once a revered Being, one of the Seven Liberal Arts. The history of the great explorers of the 15th and 16th centuries can meet the dawning sense of independence of the 13-year-old; their strong contrasts of character (e.g. high idealism and gold lust in Columbus) is reassurance for children discovering their own inner contradic-

tions. The intellectual thinking of the 15/16-year-old can be enlivened, his imagination kindled by meeting the concepts of infinity in his geometry lessons via parallel lines, the hexagon and conic sections.

An outstanding article for me was one on a study of the skeleton with 14-year-olds where the teacher had adopted the motto 'the longest way round is the shortest way home'. After studying the skeleton in its threefold quality (spherical head, radial limbs and a balance between, the ribs) he wanted to go on to give the idea of metamorphosis in bones. Leaving the subject for a few weeks he in the meantime accustomed the children to listening to Themes and Variations by Mozart and Beethoven. When they returned to a study of the bones such an idea was part of their being and they quickly came to a recognition of the principle in individual bones.

The articles range from Kindergarten work through Main Lesson subjects in Class teacher period and upper school to those on language teaching, eurythmy, gym, and arts and crafts. A truly comprehensive picture.

It is a great pity that in the interests of economy the printing and setting out of the articles is of a quality which makes an apology necessary when handing the book to a stranger. D.D.H.

* * *

Commonsense Schooling: Based on the indications of Rudolf Steiner. By Roy Wilkinson. Henry Goulden Books. £1.90. ISBN 0 904822 00 1.

Contrasted with other works on Steiner education, including of course those of Steiner himself, *Commonsense Schooling* speaks more of what Steiner teachers actually *do* in the classroom, and of the external structure of a

Steiner school, and less of the spiritual background out of which the teachers work. It makes no explicit reference, for example, to individual destinies or reincarnation. It thus serves as an accessible introduction to Waldorf

education. It will make sense to even the hard-bitten humanist, always provided he can read the word "spiritual" without reacting as Goering did when hearing the word "culture", and provided he is willing to be led gradually into the vast immaterial aspects of spiritual science, by a leader who has not gone too far ahead.

Six of the seven books in the bibliography are by Steiner himself. It might have included two that would serve as follow-ups for the inquirer to *Commonsense Schooling*. These are Caroline von Heydebrand's *Childhood* (translated by Daphne Harwood) and A. C. Harwood's *Way of a Child*. In the order here given, these three works could be said to have been composed

by, respectively, dominantly willing, feeling and thinking personalities. Together the three books form fitting and often necessary stepping stones to the ultimately indispensable works of Steiner himself.

The remaining work listed in the bibliography is a translation of Johannes Hemleben's *Rudolf Steiner*, a profusely illustrated biography, which, it is reported, sold over 100,000 copies in the original German paperback edition. It and *Commonsense Schooling* are two of the first fruits of the newly-formed publishing company, Henry Goulden Books (5 West Street, East Grinstead, Sussex).

Frank Newell

* * *

The World and Me by Nora Ward.

This book of little poems, helpful for drawing young children into the seasons' moods, is available, price 35p

(including postage), from Dunlem, Lingfield Road, East Grinstead, Sussex.

* * *

Teaching History (The Middle Ages). Price 85p. Rudolf Steiner Bookshop.

Roy Wilkinson's fourth booklet on History can be as warmly recommended as its predecessors. The writer has provided clear outlines of the leading events during the turbulent years between the 4th and the 15th century A.D. He has given a good deal of interesting general information which almost any teacher apart from

a specialist in this period would find difficulty in acquiring. At the back there is a helpful bibliography together with lists of leading characters and dates. The presentation is simple and straightforward. Altogether this is an invaluable handbook for the class-teacher.

E.H.

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