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Child and Man

A Journal for Contemporary Education

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TOWARDS SOCIAL RENEWAL

BASIC ISSUES OF THE SOCIAL QUESTION

Rudolf Steiner

This book contains a timely reminder that society need not be seen as having reached the end of the road. The startling conclusion reached is that three supposedly outdated and seemingly contradictory claims can in fact be met in a social order that has three spheres functioning together and yet autonomously. Liberty in human creativity, equality in the realm of human rights, and fraternity instead of competition in commerce and industry are possible. Society can become a mirror of man and a medium for his progress once the basic issues at stake are clearly recognized.

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Fifteen-year-old copper-beaters observe the effects of heat on their handiwork. 'All part and parcel of the evolution of Man and Society . . .' (see page 10).

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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

Towards a Human Education

The problems that face us in every sphere of life, personal, economic, political, are such that a fundamental change in the qualitative nature of our thinking is called for. Circumstances are nudging us firmly toward evolving greater imaginative capacities; there can be few of us who do not feel the unrelenting need for the kind of disciplined imagination that would enable us to penetrate, comprehend and create this world in which we live.

As A. C. Harwood indicates so skilfully in his 'Children's Questions' in this issue, we can learn a good deal about imagination from children. Modern man finds it difficult to comprehend that we are suffused by a realm which is at least as real and as lawful as material existence. Imagination is the key to the world of formative forces, the enduring source of everything living, the laws of which are just beginning to be understood by some projective geometers and botanists.

All this might be a little easier for us to grapple with if we had received the kind of botanical lessons described by Frances Woolls, or the school curriculum described by Alan Howard, or the Michaelmas Address given by Frances Brown. The whole question of *what* and *how* we should be teaching and learning is one that is very close to people's hearts at present and is the guiding thread of thought that runs through the tapestry of this Summer Issue.

Historically, mankind looked to 1. the Priest, 2. the Philosopher, or 3. the King, for guidance concerning what and how he should learn. The modern equivalents, to which we look today are: 1. our own judgement, 2. the education experts, 3. the govern-

ment; but a curriculum laid down by any one of these has very obvious disadvantages. The individual curriculum inclines toward a personal bias, the expert curriculum inclines toward the academic, the government curriculum inclines toward social engineering. What about a co-operative effort between all three?

Such an enterprise is, in fact, taking place in W. Germany, where regional education centres have been formed in which government officials, professors, and teachers (in close consultation with parents and pupils) are working together to develop curricula. But upon close inspection even this great effort may be seen to be insufficient to achieve the improvement in the quality of teaching which is the underlying aim of all the current concern with curricula. Teachers will doubtless implement the new curricula to the best of their ability, but many are feeling increasing concern at the implications of their status as servants of the state. A civil servant invariably finds that much of his initiative or imagination is frowned upon; the norm is a steady routine. State schools may appear to be making many innovations but as John Gardner puts it (in his pamphlet *Freedom for Education*, published by the Council for Educational Freedom in America, Inc.) . . . 'We are just beginning to see that, insofar as they are agencies of the state, they must strive to be ever more neutral towards—which is to say emptied of—spiritual values. Deepest questions, highest goals, most intimate and precious realities are not permitted to surface . . . The time has come for us to admit that so-called public education has by now made its his-

torical contribution; the time is overdue for a fundamentally new arrangement.' John Holt, in his most recent book (Instead of Education, Penguin 1977) describes education as 'learning cut off from active life and done under pressure of bribe or threat, greed and fear.'

Both these points of view are strongly put, but they point towards a vital truth. Only when the teachers in a school are able with full responsibility to work together to deepen their imaginative understanding of their children, themselves and their subjects can a curriculum become truly human.

D.J.B.

Understanding . . .

Among the many disputes over the future of education two widely divergent directives are conspicuous. The one demands a return to the efficient teaching of basic skills with State supervision. The other insists on the elimination of any possible privilege and plans for all State schools to be organised on a similar pattern. Yet neither concept contains understanding for the reality of the growing child, understanding that could provide the basis of an education which is truly human.

The young child comes into the world with three faculties which gradually unfold during its school life. As adult human beings we direct our lives through our capacity to think. But without a feeling for others we are felt to be lacking in humanity. Idealistic thinking and kindly feeling are of little effect if we lack the will power to act. But these three faculties develop at different rates. The little child, who is all will, learns through imitation and so needs a loving family life and regular habits in order to grow in a healthy way. The boy and girl in the first school years can learn with understanding only if their feelings are involved; with every subject they should find that they can see further into the wonder and beauty of the world; they need to be moved by the myths and legends which are the imaginative background of our different cultures. In the

upper classes the pupils' powers of logical thinking are awakening, but these should be developed not through mastering countless accepted hypotheses but through observation and contemplation. All subjects should be connected with man in his relationship to the world so that each branch of learning derives a wider meaning through its dependence on others.

In the pursuit of knowledge pupils need to learn to appreciate one another's characters and abilities. In this way a healthy social life is fostered and young people acquire confidence that they will find their way in life. In the uncertainties of the present time, with the widespread breakdown of family relationships, the countless bankruptcies, and the general unemployment, the best gift we can give to our pupils is the ability to face with courage and certainty whatever life can bring.

E.H.

Forum International

In March of 1974 the first issue, in German and English, of Forum International, appeared in Germany to dispel some of the isolation between the many Waldorf/Steiner Schools that exist in the world today. Pupils and young former pupils came together to meet and to work with each other, to find new ways of communicating across frontiers and the wide expanses of oceans and silence. Out of the work of 'International Movement of Rudolf Steiner School Pupils and Former Pupils' which grew from this initiative to share experiences and questions, it has now been possible to form three independent, but co-operating, editions of Forum International in Germany, Holland and Britain (with circulations of 5,000 2,000 and 750 respectively). Especially in Holland and Britain the evolving aim of the quarterly might be formulated as follows: Forum International seeks to further the freedom of education which it sees as the seed-bed for a free cultural life and to enable young and old to shed light upon each other.

All correspondence and subscriptions (£1.50 a year) should be sent to:

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Comment

This time I shall deal at greater length than usually with one particular problem, a problem of far greater importance than those which usually excite educationalists. For the answer which the country will give to the problem posed will have a marked effect on all the cultural and political future of Britain. Last October the question of 'standards' came to a climax and was made the main subject of a speech by the Prime Minister at Oxford. It is very difficult to gauge exactly whether the young people of today are better educated than those of a generation or two ago. What does 'better educated' mean? Wider interests? A greater amount of information? More application and commitment? More and higher A-level grades? A greater concern with the world at large and its problems? It is far easier to define what people mean by 'standards'. They want to see that even the least educated can spell, can read and do elementary arithmetic and—hopefully—have good manners. In other words, there should be a reliable supply of people who can do the more menial clerical jobs. It is generally assumed that these 'standards' are in decline, but even this is difficult to establish as rival groups produce different sets of statistics which the layman is unable to check and also because comparisons are practically impossible because of the continuous increase in our schools of children of new immigrants who at home speak no English at all.

If it is difficult to make accurate statements about the attainment of 'standards'

and about the degree of education a particular generation has received, there can be no denying that there is a general feeling of unease shared by parents, teachers and the general public alike. Never before had education been offered on so lavish a scale, never before had such high hopes been set on it, and often the young appear bored, drifting, listless, unmotivated. We often overlook what is good and new among them, but notice that they are lacking by the criteria of a former generation, forgetting only that the generation of their parents is equally lacking when judged by the same criteria. The decline of family life, the decline of business morality, the general rush for easy money, the lure of advertisements, the increase of alcoholism, the impact of the media: these could easily explain the loss of motivation in the younger generation. Added to this is the availability of jobs and the much discussed social security. But those who complain about the loss of 'standards' choose to overlook these factors and see the problem in a convenient frame of reference: teachers and pupils. So the answer for the lack of education, for loss of 'standards', for declining discipline and courtesy is easy to pinpoint: it is these new schools, the comprehensives, and their methods.

This whole complex of facts, fears and prejudices has become political. The junior Shadow Minister of Education is an arch-opponent of the new schools. Tameside Conservatives made the retention of the

grammar schools an issue in the local election and won. Not that the two parties were unanimous. There are critics of the less formal teaching methods of today among Labour members while some prominent Conservatives are fully in favour of comprehensives. To the public at large, however, it looks like a party issue and this may have been the reason for Mr. Callaghan's intervention. The critics of the new teaching want the influence which teachers, their unions and the School Council have on the forming of curricula diminished, they want the inspectorate to have a greater say in these matters and they want the establishment of a 'core curriculum'. This would be centrally decided on, made compulsory for all schools and certain minimum levels of attainment expected from each pupil. One Conservative M.P., Mr. Anthony Steen, went in a speech in Parliament so far as to suggest legislation to prevent anyone leaving school until they had mastered basic reading, writing and arithmetic.

People might think that this is an extreme statement, but the attitude behind it is understandable. It is based on the feeling that most of us need a clear brief and ought not to be given too much discretion. 'Your ideas about freedom', they say, 'sound very nice in theory, but at his present state of development man is not ripe enough to use this freedom properly. He will only misuse it.' To somebody schooled by Steiner this is an unfortunate statement. We suffer not from an over-abundance of freedom, but from a lack of it. True, local educational authorities, headmasters, heads of departments and individual teachers enjoy a degree of freedom unimaginable in any other European country. But a similar degree is denied to parents. If parents were able to choose the 'right' school for their children the balance would soon be restored. In present circumstances a majority of parents would probably at first opt for schools which are examination-orientated and strict on discipline. But gradually they would see the disadvantages of such an education as well and would ask themselves whether this was really the

best way of education for their child. Here—as in other spheres of modern life—the way forward is the path towards more freedom, and the imposition of new controls and pressures is a retrograde step.

It is therefore most gratifying that in this crisis we have such a courageous, intelligent and liberal Minister of Education as Shirley Williams. Though fairly new to the job she was not intimidated by the pressures brought to bear on her in parliament and by the Civil Service. While not committing herself to any details she made it clear where she stood. State control would be a long step backwards. 'Among the splendours of the English system are its flexibility, its imagination and the freedom of the teacher in the classroom.' So she would not lay down curricula. Also she does at present not see any reason for increasing the number of examinations. 'We may in the past have set too much store by them. Cramming for examinations probably killed the natural curiosity of many a young child. But we must avoid moving too far in the other direction, so that the lack of rigour removes incentives for young people to study and destroys the value of examination results for employers, colleges and universities.'

In his speech Mr. Callaghan indicated that 'better' education was necessary for the economic progress of this country and that quite a few of our competitors enjoyed the services of more highly-trained managers, salesmen and engineers. On the other hand, this country can at least hold its own in the excellence of its administrators, inventors, scientists and bankers. In the opinion of a number of qualified observers this is a consequence of Victorian imperialism and the public schools. The gentleman chose among a small number of 'respectable' professions, while the rest of the work could be done by the less privileged who, for this particular kind of work, would need only a limited, more practical form of education. This had two consequences: education seen as the widening of a man's horizon and a deepening of his sensitivities was not considered important enough to be accessible for many;

and, compared to most continental countries the teacher had a socially inferior position and is, even today, paid considerably less than is his colleague abroad. Secondly, for engineering and managerial jobs 'practical' men were wanted, people who had never been to a university or an equivalent place of study, but who often had worked their way up from the ranks of the workers. Such men, as we see now, did their work exceedingly well within their own frame of reference, but rarely had the knowledge and expertise to hold their own against competitors from abroad.

This was seen by those educators who in the years after the War laid the groundwork for the rapid expansion of higher education. At last, Britain was no longer to be under-educated. But what could not be foreseen was that the imperial prejudices would linger on and spread to even wider layers of the population. The young people who took up the challenge and went to university did rarely opt for engineering and commercial life, but became psychologists, economists and sociologists instead. Young people who were socially conscious were not attracted by the aridity of the sciences and the pressures of commercial life. Others who were interested in the financial rewards of such jobs and the feeling of power that went with them were often disappointed by what they found and went abroad in search of greener pastures. In this respect, both our imperial heritage and the greater social sensibility of young people worked in the same direction—and against the economic interests of the country. It will take years of persistent effort before such deeply-ingrained attitudes can be changed. A closer co-operation between industry and schools—Steiner schools not excepted—will be necessary and also clear signs that industry will not only become more efficient, but more socially concerned and humane as well.

Rudi Lissau

A Public Conference— The Wonder of Childhood

organised by the Kindergarten teachers of the Steiner Schools of Great Britain will be held at King's Langley from Thursday, July 21st to Tuesday, July 26th 1977.

What do we see as the task of the young child's teacher in forming a bridge between home and school?

How do we inspire the confidence which will allow the child to unfold courageously in these challenging times?

We need to explore together man's three-fold capacities of thinking, feeling and purposeful action, which we can already see in the young child as potential.

We have, in our position as teachers, the unique chance to open wider the doors of childhood, so that we may . . .

i) encourage the child's gift of wonder, which will give him heart to face the struggles of his fellow-men and to have reverence for their achievements . . .

ii) further the joy of imaginative play, which provides the very basis of original thought . . .

iii) help to build up the courage he will need to overcome his fears and insecurities so that when he leaves the world of childhood he will have the enthusiasm, humour and determination to make his full contribution to humanity.

For details and application forms please write to: The Conference Secretary, The New School, Langley Hill, King's Langley, Herts, England.

“Speaking of the Waldorf Curriculum . . .”

by ALAN HOWARD

There's a new catchword going the rounds of educational circles just now—the *Core Curriculum*. Who invents these catchwords, one wonders? Are they the combined efforts of a group of educational mandarins sitting in secret conclave like the manufacturers of a washing powder, pondering the name of a new product; or are they the chance inspirations of some underling who tosses them off ignorant alike of their effect and his own claim to fame? Whoever it is, once they're out everybody hastens to get one or be one—whatever it is, irrespective of whether they've already had it, or been it for years under a different name, or no name at all. From the British Isles to British Colombia 'core' curricula are the latest thing in education; and, the question being bound to arise sooner or later as to whether we, Waldorf, have one too, a few words on the subject might not be out of place.

But before we do, however, and in view of all the criticism education has come in for during the last few years, one cannot help remarking on the unconscious irony of this particular phrase. The *core*—of an apple, for instance, or a pear—is usually that part that we throw away. We have no use for it—even though it is that part of the fruit on which the rest depends. Is there perhaps an unconscious admission in this phrase that the barrenness of present day education is the result of a wanton disregard of the 'core' over the years?

Be that as it may, neglect of the 'core' of

education is something that cannot be laid at the door of Waldorf schools. Ever since Waldorf education was introduced over fifty years ago it has been doing nothing else but preparing students to take their place as competent and enlightened members of society in the modern world set-up. And that has only been possible by consistently following a 'core' curriculum throughout that time. In fact, we have even been criticised for doing just that; for while those bright educational theorists had it all their own way with their 'experimental schools', and 'freedom' and 'New Math' and 'Gnu Spelling', we were sometimes looked upon with pious horror because of our conformity to a curriculum established in broad outline fifty years ago. 'Have you been doing the same things all these years?' they would ask. 'Don't you realise how everything has changed?'

But that is also why throughout those years—as is perhaps now beginning to be realised—so many of our students have been so readily accepted—and even asked for in many cases—by universities and employers alike. The ability they were able to show in handling their mother-tongue whether in writing or speaking, in adapting themselves intelligently to new learning situations and in showing creativity and initiative in what they were called upon to do, has not gone unrecognised.

But about this 'core' curriculum.

Take language (communication in the mother-tongue, whether verbal or written)



Eight-year-olds in a play about St. Francis of Assisi

'Not just children of the 20th century . . .'

for instance—the *sine qua non* of all education. Our students are not only taught to read intelligently from Grade One, but also to write with clarity, style and grammatical accuracy (to which last, once the Cinderella of the curriculum, we have been the Fairy Godmother when everybody else despised her). In every lesson the children are encouraged to tell and retell in a classroom situation what they have heard and read, so that they shall have confidence and skill in expressing themselves to their contemporaries.

From Grade Three they are taught how to compose a letter on personal, business or official matters, and to write reports, so that they are able to put what they have to say in plain round terms with economy and directness of expression. Of course these things are done differently, and from Grades One through Three the competence may vary somewhat with children who have been reading from the age of three (or earlier), but from then on the result is not only comparable, but better.

Then take mathematics. Again from Grade One the children begin to become familiar with numbers and what can be done with them. They are trained in the facility of their use in any operation involving the four rules in fractions or decimals, the calculation of profit and loss, exchange, interest and what have you. When *their* pocket electronic calculators break down (which of course

they too will use one day) they won't be left stranded, but will be able to pick up pencil and paper and work it out for themselves.

And as to the world of affairs—Man's life as a social being in the midst of Nature—already in Grade Three there are two important main-lesson blocks on Building and Farming (two things, by the way, that are still the 'core' of our social and economic life). In these the children learn how and why people build the kind of houses they do at different times and in different ways in different parts of the world, and what are the essential differences in an urban and an agricultural community. This passes over into Geography, which, after a study of the immediate environment of the school, is gradually broadened out to take in other countries and the land masses in which they are found; and all is centred in the way people live, the differences in their life-styles and their inter-relationships based on their geographical and cultural conditions.

In History we take the growth of human civilisation as a whole. Children today are not *just* children of the twentieth century. They are heirs to the ages, and debtors to all mankind. They cannot hope to appreciate what it means to belong to this century unless they can first have some understanding of how it has evolved out of the previous ones. Beginning with the dawn of history, as it comes to expression in the sagas of ancient

civilisations, we trace the gradual growth of social consciousness *as a continuing story* in its development westward to our time and state. We draw attention to what Man has forgotten and discarded, as well as what he has gained in that development. They are helped to see that in spite of our great achievements many of the acutest problems today are caused by the ignorance of what earlier Man knew intuitively. The material for the last History lesson in Grade Eight may very well be the content of that morning's newspaper, or the radio newscast, studied against the background of all they have learned about the past.

As for Natural Science, Man is still integrated with the whole of Nature in spite of his particular conquest of the mineral kingdom. Beginning with the animal world in Grade Four they are shown how all the infinite variety in the specialised—and, to that extent, limited—animal forms is gathered together in the human *form*, and how by its upright posture Man releases his hands and arms for communal service in the world, which permits him with his God-given thinking to reproduce by his creative genius all and more than the animal species can do together. He studies the plant world *as, and where, it grows*; and sees how trees, vegetables and flowers, all the herbage of the earth, cannot be understood as something separate from the earth, but only in a living relation to it, which all must respect and care for if Man is to survive. He learns about the primary phenomena manifesting in heat, light and sound, in electricity and magnetism, in chemistry and magnetism, and how they have been put to use in all the technical marvels that he sees everywhere around him. He realises all the human thought and devoted labour that went to their discovery by people who were not able to share their benefits. And they are not allowed to forget the fact that in the enjoyment of those benefits now we are dependent on the specialised skills of millions of people the world over, involving us and our descendants in social, economic and political problems of global magnitude.

'Core' curriculum, indeed!

The Waldorf curriculum is nothing else but that; and just because it is so 'core' we are able to bring into living relation with it all what the rigid utilitarian despises; what the 'core' curricula makers are apprehensive of; and what in most schools is simply a counterweight to a stultifying intellectualism—Art. Painting, modelling, music, drama, eurythmy become part of the 'core' curriculum of a Waldorf school because they exercise the creativity and initiative which only a curriculum such as ours can stimulate and inspire. For children must not only *learn* what is essential—that goes without saying; they must not only be able to *use* what they learn in situations where it is most urgently demanded; but they must also be stimulated and inspired by what they learn. That is 'core', too; and that can only be properly integrated if they see while they learn and in what they learn how everything is all part and parcel of the evolution of Man and society—of which they are the future representatives.

Yes, perhaps it's a good word after all—this word 'core'. At least it can be if it doesn't only stand for the hard centre of a thing, the 'rock bottom', the 'bare bones'. But if it means 'seed', too; and 'heart'; the life centre out of which new life can proceed; then a curriculum which pulses with the heart of *knowing*, and is the seed of future knowledge, is truly a 'core' curriculum. And that is not only what the Waldorf curriculum has been and is, but what it always wants to be.

Alan Howard, a former editor of Child and Man, has more than thirty years' teaching experience in Waldorf schools in the U.K. and in Canada.

Waldorf Education in Latin America

by FRANCIS EDMUNDS

The story of Waldorf Education in Latin America is very different from that of North America. In Europe, Waldorf education has scarcely reached south of the Alps, just an elementary school in Milan. Looking southwards from the United States, the situation in the west is not dissimilar. It seems that the Education penetrates more slowly into Latin culture.

In Mexico today, there is no Waldorf School. Behind this statement lives a rather tragic history. A school was opened with great hope and jubilation in 1958, "La Nueva Escuela—Waldorf". It lingered on with changing circumstances for nearly ten years. There were heroic efforts to sustain the school, but in the end a situation arose when nothing was left of the original intentions except the word "Waldorf". Eventually, and, indeed, fortunately that word vanished too.

It took but a short time before new endeavours came into being, this time with much greater knowledge, preparation and foresight. About six years ago, at the expressed wish of the then newly appointed Minister of Education, following a series of officially organized lectures and a personal interview, a new Waldorf School was founded, this time under the auspices of the Government. Premises were provided. Teachers' salaries were assured. The children mostly came from very poor families. The school was widely based, proceeding upwards by parallel classes, beginning at Kindergarten level. The work prospered

happily under the counselling and guidance and indefatigable care of the original promoter of the enterprise, himself an early pupil of the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart. The teachers had prepared over a period of time, at least a year and sometimes more, in Waldorf methods. The number grew year by year, till there were over 300 ranging up to a fourth grade. Going through the classrooms one had the impression of real Waldorf teaching, seen also in the paintings and drawings on the walls, and in the children's written books. The children were happy, the teachers dedicated. Then, just at the time when we were holding the international educational conference at Michael Hall to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, the blow fell. An official of standing in the education department, lending too easy an ear to the libellous statements of one or two disgruntled people who had left the school, descended one day with a number of school inspectors, and ordered every vestige of Waldorf work to disappear; instead, the teachers, from one day to the next, were to revert to the typical work of an ordinary State elementary school.

Cables from the united Waldorf Schools in Britain, in Holland, in Germany, and private appeals and representations were of no avail. Action having been taken, there was no reversing it.

The adventure, however, is not wholly concluded. Teachers, parents and friends connected with this school were and are

determined to make every effort to open a Waldorf school again, maybe, once more, as a private school.

Moving into South America, we come to Columbia. Here interest in Waldorf education, private and also public, has been growing for a number of years. A seminar in Waldorf education was recently held in Cali lasting the best part of a year. Some of the young people attending it have since applied for further training in Europe. Applications have come in to Emerson College from various parts of Columbia and also from Equador. In Bogota, last summer there was held a major educational conference for teachers. This took place under the auspices and in the premises of a large private school for boys. In Bogota we met the promoters and teachers of a nursery-kindergarten school of eighty children where there is the firm intention of advancing to an elementary school as soon as Colombian teachers trained in Waldorf educational methods become available. There is no doubt that further developments are on the way.

It is a long journey south to Sao Paulo in Brazil, the one country and by far the biggest in this southern continent where the language is Portuguese and not Spanish. Here there is a Waldorf School of 900 children. It celebrated its 21st birthday a year ago and has recently acquired the full range of classes from nursery through high school. The school was founded originally as a German School but is now Brazilian throughout. The last of the class teachers to conduct her class right through in German has now completed her task. The teachers, today, are nearly all Brazilians, many arriving with little or no knowledge of Waldorf education and anthropology, but they enter the work with much good will. The few senior teachers who have watched the school grow up and accompanied the change-over from German to Brazilian have to carry on a continual in-training programme for their young colleagues. It is surprising to what extent the school carries throughout an unmistakable Waldorf character.

The school has two unique advantages over other Waldorf Schools. The first is that schools in general are not required to prepare their children for college entrance. It is customary for the children, having left school, to enter special institutions for such preparation. The second advantage lies in the fact that every high school is obliged to give its pupils training in the sphere of crafts or arts. The result of this is a rare degree of excellence in this sphere, really outstandingly beautiful and original work.

The school is in a fine locality bordering on the city but, unfortunately, is increasingly threatened by air pollution from heavy industry not many miles away. This necessitates serious consideration for the future of the school.

For the rest of this report which concerns Argentine and Uruguay, the author is indebted to Mr. Frank Smith of Zürich, Switzerland who writes from personal knowledge. There has also been by good fortune a recent visit here by a leading teacher coming from Buenos Aires.

The oldest school, founded about 35 years ago, the 'College Paula Alberracin de Sarmiento' is better known as the 'Rudolf Steiner Schule'. It is largely a 'German school'. Waldorf education is fully maintained in the elementary school of seven classes. The upper school comprising classes eight to twelve has a special programme. The morning courses from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. are conducted in Spanish and follow the official state programme. In the afternoon, however, German is taught as a language and this includes a number of subjects from the Waldorf curriculum as well as artistic work. At the end of the twelfth class some of the students take an official German state examination, though not yet the Abitur.

Then there is the 'Escuela San Miguel Arcangel'. The aim of this school is to remain as free as possible in determining its educational programme within the given political conditions. It has only seven grades (the Argentinian primary school) and a kindergarten. It does not intend to expand within

the foreseeable future, despite parental pressure, due to a lack of qualified teachers to take on the task of the higher grades. The school is situated in the more distant suburb of San Isidro, a charming area where the Spanish colonial architecture is still dominant. It is nine years old.

There was a third school, the 'Colegio St. Jean'. It must be fifteen years ago and more since a party of three Brazilians came to Forest Row to train in Waldorf education with a view to opening a school in the native language. We learnt with regret that this school had to close down. According to Mr. Smith one of the main reasons was that it became too dependent for its finances on state funds.

Mr. Smith next draws our attention to the Colegio Novalis, a small, thatch-roofed school located near Montevideo in Uruguay. It has a rather large kindergarten. The classes beyond this are still small but are growing slowly and surely. They are now approaching a 5th grade with a 6th grade to follow next year to complete the Uruguayan primary school.

The immediate needs are for adequate housing, the present quarters being very cramped, and also for some land. Beyond that, there is, of course, the need here as in all these schools for trained Waldorf teachers. To go to Europe for training entails a heavy financial burden.

Only today there came a letter to Emerson College from this school, enquiring about facilities for teacher training, but stressing concern about the costs. The disparity in fees between South American countries, and Europe and the United States does present a heavy problem. There could well be a justified appeal for help in this respect to Europe and the States. We may indeed feel deeply grateful for the pioneering work that has been and is being done. We at Emerson are most happy to have received students from Argentine, Brazil, and, just now from Colombia and Equador also.

(To be continued).

A penetrating glance at education in West Germany

by CHRISTOPH LINDENBERG

Ten years ago politicians, educationalists and sociologists started a wave of educational reform in Germany which was received by the general public with great expectations. The slogans were: Comprehensive Education for Everyone! Education—Everyone's Right! Equal Opportunity through Education! Education—Path to Emancipation! The whole of society was to be revolutionised by new standards of education and by new curricula. Educational reform was to produce a democratic citizen, equipped with the critical consciousness which was thought to be the essence of citizenship. Thus it was echoed everywhere.

Thousands of books and expert estimates were written, hundreds of programmes were discussed; eventually new schools were formed: comprehensive schools. New educational approaches were introduced (e.g. new mathematics, linguistics instead of literature, etc.), the style of teaching was changed, the teacher as the authoritarian personality was to be abolished. In short, everything was to be improved.

No one can assert that nothing happened: the expenditure for education rose from DM 15.6 billions in 1965 to DM 58.1 billions in 1975, the number of sixth form school-leavers per year trebled, and the number of teachers and students increased by leaps and bounds.

And yet, apathy dominates the scene today. The newspapers publish long articles: 'School makes our children ill!' Twenty-five per cent of the pupils suffer from behaviour disturbances. School-leavers cannot find a university place, graduates cannot find work, and it is estimated that in a few years' time there will be 200,000 unemployed, trained teachers. At the same time, the annual number of births has fallen from 1,100,000 to 600,000, leading to a drastic decrease in

pupils, and now school buildings stand empty! The education planned by the State, the fully administrated school, and a completely intellectual standard of education have thus led to chaos.

In this environment the German Waldorf School movement exists and grows—two, three or four new Waldorf schools are founded each year! Recently the number of Waldorf pupils has been increasing by 1,000 per year. Apart from the Teachers College in Stuttgart, where some 150 students are given courses lasting one or more years, a second college was founded in Witten/Ruhr on the Annener Hill, which offers teachers three-year study courses. At present about 100 students are enrolled at Witten. As well as these two colleges there are numerous local teacher-training courses and courses for future specialist upper school teachers.

The growth of the German Waldorf schools, the many children who wish to go to them but have to be turned away because of overcrowding, the difficulties of finding enough qualified teachers—all these problems cause great concern, but the greatest concern is for all the schools to become—and to remain—truly Waldorf schools. This does not happen only by conscientious study of Rudolf Steiner's lectures, however important that may be. More important by far is that Man should grow through meeting challenge. An ever-increasing proportion of teachers and parents are taking over responsibilities, having to advocate and expound Waldorf education through lectures and discussions, having to give teachers

in-training and introduce students to anthroposophy; this leads to an active and independent penetration of the living ideas given by Rudolf Steiner.

The public is increasingly beginning to appreciate this activity, in fact to such an extent that, during the 1976 Summer Seminar of Waldorf Schools (an annual event) in Stuttgart, all lectures had to be held twice, and almost 1,000 people participated in the artistic exercises and seminars, which lasted eight days. In 1977 there will now be two conferences, one at Stuttgart, one at Wanne-Eikel. Wherever Waldorf schools are mentioned, lecture halls fill up, evening courses in the arts in individual schools are well attended, eurythmy performances are sold out.

However, one cannot conceal the fact that the work-load still rests on all too few shoulders, that the financial resources—due to the changed economic situation—are running at a low ebb, that the difficulties which press upon the schools in the form of examinations and standardised demands are not exactly decreasing. Nevertheless, thoughtful educationists in Germany today know to be true what one of the leading educators has said: 'Waldorf schools today are the only alternative to State education chaos.' Perhaps more people will comprehend this in years to come.

Christoph Lindenberg is the author of a recent paperback on Waldorf education and teaches history at the Tübingen school.



Rudolf Steiner school at Dortmund opened in 1976.

'Waldorf pupils are increasing by 1,000 per year . . .'

Children's Questions

by A. C. HARWOOD

From about the age of three children begin to be full of questions, and it is sometimes a matter of great difficulty for their parents to find the right answers to them. Every question demands its own individual answer, but it can be of great value in deciding what answers to give to have a clear idea of the kind of answer which is required. For it is altogether wrong to imagine that a little child should be given the same kind of answer as would be suitable for a child of eleven or twelve, but in a simpler form.

The range of questions which even young children will ask is truly astonishing. Indeed, in many respects the youngest children will often ask the most fundamental and far-reaching questions — on life and death, and life after death, and many subjects on which parents have often resigned all hope of definite knowledge. A child of four (to quote an actual example) has asked these questions in the space of a few minutes:—

Do men die? Will you die? Shall I die? What do the angels say to you? Are angels shy? Who made God? Do you like God? When you die do you come alive again?

It must come as something of a shock to little children if parents declare themselves unable to answer questions fundamental to a knowledge of human life, and the questions of children must be a challenge to many parents to carry their thinking to the point of becoming clear and certain on many things which they are often content to leave unsettled.

There are two things, however, to be

noticed about the questions of little children; they will often ask question after question in rapid succession, as though it were not so much information they were seeking, as the satisfaction of hearing the answering voice; and they will listen with more pleasure to an imperfect answer which is spoken with love and warmth in the voice, than to a complete and final reply given in a matter-of-fact tone. It is, indeed, to a large extent true that when little children pour out their endless questions they are seeking something much deeper than the mere satisfaction of curiosity; they are seeking to bring around them the living tones of the human voice. For the voices which they hear do not remain arrested in their consciousness, as is the case with adults, but penetrate even to those deep unconscious processes which take place in the building up of the physical body. Indeed Rudolf Steiner has shown the exact connections of the sounds of the alphabet with the formation of the different organs of the body; and hence it is that Eurhythmy, which expresses the various sounds of language and music in movements of the limbs, is not only an art, but can be used as a means of healing.

It is, therefore, just as much a matter of *how* you answer little children's questions as of *what* you answer. Pure full tones of speech (and modern voices, especially those of intellectual people, are often terribly clipped and dry) not only give a child a feeling of blessing, but help him to form his bodily strength for later life. A child is first nourished by his

mother-milk, and then by his mother-tongue.

But as a guide to what kind of answers little children need, it is often to be noticed that a child will supply the answer to his own questions, and not infrequently reject the one given by the adult for another of his own invention. Such answers which children give to themselves as a rule are much more full of fantasy than those which an adult would supply. A child asks: Why does the sun take the water up into the sky? and then adds: Is it for the angels to drink? Or seeing a piece of wire-netting over the funnel of a steam-roller, he asks: Why do they put the netting on it? but immediately adds: It must be to keep the birds from building their nests there.

It is not easy for an adult to copy this wonderful power of fantasy, and a certain sense of intellectual truth may often stand in the way. But it is always good to remember that what little children need is a certain living fantasy in the answers they receive. To offer them logical explanations (however true to a scientific mind) is to give them a stone when they ask for bread.

Sometimes little children's questions arise plainly from their desire to unite themselves with words to the objects around them. A child sees a caterpillar for the first time, and asks: "What is that?" "A caterpillar." "What is a caterpillar?" But what he wants from the second question is not a definition of a caterpillar in ideas, but the joyous affirmation of the reality before him; "That is a caterpillar." "A Spae-woman lives by telling people their fortunes and interpreting their dreams," says the *King of Ireland's Son*, "that is why she is called a Spae-woman."

When children have passed the age of six or seven they naturally need much more connected answers to their questions than when they were younger. They wait more consciously for the reply, instead of living in the speech which is the answer. It is at this age, for instance, that children will ask many questions about the heavenly bodies, the nature of the sun and stars, the creation of the world, etc. And ready to supply the answer are numerous Children's Encyclopaedias, Newspapers, Science books, and what not, with

beautiful diagrams of the Sun, a flaming ball on a black page, many times the size of the earth, or a man cut in half showing the heart like a pump, the lungs like a pair of bellows, the nervous system like a set of telegraph wires, etc. Whether or not these things are in any sense representations of the truth is not for the moment the question: though it is worth noticing that by the time scientific theories reach popular children's books they are often quite out of date even judged by their own standards.

There will be plenty of time for children to investigate scientific theories at a later age, when they can really understand some of the conceptions on which they are based. For these scientific conceptions arose only at a very definite point in human history, and the mind of a child is not to be compared to the wave of intellectual thinking which historically brought them to birth. A child between seven and twelve or so has in him much more of the piety and luxuriant imagination of the Middle Ages. To him the stars are not vast spheres incredible millions of miles distant in space; he feels their clear shining beauty as something very close to him. The sun is not a huge stationary mass of burning gasses; its rising each day fills him with a wonderful feeling of joy and thankfulness. The pictures of the heavenly bodies in mythologies are far truer to children than the distances and dimensions of modern astronomy.

The Norse people said that wolves swallowed up the sun at the time of an eclipse, and to a child, who has a fine sense of the *devouring* quality of darkness, the nature of an eclipse is much better expressed by such an image than by a diagram of revolving shadows. For in an eclipse it is truly *as though* the wolves devoured the sun, and that 'as though' is, after all, the furthest claim made by the true scientist. Newton did not say that the planets are attracted to the earth by gravity; but that they move *as though* they were so attracted, and it is not his fault that men have made a dogma of a hypothesis.

It is, in fact, of real importance not to give a child scientific conceptions on these subjects too soon. They tend to destroy the vivid feel-



Seven-year-olds listening to a story

'... their own pictures in their mind's eye ...'

ing and imagination proper to this age; and, because they are received before the child has developed the power of following the thoughts on which they are based, they become matters of faith instead of matters of knowledge. Very few people in their adult years have even the will to investigate the mathematics on which is based the Newtonian planetary system or modern atomic theories. In a sense a scientific age is the most credulous of all ages. A thousand yeears ago a man could at least say: "I see the sun move with my own eyes"; but to-day many a man has to say: "Somebody proved a long time ago that the sun stands still. I forget exactly who it was, and I don't know how he proved it, but it's a fact all the same."

When children begin at this age to ask, How a thing is made? it is worth while considering how much of the true explanation has real meaning for them. There are children's books to describe how everything is made, but from such books children often get a very superficial, it may almost be said glib, impression of the work men have to do in the world. Such works are generally illustrated with photographs which give children a very easy picture of various processes, but very little feeling for the real conditions under which the work is

done. A few flashlight pictures of miners hacking at a seam, together with a section of a mine with the cage descending, and a child will soon think he knows all about a coalmine, and turn to the next page to discover how a gramophone works, or what the Great Wall of China looks like. But there is something extraordinarily superficial, muddled, and uncreative about such a way of acquiring information; it is really far better for children to make their own pictures in their mind's eye from living in descriptions they hear of the intense silence under the ground, of men walking to their work for miles in galleries where they cannot go upright, of the dripping of water, etc., etc. In short, they should have some such picture of the inwards of the earth as George Macdonald gives of the interior of a mountain at the beginning of the *Princess and Curdie*. And, above all, the mind should not be an isolated fact, but a knowledge of mining should come as part of the children's general thoughts at the time, in some connection with chemistry, perhaps, or history or geology.

One of the worst results of children's books of the 'How it Works' type is that a child will often collect an extraordinary amount of theoretical information and forget to observe things which come within its own ken. Many

children can describe the solar system, but do not know where the full moon rises, or what planets are in the sky. They know a lot about the assembling of a motor-car, but are very vague as to how butter or cheese or soap is made. It is always best to try to keep younger children's questions as to how things are made to those objects which they can really understand and observe, perhaps by themselves making them. Generally speaking, it is much easier to impart information to children too early than tactfully to withhold it until a better season.

But a certain reticence in answering children's questions is of great help in keeping the questioning faculty alive. For it is a sad fact that the power of asking questions only too often fades away as children grow older. It is perhaps a test of whether children's questions have been answered rightly in their younger years to see how profound are the questions they ask when they are older, and if they are readily satisfied with the answers. For by the time they reach a more intellectual understanding towards the age of fourteen they should have a strong desire to probe every question in life to the bottom, and not be lightly satisfied by theory without knowledge. For children of this age there is a deep meaning in that part of the story of Parsifal where, as a young man, he first sees the wounded Knight, but does not ask of him the question he should. Many of the questions which children should have in their hearts at this age will indeed only be answered by life itself. They stand in the threshold of life, and life will answer them; but only if they put to life the right questions.

Cecil Harwood wrote this article over forty years ago for the second issue of Child and Man, of which he was the founding editor.

Its The Same Old Story

*Siegfried Rudel
reviews an article in the Times
Educational Supplement*

The title is not mine. It is Sir Alec Clegg's. He was writing in the Times Educational Supplement after the Prime Minister's speech in Oxford last October. The speech had been given at Ruskin College but what he had put forward had not been very Ruskin-like. That is the point Sir Alec was making. "We must bear in mind", he wrote, "a warning that Ruskin gave us years ago about educating for industry. He said, 'It is not that men are ill fed, but that they have no pleasure in the work by which they make their bread and look to wealth as the only means of pleasure' and if education should have heeded that warning in Ruskin's day, how much more ought it to do so today."

It's the same old story indeed. A common core curriculum, as is now being proposed, is not a new idea. It was part of a new code of regulations issued early in the century. And the man who was responsible for supervising it was the senior chief inspector Edmond Holmes. "The fascinating thing is"—I am quoting Sir Alec again—"that when he retired he wrote a book in which he condemned lock, stock and barrel all that he had been doing for 30 years . . . It might be as well if those who are apparently going to follow in his footsteps were to heed what he said. Here are three of his statements about the effects of his common core: 'In nine schools out of 10 on nine days out of 10 in nine lessons out of 10, the teacher is engaged in laying thin films of information on the surface of the child's mind and then after a brief interval he is skimming these off in order to satisfy himself that they have been duly laid.' 'The State in prescribing the syllabus which was to be followed in all the subjects of instruction by all the schools of the

country without regard to local and personal consideration was guilty of one capital offence. It did all the thinking of the teacher, it told him precisely what to do each year in each class, how he was to handle each subject, how far he was to go in it, and what width of ground he was to cover.' 'To be in bondage to a syllabus is a misfortune for a teacher and a misfortune for the school in which he teaches. To be in bondage to a syllabus which is binding on all schools alike is a graver misfortune. To be in bondage to a bad syllabus which is binding to all schools alike is of all misfortunes the greatest.'

A similar and more recent recantation comes from Derek Morrell who was mainly responsible for establishing the Schools Council. After a spell of two years he wrote in an article in the TES: "When I was at the Schools Council I should have found it difficult to perceive as I now do that the curriculum if it exists at all is a structure erected on a basis of personal relationships. I should have found it difficult to assert as again I do that in the curriculum we are concerned with human beings who see feeling and aspirations as far more real and immediately important to them than the cognitive development which is the educator's stock in trade."

One of the Prime Minister's calls in his Oxford speech was for more scientists because the country needed them and he asked why it was that schools did not produce them. But is the present approach at all realistic? What Einstein described is, I think, an oft-repeated experience and shows up the reason why youngsters do not regularly pursue science after leaving school. "One had to cram all this stuff into one's mind whether one liked it or not. This coercion had such a deterring effect that after I had gained the final examination I found the consideration of any scientific problems distasteful to me for a whole year."

The major problem, as Sir Alec sees it, is really "whether we are going to continue to educate as the people were educated who have produced the world as it now is". We

might add that it is out of such a feeling of dire necessity for a new beginning in education that the impulse for Waldorf Education was first born*. The aim must surely be, as Carlyle put it, that each should become all that he was created capable of being. The question is: What are the new, non-political and non-utilitarian principles, and what are the ways and means of implementing them? Sir Alec Clegg has cleared the ground on which we need to build. These are his final warning words: "So is education to respond to what experienced educationists like Holmes and Morrell said, to what thinkers like Carlyle, Ruskin and Einstein have told us, or are we to teach solely what the building up of the gross national product demands and devil take the hindmost?"

If we do the latter the hindmost will be the children who can least cope with the common core, and we shall need a plentiful supply of plastic bullets to control them."

* For a fuller exposition see the early chapters of "Education towards Freedom", by Frans Carlgren. Lanthorn Press, East Grinstead, Sussex.

Siegfried Rudel is co-principal of Peredur Home School.

Education in our Cities

A group of teachers and parents meets 3-weekly to study and discuss Rudolf Steiner's ideas on child development and education in relation to the needs of present day city children, and in the light of current educational theory and practice. Next meetings: Saturday, June 18th—The Four Temperaments; Saturday, July 9th—Peter Clark: The Nine-year-old. Time: 7.30 pm. Place: 8 Eastfield Road, London E.17 (near Walthamstow Central tube). Tel: 01-521 0188. All teachers and parents welcome.

Leaders of the Plough

The curriculum as prophecy . . .

by R. BRIEN MASTERS

It is only too easy to think of a school curriculum as something on paper, something parents and teachers keep tucked amongst their atlases and dictionaries, or pinned to plaster-board: one large master-plan, with the geography for twelve-year-olds, or the art for the adolescent, or even astronomy, arithmetic and music—the once well-fed beings of the liberal arts—all padlocked with their feet in the stocks of diagrammatic rectangular columns. A school curriculum, however, is really more of a forecast—at its best, a reliable prophecy. Through it, the teacher knows when to expect the violent storms of idealism-gone-wrong, or the clear blue skies of fairy-tale days (with their weepy showers soon washed away), or the doldrums of body-weighted soul-boredom. And the marginal notes may tell him how the classroom farers who have preceded him have, in fact, fared. You cannot ice-break the Baltic in a Welsh coracle any more than you can triumph round the Cape in a rapid-conquering canoe or picnic on the Cam in an air-craft carrier.

The teacher stands with his lesson preparation deck-solid beneath his pedagogical feet and thence steers his course through the classroom intangibles. If a primary teacher, he basks in the permanent yet changing after-glow of crimsons and golds and scarlets left by each child's sun as it dips below its spiritual horizon. But delightful though this lingering red-sky-at-night is for both teacher and parent, the once-upon-a-time eight-year-old dreaminess must change. In due course, his wits will need sharpening as he wakes up; and, as he grows down his will-power needs direction and motivation towards the substances of earth and what is living in them, as well as towards the brothers and sisters of

humanity who throng at his side.

Maybe, at some significant moment of adolescence, the teacher will bring the essence of this through Wordsworth's: 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality' for the young person to live into with the tender light of his dawning consciousness. Somewhat earlier, no doubt, will be brought an image of that fading past world through the advent of the first internal combustion engine honking its oily way over the shuddering market cobbles of a cathedral city. But, in this *primary school age* the teacher will seek for something more akin to the child's natural relation with nature; akin to his worn-on-the-sleeve peasant-joy; akin to his immediate response to nature's moods, to her seasons and her munificence. The farmer's hay-wain couldn't have moved without the wheelwright's skill in those days of the horse, dangerously nostalgic for some, when the land was in good heart, in the days before the innocent weed was mown down by the weapons of chemical warfare.

In the working-team of shire-horses symbol and reality are rolled into one: strength and nobility spoke through their every movement; the dark earth was turned towards the light; fertility came through unflagging toil; man was served through the dignity of animal. The knight of old—as well as the legendary Arthurian, bent on ousting evil and sorcery—was mounted on such creatures. And in the image of the 'sword become plough-share', the youngster—still borne on the crest of the Divine Father-principle—may catch a glimpse of the Christology which he is yet to meet.

In autumn—the traditional time for ploughing matches, the last remnant of such by-gones, still to be seen in some districts—



Nine-year-old view of a ploughman 'Immediate response to nature's moods . . .'

the deciduousness of Nature calls on man to actively remember that there is that within his soul which is evergreen. Our wintry world today—torn to shreds socially, economically and spiritually by the blizzards of ingratitude—is in desperate need of leaders of the plough! Many an inner battle must be fought before swords such as destructive criticism or crushing prejudice will be laid aside for the cultivating of sympathy, encouragement, long-suffering, open-mindedness, tolerance and the love that goes the extra mile, some of the qualities, not to mention his method, the teacher will need.

How many of those committed to our care have it within them—if only we can bring to healthy life the right curriculum—to be such leaders, leaders in whom the new sun-rise is flooding the valleys? For the teacher: the past man is the man of glory, but he must be helped to become an earth-citizen. Then, as the *individual* takes over the baton handed to him during the course of his education, with a burst of freedom, like Glad Day, he proclaims on his road from Damascus: ' . . . for the first man is of earth, earthy; the second is the Lord from Heaven.'

We are the joy of the ploughboy's heart;
He melts the load of our eye's heavy smart;
We trudge well-shod while he whistles and ploughs
To the dismal tunes from the rook-drenched boughs;
We snort past those lop-eared gleaners' burrows,

And breathe the richness of new-split furrows:
An acre a day
We plod without trouble!

Young shaver; bend again, lean again, tread again,
Guide us through the ocean of the mist-gold stubble.

We are the pulse beneath Autumn's rough hide,
Measuring the fallows with dignity's stride;
Gliding the steel through its cold, clammy bed,
Toppling the roots for the frost's winter bread,
Plunging our hooves in the streaming light,
Threading earth's loom with furrows bright:
Champing we stand!

Stately we toil!
O dark earth; turn again, grow again, green again,
Glisten in the stillness of the share-pledged soil.

We are the memories of knights of old,
Who rode into battle with sword-steel bold;
These face-brasses echo the clang of the shield,
This shaft is the lance on the mud-stubbed field,
These blood-matted fetlocks with dew are washed clear,
This plough the bright Easter of Friday's red spear:

Earth's furrow is cleft!
The meal is begun!
O young hearts; mount again, ride again, fight again,
Strengthen yourselves with the birth of the Sun.

(R.B.M. Written for nine-year-olds).

Botany Alive

FRANCES WOOLLS explores the living totality of the plant with 17-year-olds

In schools generally today most pupils go through a course of biology, which will include studies of plants and animals in their natural habitats, as well as detailed study of structure in relation to the functioning of life processes. What one wonders is whether an abiding love and concern for Nature and the Earth are engendered by these biology lessons with their usual emphasis on dissection and microscopic work.

The curriculum of a Steiner School suggests courses on botany and zoology in classes XI and XII (age 16+ and 17+). Here is the teacher's opportunity to introduce these maturer students first to the world of the plants and then to the world of the animals, and to show their dependence on each other and man's dependence on both and his increasing responsibility for what happens in the biosphere.

Recently I gave a course on botany to a class of 16 and 17 year-olds in New York State, USA. There were in all twenty-two young men and women, of mixed ability, and we could reckon on having the first two hours each day for three weeks for our studies.

If one is to experience the plant world, even a fragment of it, one must bring one's powers of observation to bear on the living plant and emphasise its connection with the Earth. Repeated looking at a particular plant over its period of growth from seed to fruit will foster intuitive powers of comprehending, which help us to gain a deeper understanding of the living world. So I began by giving each

student an *Ageratum* plant, one in which the inflorescence had yet to develop, and suggested that the plant should be potted, taken home and situated where daily observation would be possible. From time to time drawings would be made, showing the unfolding of the leaves, the lengthening of the stem and emergence of the flower buds.

Meanwhile in the lessons we discussed the significant parts of the shoot — the node, where leaves and side shoots develop, the internode where there is contraction and a lengthening of the stem. We drew attention to the central axis, around which there is often a spiralling of stem and leaf arrangements. We had other plants in the room, notably many *Cleome spinosa*, whose magnificent inflorescence, in shades of pink, was already in bloom. During the days that followed we developed the theme of metamorphosis, showing as Goethe first did, the prime importance of the green leaf, and how all other parts of the shoot are modifications of the leaf principle — cotyledon, bract, tendril, sepal, petal, stamen and carpel. Sometimes the carpels may be joined to form a leaf-like pod, as they are in *Cleome spinosa*, or in the velvety pod of *Wisteria* and the familiar peas and beans. The discovery of such transformations leads to a fascinating study, but even more significant is the thought-structure comprising the living totality of the plant as an organic process of interpenetrating formative forces. This Goethe achieved, as Rudolf Steiner points out in his book "Goethe the

Scientist", by the fruitful combining of idea and experience.

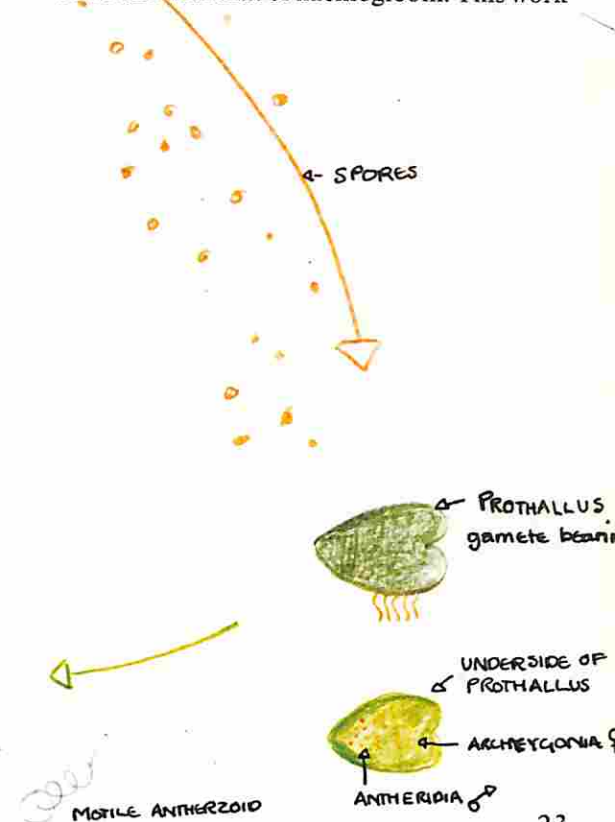
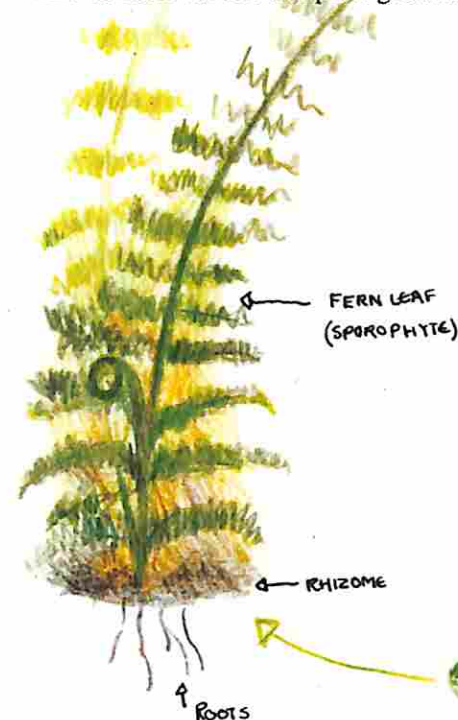
Besides the continuing observation of the single growing plant selected, study was extended to the secondary woodland surrounding the school. This led on to descriptions of the plant covering of the earth as a whole — how it is in desert regions, in swampy lowlands, on the prairies, and on the sea-ward slopes of the Sierra Nevada mountains, for instance, where one meets such a tremendous growth of stately pine trees, often attaining 200 feet in height.

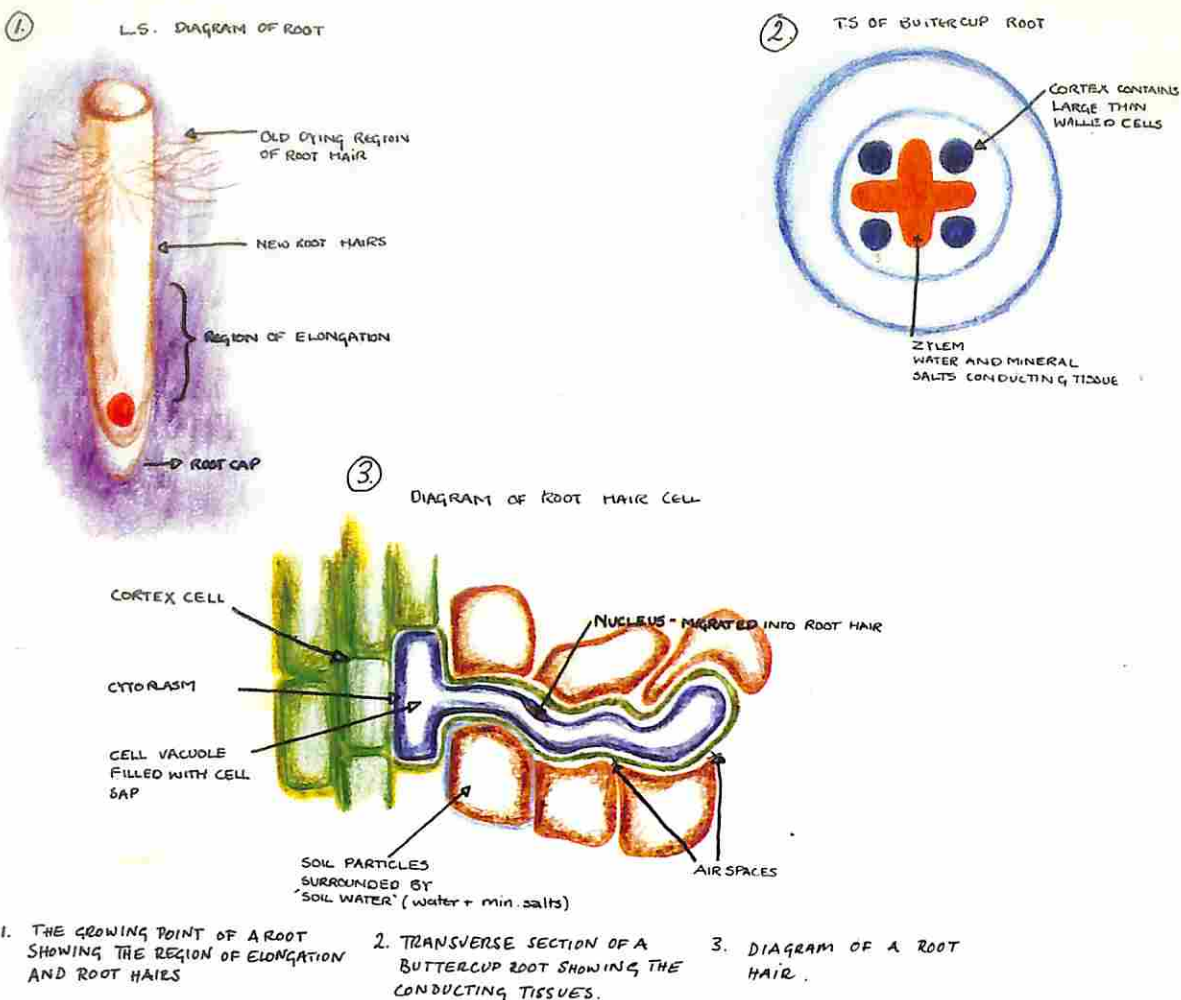
There were other lessons where we studied the characteristics of the trees of the neighbourhood, and noted the leaf transformations that occur in the sassafras, in red mulberry and in the ivy that climbs the trees. This change of shape in the leaf can also be seen in delphinium, buttercup, celery-leaved crowfoot, sowthistle etc. An interesting change of form can be seen in the thick aggregate fruit of *Magnolia grandiflora*. The individual pods are attached to the elongated receptacle, freeing the red seeds which amusingly hang by a thread. One morning we went to look at the rampant growth of the

climbing star cucumber (*Sicyos angulatus*) finding its way along the ground in great lengths, up telegraph poles and over trees. Its fruit is a solid green star.

I wanted my pupils every morning to experience another example of plant growth, to live in it intensely and at the same time to be given enough help with technical terms to find a common way of comparing notes with other folk interested in botany. There was great interest in the subject of pollination and the relation of the form of the flower to the form of the visiting insect. We contemplated the immense task which bees, wasps, butterflies, moths, beetles and flies carry out in bringing about cross pollination; and what an enormous debt we humans owe to these creatures. The details of fertilisation as revealed by the microscope my class found fascinating.

We certainly also drew on the microscope for our detailed studies of leaf, root and stem structures, emphasising the differentiation of plant tissues and how these are related to function. It is important to bring out the role of chlorophyll and interesting to compare its structure with that of haemoglobin. This work





led naturally to the significance of cell division, and a detailed consideration of those wonder-evoking processes which are continually taking place in mitosis and meiosis.

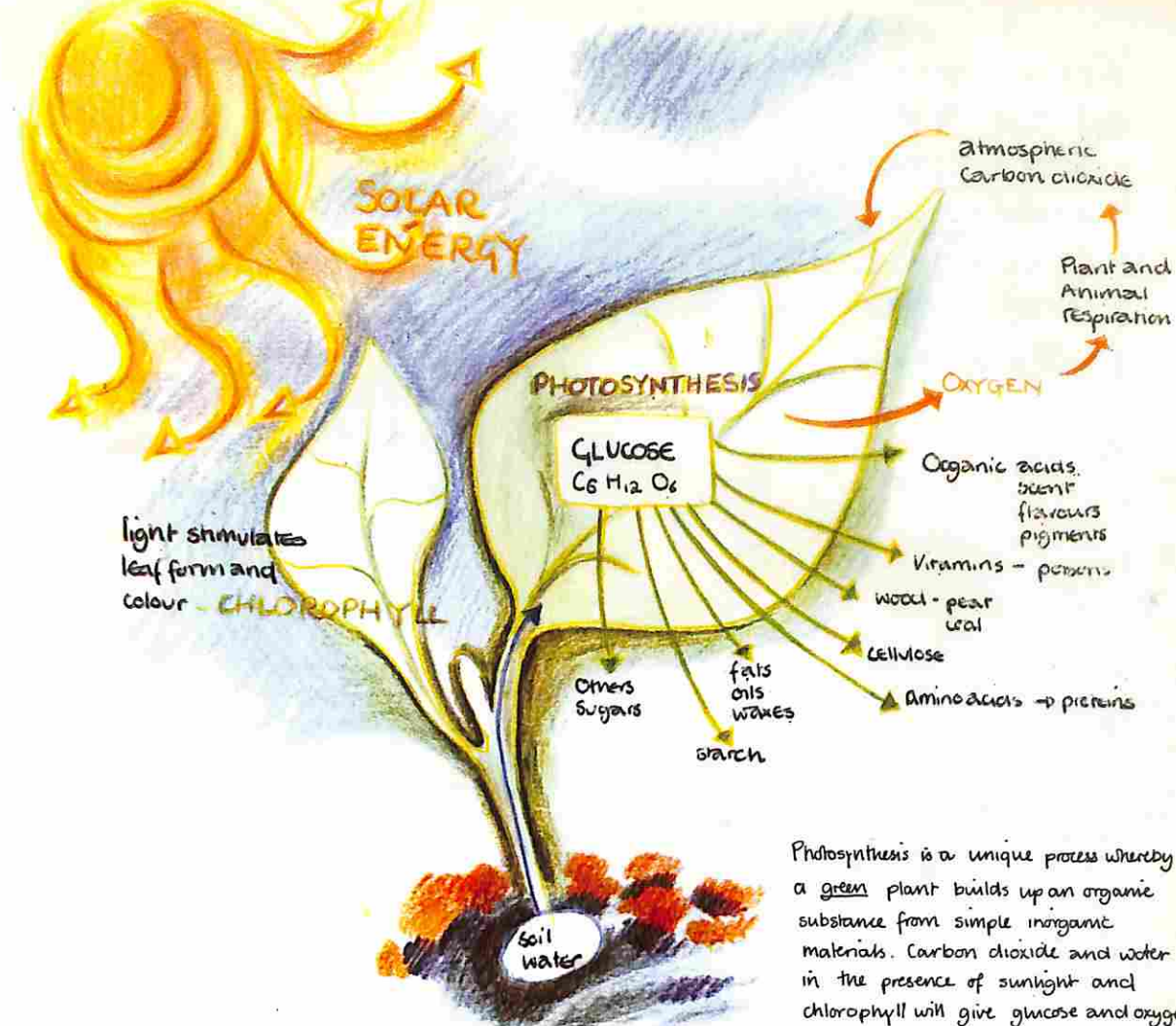
Another phase of the course was an introduction to the way in which plants are named and classified, introduced with a brief sketch of Linnaeus. We looked at the characteristics of some representative families, and then turned our attention through several days to the non-flowering plants. What a different experience it is to observe in turn the algae, the mosses, the ferns and then the great conifer trees and to learn something of their life histories. To come again to the grasses and the grains, and realise the importance of the soil in which they grow — that soil which Prof. N. Berrill in his book "Biology in Action" describes as 'precious beyond all estimate'. In

other botany courses I have found time to do some practical work with pupils in making soil chromatograms, showing a way of testing the quality of a soil other than a quantitative analysis of the humus content.

Practical experiments on photosynthesis and transpiration also have their place, leading to the realisation that these are world processes.

During this botany course of three weeks all pupils made drawings and notes and wrote essays, the beauty and quality of the work often testifying to the interest aroused. In addition, from discussions in class, students came to realise in a fundamental way that as human beings we have our roots in nature and are utterly dependent on the growing plants.

At seventeen they were mature enough to have a critical look at some of the current practices in agriculture, which tend towards



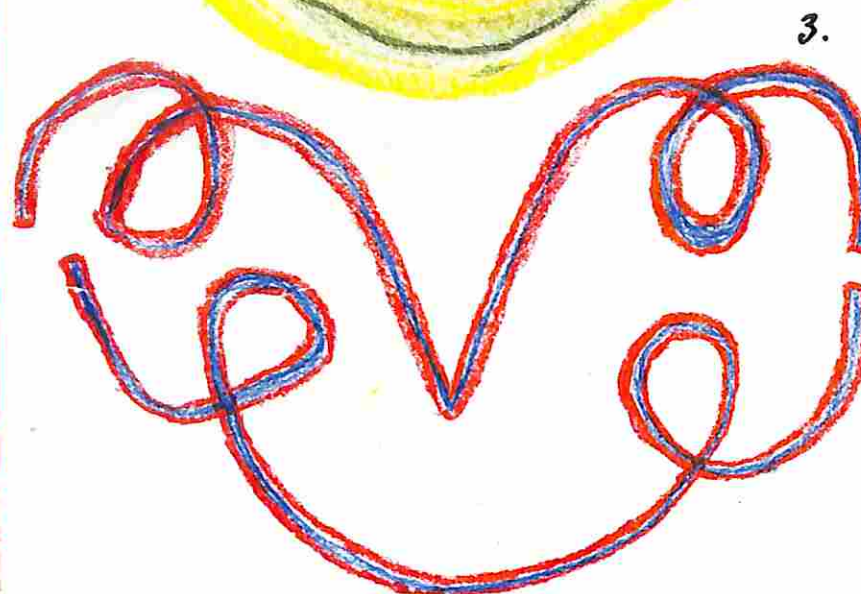
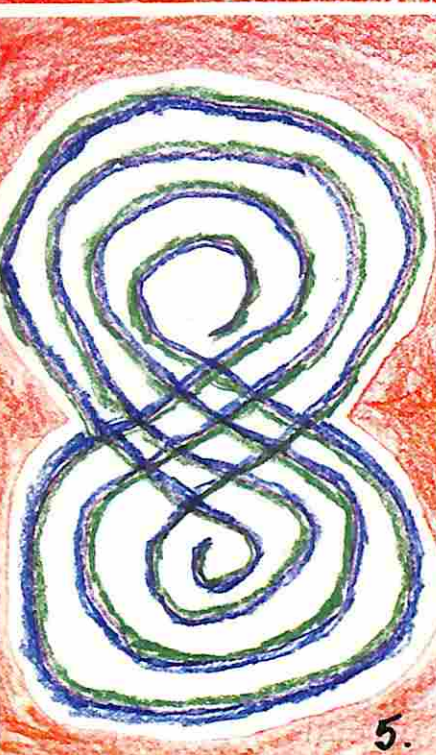
upsetting the balance in nature, especially with regard to insects; and to appreciate the efforts of pioneers in the Bio-dynamic methods of farming and gardening. It did not come as a surprise to some of them that recent experiments confirm what people knew intuitively in former times that the moon and even the planets influence plant growth. Not only have the plants an intimate connection with the sunlight around them and the soil beneath them, but the water all over the Earth, having a connection with the Moon, distributes the lunar forces in the ground and these work from below into the plants. Lunar forces work formatively in the plant saps. Young people sense that the time has come when we need increasingly to turn our attention, through experiments carried out scientifically, to the working of cosmic forces upon the life processes.

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Reprinted from the British Homoeopathic Journal. Oct. 1973, Jan. 1974, April 1974.

Form drawing exercises are related to age-levels:

1. Seven-year-old
2. Eight-year-old
3. Nine-year-old
4. Ten-year-old
5. Eleven-year-old



Geometric Form Drawing

PROFESSOR EARL OGLETREE *looks at a therapeutic system unique to the Waldorf curriculum*

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), founder of the Waldorf Schools' movement, developed a therapeutic system based on form drawing which is preventative and remedial in nature. One of Steiner's basic principles of learning was to let the child experience concepts and forms before he was able to learn and understand them, i.e., allow the child to experience geometric forms and shapes through movement in space, and drawing patterns by imitating the teacher, before he writes letters and numbers or knows the names and relationships of geometric forms. Steiner was cognizant of the stages of child development as they unfolded in the growing child. He believed in "fitting the curriculum to the child, not the child to the curriculum" and felt that intellectual learning — reading, etc. — should be delayed until the child is maturationally ready. He advocated that reading be gradually introduced through a method compatible with the child's natural learning style and development. For example, the primary and elementary school child (pre-12-year-old) should first learn and experience a subject through motor and emotional involvement, which gradually leads to understanding or cognition. In other words, the child later

grasps intellectually what he first experienced in the psychomotor and affective realms.

The Waldorf teachers, using a kinesthetic, action-loaded approach to intellectual subjects, involve the child first in the realm of impulse and emotion, which then gradually leads into knowledge and skill. (The task here is not to explicate the rather complex theory of learning of Steiner but to indicate the approach.) Steiner emphasized the "doing," the physical activity, as it relates to and develops cognition, in contrast to developing the intellect in isolation. Steiner (1964) stated:

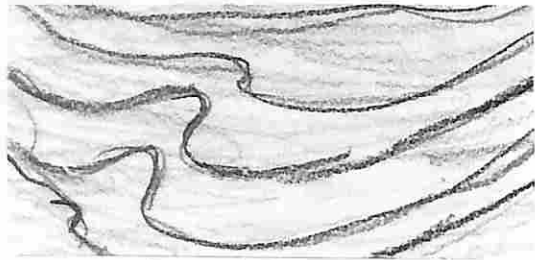
The less we train the intellect directly and the more we aim at treating the whole being in such a way that out of the movement of the limbs, out of the dexterity the intellect will evolve . . . Learning to think directly through the head is not the kind of thinking that will last him a life time. He will become thought tired later on. But if, on the other hand, he has to do actions with his own body which need to be thought out first, this will develop the thinking in the proper manner. (pp. 82-83).

Abstract learning without experiential involvement is a foreign element in Steiner education. Art, for example, permeates the curriculum as a medium of expression in all subject areas. Since young children have an imaginative (non-abstract) consciousness and their thinking is pictorial (concrete operational), every effort is made to present the subject matter pictorially.

There are 150 Steiner or Waldorf Schools located in 18 countries, including 15 in the United States, based on the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. In addition, 123 schools and residential homes for the mentally handicapped have been established by Steiner's students and followers; some of these schools are known as Camphill Schools.

Rationale for Form Drawing

Since the primary school child is an active emotional being, form drawing plays an important part in the teaching of reading. In the Steiner schools form drawing precedes learning to write, and writing precedes learning to read. Steiner's educational process is from movement to rest, from the active to the passive, from the psychomotor to the cognitive. The introduction to writing and reading proceeds as follows: The teacher, for example, wishes to introduce the letter *W*. She begins by telling a fairy tale about a fisherman and describes vividly the movements of the seas and the boats in the waves. She gestures and makes drawings of the shapes of waves, indicating their hollow and wavy forms (Baravalle, 1942). Then the children



pronounce the words "water and waves." She illustrates how the initial sounds are written through a simplified drawing of a wave. The children make the wavy motion in the air with both hands, then run (trace) the form or wave drawn on the floor by moving their whole body and by arm gesture. Then the movement or form is condensed into a drawing which is simplified until it becomes the conventional sign or letter *W*. After a sufficient



number of letters are learned in this manner, they are transformed into words and sentences. The children copy the letters and sentences in their notebooks, which they profusely and carefully illustrate in bright colors (no textbooks are used in the Steiner Schools;

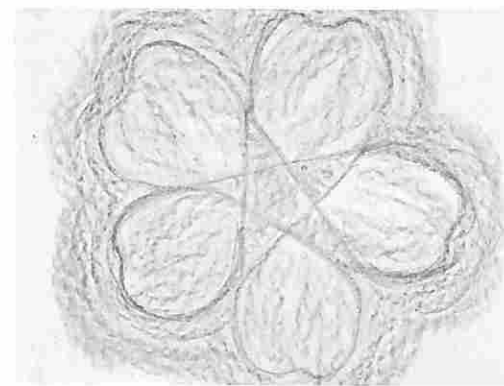
children make their own copy book on each subject). Their art work is mature; just as children have an IQ, they also possess an AQ — artistic quotient. Through this approach, the learning process begins with gross activity (movement and gesture), which is then gradually transformed and reduced from the whole body to the hands, through the affective domain, and thence to thoughts and concepts.

This co-ordination of motor movement and mind — or, more accurately, the control of mind over motor movement — is the basis of Steiner's perceptual-motor development program. Certain form-drawing exercises (free-hand) are recommended for each age level, according to the children's development and maturity (Frohlich, 1965). Steiner believed that cognitively controlled motor activities stimulate and awaken the child's thinking and increase his concentration span. The child learns through a cognitive style that is concrete and compatible with his development.

Unlike Piaget, Steiner explained the cognitive stages in terms of levels of consciousness in which the psychomotor, affective, and cognitive realms have their own levels of awareness. For example, we are not aware of our actual physical movements; in a sense we are not conscious of the process. For if we were fully conscious of the process, we would have difficulty moving because we could not think each action and subaction. For example, we know how to write because we have forgotten the process of writing. The perfection in the performance of a motor activity lies in the forgetting of the process. Another example is that when we are self-conscious of the activity of speaking, we stutter and make errors. Hence the process of physical movement is subconscious. In the emotional life we are vaguely aware of our feelings, analogous to our "awareness" while dreaming. Thus both the physical and emotional domains elude our conscious control and awareness. It is only in the cognitive domain that we are aware of the process, for we actually participate in the act of thinking. The control of cognition is a relative process in that there are different qualities of thinking. Preoperational is one level, con-

crete operational a higher level, and formal operational still a higher level or quality of cognition. For example, consider how difficult it is to think of the day's events in reverse or to think of one simple uninteresting object, such as a pin or paper clip, for 5 to 10 minutes, shutting out all extraneous thoughts. The meditative exercise, as just described, is more difficult and takes greater concentration or cognitive energy than does the sense-bound or sense-oriented thinking that we ordinarily do. Comparatively speaking, we can control our thinking processes — we are more aware of them than of our physical movements and feelings (Steiner, 1966).

According to Ilg and Ames (1965), the pre-7-year-old child exhibits a natural unconscious, but the voluntary inclination to copy and draw geometric forms in a sequence is determined by his maturational development — it seems to rise out of his very nature. Steiner (1966) supported Barsch's (1965) view when he stated that geometry is an integral aspect of the child's nature: "This reality is movement carried out unconsciously... [which] is due to the fact that our bone system has an essential [geometric] knowledge: but the conscious does not reach down into the bone system. The consciousness of it dies, and it is only reflected back in the [geometrical] images which man carried out in [geometrical] figures (p. 3). In other words, that which has unfolded naturally in terms of instinctive motor control becomes the basis of therapy when motor control becomes a conscious and voluntary activity.



The sequence of forms to be used is determined by the child's development and the

complexity of the form. The circle requires less concentration and voluntary control than does the wavy line; the metric forms or lines require the most awareness in order to execute the acute, obtuse, and right angles accurately, i.e., both hands and mind have to be more dextrous. Therefore, one begins where the child is in terms of his cognitive and motor control development, generally with the simplest forms—circle or linear wavy line or symmetry exercises. It is not enough that a child recognizes the forms; he must also be able to reproduce them with repetitive accuracy. This latter is the key to the method.

If a young child is left to his own devices with crayon and paper, he has an inclination to draw circles or a series of scribbling circles. He falls into an instinctive pattern of repetitiveness, an urge to move in a certain way. In other words, he has reached the limits of his creative resources, so he simply repeats certain forms in an unconscious, undisciplined manner. Here is where the therapy should begin: It is the teacher's task to step in and guide the child away from the instinctive-repetitive forms and towards new forms; in short, from the instinctive to the conscious. Kirchner (1962) stated: "This repetitive work has a diagnostic value: therapy will only start when the child has to wrestle with his crayon in order to make the correct form, and in wrestling against his own chaos (instinctive repetitiveness) lies the therapy" (p. 14). This conscious relationship between the cognitive and psychomotor process becomes a harmonizing element in the child's development. The child's struggle to gain greater conscious voluntary control over his physical activities "is comparable to the action taken by a charioteer when a horse stampedes" (Kirchner, 1962, p. 16).

Method and Application of Form Drawing

In conjunction with a writing lesson, the child consciously practices the geometric forms. Frohlich (1965) described this transition from the instinctive-repetitiveness to the conscious: "One can begin right there,

using both their liking for rhythm and their liking for the round movement. But instead of leading this movement around, to form a circle, one would form a wavy line." (p. 2).



Figure 2 shows what a child does when required to make semicircles which merge into each other in a reversed way. At each merging-point, a heightening of consciousness is required. It would be much easier to continue the movement around and around the circle. The teacher draws a wave-line on the board very slowly and with great care, trying to make each wave as large as the previous one and trying to make them along an imaginary straight line. The children copy the form on their paper in bold lines and strong colors. Frohlich (1965) stated: "Even though first graders have the tendency to copy the teacher, they will have finished their line in an instant. It is very important to aim right away at expecting their best efforts, and after a few more fast attempts the children will usually settle down and really try" (p. 2).

The point is to slow them down and motivate them to work accurately and carefully. The children are then asked to complete an entire page with the same form, keeping even margins and shapes and straight wavy forms with equal distance between forms. No guiding line or lines are used. The objective is to enhance eye-hand co-ordination, dexterity, and the ability to estimate and draw forms — in essence, to develop voluntary control over gross- and fine-motor movement. The exercise can be extended to include more unique and complex wavy forms and patterns

Sometimes repetitiveness can generate into sloppiness, particularly with the wavy linear forms which require less consciousness. If this occurs, the teacher changes the pattern to a semi-metric form (Figure 5). These forms are combinations or alternations of wavy and metric patterns.

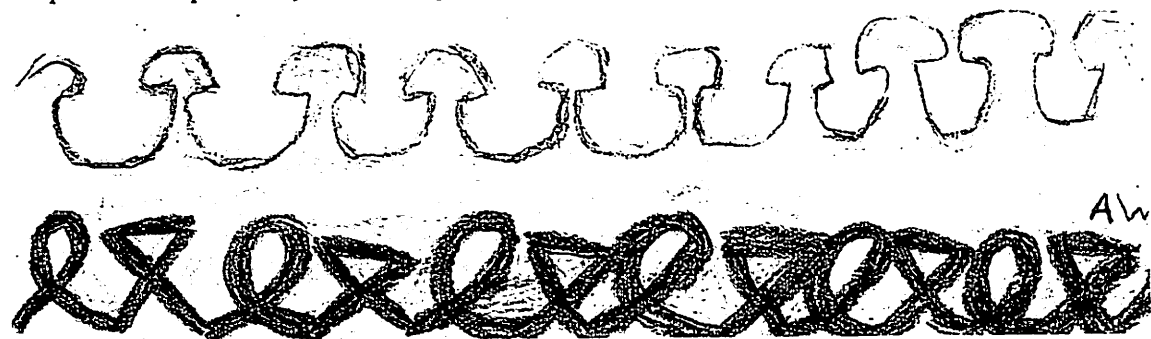
The next step moves from the semi-metric to the full metric forms. As indicated, the metric form requires more awareness and concentration. Many intellectually precocious children find the angular form easy and to their liking and can benefit from the passive rhythms of the repetitive forms. On the other hand, the child who loves to draw and is active or hyperkinetic should not be allowed to run amok; instead, his movements should be controlled and stimulated in a certain direction. Figure 6 shows selected examples of straight-line or metric forms.

The children incorporate their form-drawing exercises in writing and arithmetic lessons and use the artistic geometric forms to decorate their notebooks and to border and outline their papers and art projects.

Form-drawing patterns are then extended into circular patterns. The circle is first drawn lightly, freehand, covering the entire page; then the wavy or metric form is drawn around the circle (Figure 7). Then the children practice the forms without the guiding circle.

Metamorphosis of forms plays a major role, helping the children move from a simple form to a complex one, stimulating their imagination, and developing skill and dexterity (Figure 8).

Symmetry and mirror exercises are used with dominance-disturbed children. These perceptually handicapped children have difficulty differentiating and distinguishing direction. The following exercises (Figure 9) help in establishing a sensory right dominance



for children who tend to see words in reverse or do mirror- or reverse-writing. One begins with simple symmetry exercises in which the children have to complete the opposite half.

After this, the youngsters can practice the more complex double-symmetry forms (Figure 10).

The teacher can invent additional forms and also allow the children to do so. The symmetry exercises then lead to writing in the four quadrants: The children begin by writing a word in all four quadrants (Figure 11). The children are then assisted to leave out both lower quadrants and, last, the upper-left quadrant. According to Kirchner (1962) and Weihs (1966), children then begin to establish their reading and writing patterns in the upper-right quadrant.

Steiner postulated that geometric form drawing developed eye-hand co-ordination, controlled movement, and concentration span in children attending the Waldorf Schools. In the Waldorf Schools dynamic form drawing is taught as a prerequisite of writing and of forming letters and numbers. It forms the basis of the geometry (which is drawn freehand) programs until grade 6, when the youngsters begin using a compass, protractor, and ruler for a more formal and precise approach to plane, perspective, and projective geometry. Not only do the children gain greater voluntary control over their gross- and fine-motor systems and expand their concentration, but they also acquire a

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feeling for form, geometric relationships, and harmony. Niederhauser (1967) stated:

First of all, it is wonderful, particularly with the simplest exercises [in form drawing] of the lowest grades, to train dexterity of hands by means of Form Designing. The high demand upon intelligence, which is woven into symmetry exercises is not solved by the child with the intellect, but rather by a gentle balancing and feeling touch, a developed psychomotor activity (pp. 14-15).

SUMMARY

Dynamic form-drawing exercises can be used as a diagnostic and therapeutic tool. They can be used sequentially in terms of form types (circular, wavy or metric) and in terms of simple-to-complex constructs. Geometric forms are a continuation of the child's natural inclination to copy and draw geometric patterns during the pre-7-year-old period (Ilg & Ames, 1965). But form drawing is not merely a continuation of this skill; it is also a more conscious extension of the activity. Kephart (1960) emphasized that motor and cognitive development can be fostered through the effects of movement on perception and the effects of perception on higher thought processes. It is, in a sense, quite natural that geometric form drawing is a tool to develop cognitive and motor efficiency through the controlled, disciplined correlation of hand, eye, and thinking.

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That country is far and that
country is near.
The king of that country will watch
without fear.
He knows of a cavern, so dark
and so deep,
Where a fierce, fiery dragon doth
craftily creep.
It lurks in the darkness to pounce
on its prey
And hundreds of victims have
perished that way.

The people cry out to their king
in despair,
"Save us, O save us! 'Tis too much
to bear."
The king's royal councillor then
lifts up his voice:
"The folk must draw lots for the
sacrifice."
The king's lovely daughter speaks
out in that hall,
"I'll go to the dragon for sake of you all."

The king's lovely daughter, so
tender and fair
Is taken as victim and led to
his lair.
The people they weep as they
leave her alone.
To fight the fierce dragon there
seems to be none.
Deep from the cave comes an
ominous sound.
The roar of the monster is
shaking the ground.

The maiden is praying to
conquer her fears.
A knight in white armour with
bright sword appears.
"Take comfort, dear maiden, I
come for to fight,
To conquer the dragon of dark-
ness and might."
The dragon emerges, the maid
to devour.
Saint George he is wielding his
sword of power.

Unswerving, unyielding, a hero
is he,
And now he is gaining the
victory.
The dragon's wild will is
subdued neath his feet.
The maiden she binds him
with girdle so neat.
The dragon is mastered by
George of good will,
And led as a servant, his
work to fulfil.

The Singing-Play of Saint George and the Dragon was done 'in the round' by a class of seven-year-olds processing and chanting the pentatonic melody with musical interludes between the verses. Suitable movements suggested themselves and the whole thing grew into a kind of ritual-singing-game. On the day of the actual Festival, the Dragon was formed by children from an older class who enjoyed helping the younger ones.

Rhona Everett is an experienced classteacher at Elmfield School.

1) That country is far and that country is near. The king of that country will watch with fear. He knows of a cavern, so dark and so deep, where a fierce, fiery dragon doth craftily creep. It lurks in the darkness to pounce on its prey and hundreds of victims have perished that way.

2) The people cry out to their king in despair, — "Save us, O save us, 'tis too much to bear." The king's royal councillor then lifts up his voice, "The folk must draw lots for the sacrifice." The king's lovely daughter speaks out in that hall, "I'll go to the dragon for sake of you all" —

3) The

Archangels and Dragons Here and Now

A Michaelmas address given to Michael Hall's upper school
by FRANCES BROWN

We meet together to-day to celebrate Michaelmas 1976. We have entered the last quarter of the twentieth century. It is just two hundred years since James Watt perfected the steam-engine, and ninety years since Daimler and Benz invented the petrol engine. Now we have supersonic airliners capable of flying at twice the speed of sound, space-probes on Venus and Mars, and the ubiquitous computer entering nearly every aspect of our daily life. And I stand before you to talk about Archangels and Dragons!

What is Michaelmas? Before we can answer that question it is necessary to consider what it is to be born into this age. When I mentioned a few of the stupendous achievements of Mankind I did so, not by way of congratulation nor of commiseration. These things form part of our world — and that is as it should be — as long as they do not in turn form Man. We are all familiar with the story of Frankenstein, the monster invented by a scientist but which got out of control and terrorised its own maker. However, that sort of danger seems too far-fetched to be one that need bother us . . . But, what if the threat was far more subtle than a mass revolt of the robots? What if the *sort of thinking* that goes into making the machine took over the whole power of thought of the human being? Can you imagine what would happen if, instead of experiencing living forms of thought, man worked exclusively in terms of formula and theory? In other words, men stopped experiencing phenomena with all their senses and cut themselves off from the

realisation that William Blake described in his Song of Freedom:

*"Everything that lives is holy . . .
Each grain of sand
Every stone on the land,
Each rock and each hill,
Each fountain and rill,
Each herb and each tree,
Mountain, hill, earth and sea,
Cloud, meteor and star
Are men seen afar."*

— and instead, looked at all things in terms of breaking them down to see of what bits and pieces their bodies were assembled. The tragedy of this situation is clear in the language used by a gentleman writing to a national newspaper two weeks ago to defend the practice of using pithed frogs in classroom experiments. He defines a pithed frog as one "that has been first anaesthetised, after which a needle is inserted into the frog's skull and manipulated so as completely to destroy the brain." Moreover, he explains that he had never personally pithed a frog — "at school it was always done by the master out of sight of the pupils," and at university the frogs used in physiology practicals had always been pithed by a trained technician prior to the experiment. He points out that he did not perform the experiment where legs were pulled off a living insect, and adds 'Here again I would not think that the insect was conscious of any pain during the experiment.' He concludes "All of the biology teachers that I have known have

been most kind to animals, especially when it is necessary to terminate their life."

What I found so profoundly disturbing about this letter was not simply what the scientist was doing but the suggestion as to what he was becoming.

In my cottage at this time of year the unwary may be startled to hear sudden reverberating thuds. It is surprising how solid and echoing a sound is made by falling apples.

*"The apples falling like great drops of dew
To bruise themselves an exit from themselves."*

*And it is time to go, to bid farewell
To one's own self, and find an exit
From the fallen self."*

So wrote D.H. Lawrence. Well, one is familiar with the Harvest Festival aspect of Michaelmas, seeing Autumn as "the season of mist and mellow fruitfulness" and rejoicing in the fact that "all is safely gathered in." One way of looking at Michaelmas is in terms of the round of Nature, and one can become attuned with the physical seasons. Of what does this round of Nature consist, and what is the place of Michaelmas in it? Autumn is the time of physical decay and death. Winter is the time of burial. Spring is the time of re-birth. Summer is the time of maturity. Autumn/Death; Winter/Burial; Spring/Re-birth; Summer/Maturity.

If we consisted only of physical matter that would be our ceaseless round until the Winter of our individual lives. In this sense our youth is Spring. Youth is the Spring-time of your life, and you have the Summer-time of your maturity to look forward to, and perhaps it is as well not to think too much of the inevitable Autumn beyond — the gradual failure of physical powers and eventual (dare we mention it?) Death.

If we consisted of the time and space of the physical body this would be our round, and in Autumn we should come together to give thanks for what we have received and to prepare ourselves for the darker, less propitious time ahead. Not much cause for celebration, one might think. After all, in growing up one is merely conforming with the

Laws of Nature. One might almost say that growing up is "kids' stuff"! But, what if it were possible — to choose what one would become — to revolt against repeating the same dull round over again — not to be limited to that objective reality which stems from the stimulus of certain coarser senses — to take advantage of that "tide in the affairs of men which, if taken at the flood, leads on to fortune"?

That sounds very well, but what are these tides in the affairs of men, and how do we chart them? Not by following the round of Nature in its denser forms, but by regarding it in its more subtle aspects — and here we meet the role of the Archangels. We must now look at the year as it is experienced by the Human Spirit.

Let us start with the festival with which we are most familiar — *Christmas*, the time of Birth. With the birth of the Divine Child, the Ideal is brought into the world.

Easter is the time of Self-Surrender, witnessed in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Mid-Summer is the time of Consummation — when the human spirit is consumed most fully in the outward manifestation of life. Think of St. John's Bonfire — the human endeavour needed to build up the stack, and then the roaring consumption of the fuel by the flame.

Then we come to *Michaelmas*, the point between mid-Summer and Christmas, the seeming-dying time, with Man, having drawn strength from the Summer Sun, now "dying to the world" in order that the flame can be kindled from within.

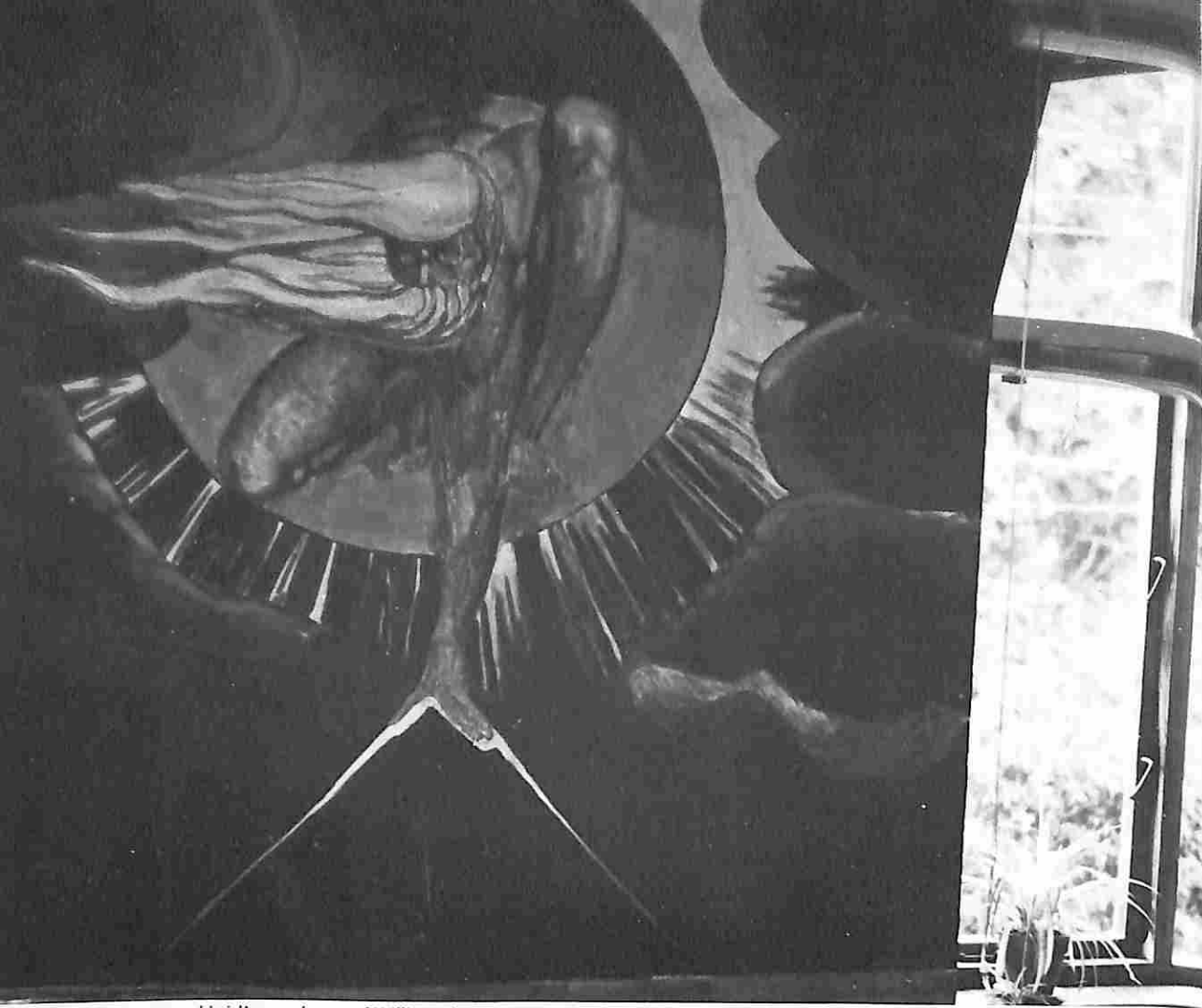
There are Four Archangels attributed to these Four Festivals of the Christian Year. *Archangel Gabriel* embraces Christmas — the *Birth of the Ideal*.

Archangel Raphael embraces Easter — *Self-Surrender for the Ideal*.

Archangel Uriel embraces mid-Summer — *Consummation of the Ideal*.

Archangel Michael embraces Michaelmas — *Conception of the Ideal*.

And now we can see why there is special need for a Michaelmas Festival in our age,



A seventeen-year-old girl's mural copy of William Blake's 'Ancient of Days'.

'Everything that lives is holy...'

because Michaelmas is the time of the courageous conception of the Truth, without which no Ideal can be born. We are living at a crucial time, Man having become so involved in the material world that it is more difficult than ever to seek within for the essential, re-vivifying potency that will bring about the New Birth.

So, what are we celebrating at Michaelmas? We are celebrating the fact that we are FREE — free to choose that we will to become. We do not have to be triggered by our environment, our status, our image of ourselves. Every individual is as free as the next to form a conception of the truth — if he can but realise that freedom. The key put in our hands at Michaelmas is the story of Michael and the Dragon, but the important thing to notice is

that Michael subdues the dragon and does not slay it. We have to seek out the dragon within us, and show it who is master.

How would I characterise the dragon of today? To make a list of moans about the evils of the present day (noise, pollution, the rat-race, permissiveness etc. etc.) just leaves one feeling weaker. It is, in fact, a self-indulgence — and *self-indulgence* is how I would characterise the dragon that is to be tamed by the Sword of Michael. When the apple thuds from autumn trees the bruise thus made is the exit for the seed that will bring the new life. If we duck the major issues of our time, because we do not like to be bruised, no new life can be revealed. If we dodge the big issues in our personal lives, because we do not like to be bruised, then no new life can flow through —

and yet, how much of our energy goes into boosting our own idea of ourself or trying to "live up" to the idea that we think someone else has of us!

In recent days I have been listening in the corridors and classrooms of our school trying to pick up mutterings of the Dragon. Here are some of his key-phrases that I heard:—

"I can't stand so-and-so..."

"I can't stand what-you-may-call-it..."

"It's not fair that I..."

"Well, it wasn't **only** me..."

"I don't see why **I** should have to..."

"I don't see why we **should**..."

"What does it matter, anyway?"

"I couldn't care less."

"Anyhow, it's none of my business —"

"It's just his hard luck!"

Of course, there are plenty more, but what are they all pointing to? That I think I matter and that you should care, whereas the truly individual person stands foursquare on the principle:

I care — and — You matter.

They identify not with the bruise, but with the forces of life that stream through the apple.

In this way the bruise of Michaelmas is not a pain but an opportunity for the human spirit to flow into and redeem its environment. As we go about our tasks it is not just what we are doing, but what we are becoming that is important. At this season above all we should realise that we are free to choose what we will to become, and to become that which we will.

Frances Brown is a Class Guardian and history teacher at Michael Hall.

Announcements

HENRY GOULDEN LIMITED—Bookselling & Publishing. This company, formed in 1976, exists primarily to promote the publication of works concerned with Anthroposophy. Future publications include: *The Second Man in Us* by Maria Roschl-Lehrs 'Jenseits' the latest title by Johannes Hemleben *George Adams: Interpreter of Rudolf Steiner* compiled by Olive Whicher. Publications already in print include *Rudolf Steiner* by Dr. Hemleben. The company also has the sole distribution in the U.K. of the American paperback imprint—STEINER-BOOKS.

The Bookshop, with a comprehensive stock, is situated at:

5 West Street, East Grinstead, Sussex to which address all enquiries should be made.

STAR & FURROW is the journal of the Biodynamic Agricultural Association, and is published twice yearly 40p. (Free to Members).

The BDAA exists for the practice and promotion of the agricultural principles taught by Rudolf Steiner. The function of Star & Furrow is to encourage the free exchange of ideas and experiences among those who work with, or are interested in, those teachings.

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THE ROWAN TREE is a friendly craft-, art-, bookshop which was opened in 1975 and has been making available to the public a wide range of artistic items for everyday use and making known the work of Rudolf Steiner. There are wooden toys from Russia, Woodpecker Toys, New Knowledge books, lyre-music, bees-wax candles, Stockmar wax and crayons, Weleda Wala and Holle products, crystals, hand-woven clothing, etc., etc.—at 15 Cotham Hill, BRISTOL BS6 6LD, phone 0272 36786.

Examinations Examined

by H. L. HETHERINGTON

Examinations have loomed so large on the school horizon for so many years that it is difficult to put them firmly in the place where they belong. A little thought only is necessary to do this. They are a means of assessing the point of development of a pupil. As such they must be so organised that they are objective and as far as possible self-checking. So long as they perform this function they can take any form. It is a thousand pities that in the minds of most parents, children and, alas, educators, the form they assume is of ferocious memory tests carried out under alarming conditions and trained for rather like a hundred yards sprint.

Steiner schools, with their own curriculum for all the twelve years of schooling, find external examinations an intolerable intrusion into their planned development of subjects, each with its own experience to bring to the growing minds and hearts. Nevertheless public examinations have to be studied for and space is made in the curriculum of the upper three classes to prepare the special, and rather artificial skills demanded by the examiners.

There are, of course, many educators now who are busily engaged on examining examinations and planning quite a different method of assessment. The Head Teachers' Association of Scotland, for instance, has issued a report, entitled *Pupils in Profile*, in which they suggest a much wider basis of assessment than has hitherto been current. The Steiner schools do not use internal

examinations as such and pride themselves on being able to make accurate assessments whenever necessary born out of long personal knowledge of the pupil concerned.

However there is a danger here, which the more conventionally minded will not be slow to point out. One important aspect of performance is the ability to produce a result on demand and within a certain time. Literacy and numeracy especially involve the production of work of a sufficient standard when asked for, not when the pupil feels like it. It is in this kind of test that many Steiner schools are weak. Their natural distrust of examinations and all the manifest injustices that go with them has prompted them all too often to eschew the classroom test in which each individual within a set time is asked to produce a concentrated piece of considered work. Such tests provide vital evidence for assessment and do no harm. Indeed they provide just that element of anxiety which is conducive to the best work.

Having said this, let us hasten to add that such tests can be so administered that they do not assume an undue importance in the mind of either examiner or examinee. They are just another piece of evidence necessary to fill out the whole picture. Such monitoring of achievement at regular intervals would best be carried out by teachers other than those who have been responsible for the classwork to be tested. It can be done very discreetly, especially in the case of the younger pupils, and then perhaps more

obviously as they grow older.

So much for internal tests within the schools themselves and for the information of the teachers of those schools. There remains the thorny problem of assessments useful to employers and those bodies for whom it is vital to know something about the intellectual and practical achievements of the young people coming under their aegis. At the moment such tests are provided by the Universities and were originally tests for entry into those Universities. Since they were the only public examinations in existence, many other bodies used them for entry into *their* organisations, however unsuitable they may have been for this purpose! As a result the entire curriculum of the upper classes of all the schools in the country, with the sole exception of the Steiner schools, has been dictated by the Universities in a quite unwarranted manner.

The solution to this absurd anomaly is clear. Schools should be allowed to devise their own curriculum and then invite external monitors to see whether this curriculum has been adequately followed and assimilated. Schools, in other words, should set their own examinations in their own way, on their own material, ensuring all the time, in consultation with the external monitors, that the evidence is trustworthy and the work presented carried out under acceptable conditions.

A difficulty remains that it would be hard to arrive at comparable standard of achievement, when very widely different curricula have been followed. This is not insuperable, however, and would indeed be a fascinating task for the monitors concerned. After all, the present 'O' level standards in literacy and numeracy are plain enough and fair enough and could be easily assessed in any curriculum offered. As for the rest, the humanities and the sciences, such general knowledge as should be possessed by an 'O' level student in various disciplines could be laid down. Here the operative word is 'general'. One senses all too often, even in 'O' level papers, the fussy pedantic detail which has to be

stuffed into a young head for the few months before an examination, only to be forgotten by the end of the summer holidays!

Such an arrangement would produce a fine wealth of differentiated curricula up and down the country and schools in time would become famous, or notorious, for the fare they offer to their pupils. The good would be imitated and the bad eliminated, to the general benefit of all! An objection might be that the body of monitors would be a veritable army, but I doubt whether it would be very much bigger than the present locust-cloud of examining bodies and their squads of paper markers, so furiously busy during the summer months of July and August. Their work could be spread over the whole year and a fruitful co-operation built up between them and the schools they serve.

Employers would be presented with certificates at various levels, equivalent roughly to the present 'O' and 'A' level examinations, but not in subjects, rather in whole curricula, involving across the board treatment of wide themes, including many disciplines in the one study. It would probably happen that the certificates from certain schools were more highly valued than those from others, but this would be because the curricula themselves were more exciting and educative, not because the academic standard as such were any higher. Indeed it would be the task of the monitoring system to ensure that academic standards were broadly comparable between schools.

Such an outline as has been attempted here may well seem futuristic and too far from current habits and expectations, but it at least has the merit of breaking away from a system which is inadequate, outdated and manifestly incapable of carrying out the job it was never designed to perform.

Hugh Hetherington is a former editor of Child and Man and retires this year from Michael Hall where he has shaped the English Literature and History curricula.

Book Reviews

RUDOLF STEINER EDUCATION

By Roy Wilkinson, Forest Row, Sussex

Roy Wilkinson has added to his series of handbooks for teachers with a further study 'Teaching English'. This covers a wide field. He opens with thoughts on the origins of language which in his own words 'may appear aphoristic', but nevertheless they stimulate the reader to consider the subject more deeply, and, as the author points out, 'if he is taking his business seriously, the teacher will seek to build up a substance in himself'.

There is detailed guidance on the content of the lessons, especially with regard to grammar which he rightly considers of great importance. There are also helpful comments on the child's changing stages of consciousness during the classteacher period.

At the end the author gives for each age from 7-14 a helpful list of stories and poems, including three examples of Old English alliterative poetry which he has ably adapted to be understandable to modern children.

It is an omission that in his suggestions for English lessons in the upper school he makes no mention of literature of the twentieth century. Many pupils at this stage long to take part in the cultural life of their time and more readily respond to modern poetry than to the romantic themes of say Tennyson or Swinburne. It would also have been helpful to have been given some suggestions for ways of

approach to the scientifically minded of the older pupils who tend to regard poetry as estranged from life. For it is just such students who, given the right content, can bring the most conscious appreciation to works of literature. However this booklet gives valuable information for teachers concerned with the history of literature in the upper school.

Roy Wilkinson has now produced fifteen of these useful guidebooks. He hopes that they will be of value not only to teachers but also to parents who can in this way share in their children's education. It would be well if this hope could be realised.

E.M.H.

MUSIC THERAPY: a new anthology

*Compiled by Lionel Stebbing
New Knowledge Books £2.95*

The interest of the teacher or remedial worker, the medical practitioner and the musician — quite apart from the general reader whose concern for present day humanity finds an echo in one or other of these professions — will be roused by the appearance of an anthology on music therapy, particularly one compiled by Lionel Stebbing. This is a volume which makes fascinating browsing, but which could equally well become a well-worn handbook. Indeed, as it has no index, these are probably the two most profitable approaches.

The table of Contents clearly indicates the form: A general introduction, followed by a section on Healing by Music in Ancient Times, then becoming more and more specific and detailed. And this changing emphasis from therapy in general, to the manifold diseases which can be helped through music, and then to the actual musical treatment finds its perfect reflection in the examples in the latter part of the book when three cases are described through the stages of symptomalogical characterisation, diagnosis and remedy. The latter section will be particularly welcome to the serious enquirer who may find that his hunger knows no bounds after the appetite has been stimulated by the first third of the book. However, it is also true to say that, although an anthology by its very nature is in danger of producing a feast of tit-bits, the meal which we find served here is in truth satisfying.

When, as a musician, one steps down from the concert platform, it can be most refreshing to find — as in this therapeutical work one does find — "O what a beautiful morning" and the 'Eroica' rubbing shoulders together in their remedial significance in different human lives; as a teacher, it is certainly an eye-opener to read how the Nordoff-Robin music therapy for example can reveal endlessly fruitful aspects of a child's nature which an education based on an I.Q. would never reach; as a therapist it is of great value to learn what can be done with the simplest musical vocabulary added to qualities of patience, love, perceptivity and careful method, yet at the same time to know that the widest possible experience would not be too great for the task in hand, the task of awakening the patient to his own being and to his environment and fellow men through the world of tone.

One is deeply grateful for the encouragement to go further which such a book gives, deeply grateful also for the generosity of its information and for the devotion of those from whose experiences such information flows. This comes over in ways such as the following: "... Here we are not concerned with tonality, but with pure sound as a means

of elementary communication; a few spiky notes on the piano answered by a phrase on the glockenspiel; a glissando on the xylophone taking part in a conversation with a pair of bongos..." (from Geoffrey Russell-Smith's "Prisoners within Themselves"). But there are many passages which give one a real insight into the 'workshop' situation. (Maybe this one springs more readily to mind than others because it is quoted twice within six pages — one of the very few slips in the volume!)

It would be well to mention the chapters on Music in Normal Education — the values, quite apart from the music played, of being a member of even the humblest of school orchestras — Music for the Elderly when the associative powers of music can play an important role and when mentally-senile tendencies can be helped, also the quick glimpse that is given of Remedial Eurythmy as a well proven method of healing, medically and scientifically yet creatively prescribed. The book closes with a short article introducing the work of Rudolf Steiner and the connection between the science of the supersensible which he stood for and Christianity in modern times and its clear connection with Reincarnation.

There is a helpful bibliography and a list of useful addresses for those interested in further enquiry or courses of training in Great Britain.

There can hardly be any teacher who can afford to ignore the world of Music Therapy and every musician would be enlightened by the therapeutical possibilities of his art: this anthology makes a valuable contribution for such people as well as for the therapist who seeks to develop his practice and deepen his impulse.

R. Brien Masters

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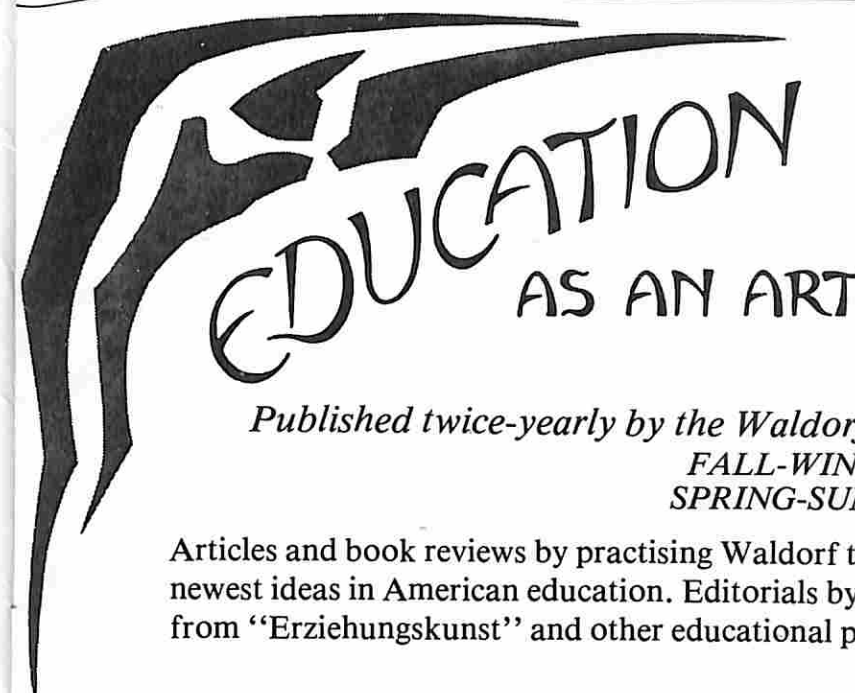


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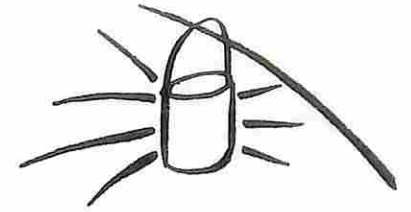
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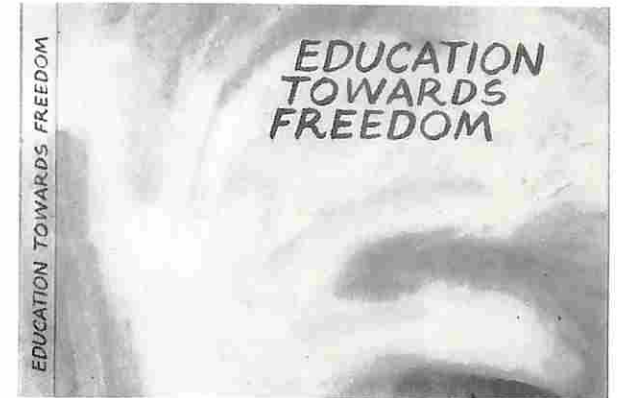
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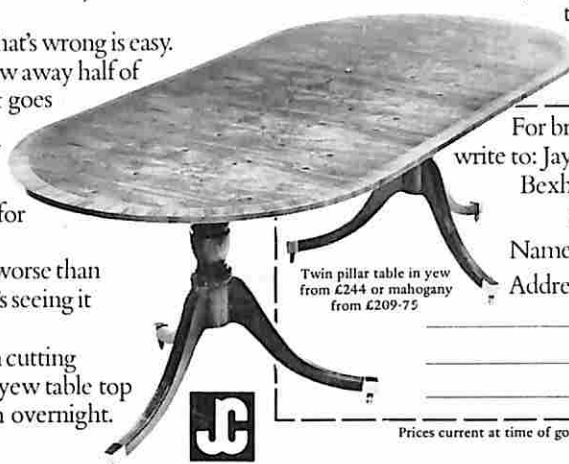
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