

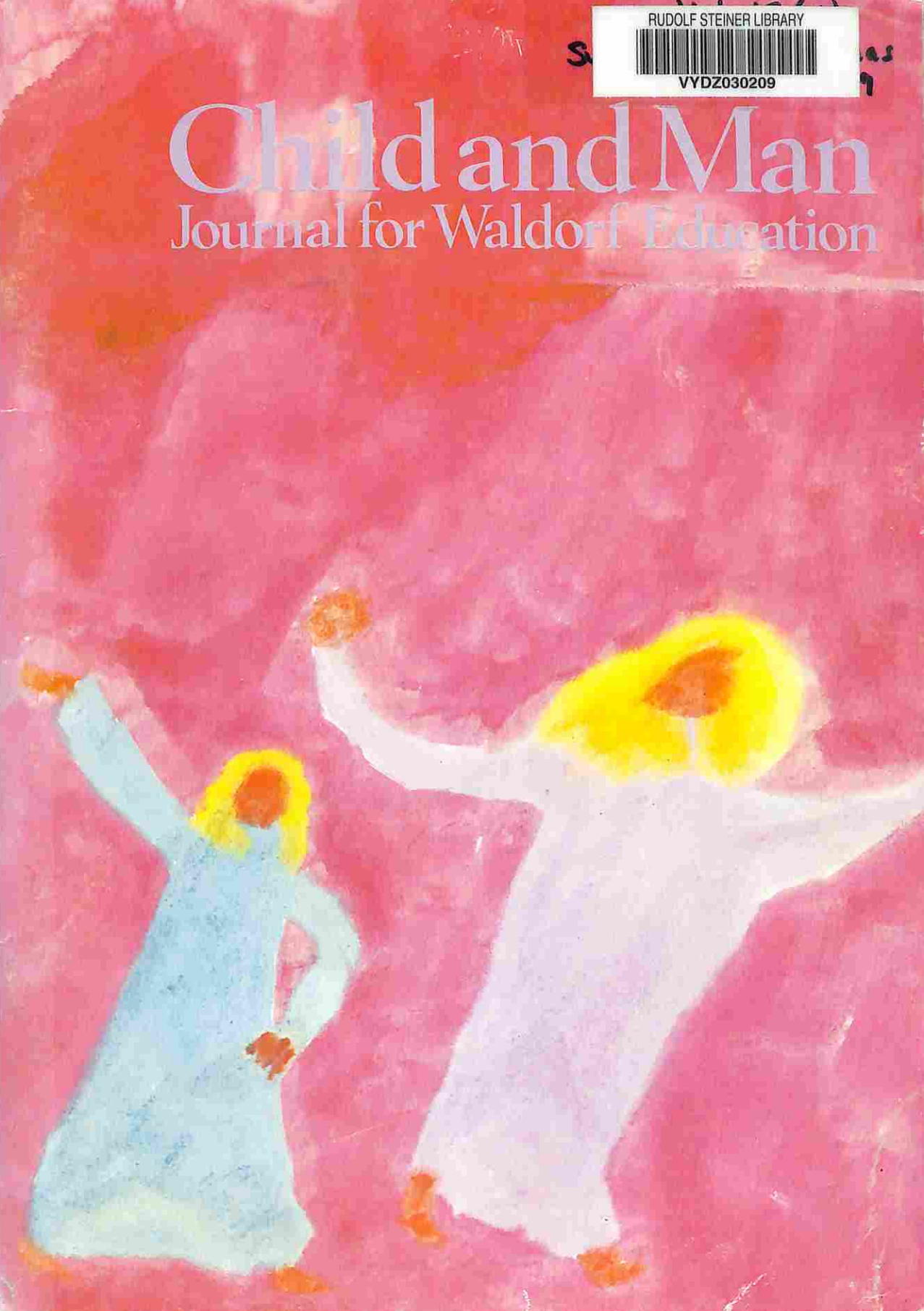
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Child and Man

Journal for Waldorf Education





Child and Man

*If men do not keep on speaking terms with children,
they cease to be men, and become merely machines for
eating and for earning money.*

JOHN UPDIKE, *A Foreword for Younger Readers, Assorted Prose (1965).*

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Editorial

Movement in Education

When children's feelings and imagination are deeply moved — by a great story perhaps — they are usually physically quite still and peaceful, and one senses that a profoundly healthy process is taking place. Teachers are, in fact, very often striving to engender in children inward activity accompanied by physical immobility. Is there an equally healthy form of physical movement? When one observes physical activity accompanied by imagination, in the small child's games for example, the health is certainly there, but too often as the child grows up physical activity loses its imaginative counterpart, and is accompanied by an emptiness of feeling and thought.

This issue's theme deals with forms of physical movement that can be united with the very best in feeling and thought. Eurythmy — visible speech and music — is potentially close to every heart and mind. Bothmer gymnastics — a means of taking in hand the human relationship with gravity, levity and the three dimensions — aims to bring feelings, thought and will into harmony.

In a recent letter to a student, Liselotte Mann, who has taught both Bothmer gymnastics and eurythmy, gives a remarkable insight into the character of these two important new educational tools:

'In the sphere of will and movement, people are often unable to observe, and distinguish between, action (*free* movement); *re*-action (involuntary response); and *adjusting* action (voluntary response). A really *free* action is, for instance, the action of orientating the body in space, from the horizontal position in sleep, to the vertical position, when awake. This orientating the body in space and observing the three dimensions of

space, as in Bothmer movements — first, in younger years, with the arms and then, when older, with the whole body — makes you realise that the movement is being brought about by your *real self within* your body and *not* by the purely *physical reaction* of your body. It therefore develops personal initiative and control from, and experience of, your spiritual reality. This is even more essential, for the type of child you are helping, than the more emotional gestures of expression in Eurythmy. Free Gymnastics develops the relationship and control of the Ego, with and over the physical body; whereas Eurythmy develops the forming of integration between the life of the soul and the vitality functions of the body (as when you blush or become pale). To use a picture: to have the impulse to lift on to his feet someone who has fallen, comes from the Ego through practising Gymnastics; and to comfort him and say something loving, from speaking and singing with your body in Eurythmy. The coordination of mind and body is developed in both activities. Gymnastics encourages physical action and Eurythmy mental action. Gymnastics gives you the skill to guide your body in space, so that you can play it in Eurythmy as a musician plays his violin or other instrument. So Gymnastics should come first and bring to inward experience the ideal human design and divine plan, through which we perceive the living qualities of the different dimensions of Space. The different movements from below to above, or from right to left, or from back to front and vice versa, relate us to quite different functions in life.'

Some of these concepts are skilfully explored in this issue's humorous and perceptive articles by Paul Matthews and Rudi Marcus. The imagination and skill required by the teacher of eurythmy are apparent in the forthright descriptions by Mary Watson and Janet Williamson.

In further issues, much more must be written on movement: in games, drama and in the classroom.

D.J.B.

Comment

Freedom and Finance in the Free Waldorf Schools

Rudolf Steiner called the school which, in 1919, he founded in Stuttgart the *Freie Waldorfschule*. 'Waldorf' referred to the company which funded the school, but 'free' referred to one of Steiner's most cherished intentions, a school free from interference by government and bureaucracy. It was obvious that a modern educational impulse could not be foisted on a tradition-bound and bureaucratic system. In Germany, even in 1979, a teacher is a civil servant who can be moved from job to job as the authorities think fit and whose choice of method, teaching aids and text books is narrowly circumscribed.

A model for state schools?

I want to ask two questions: is this freedom absolute? And: how can a free school be financed? Steiner always worked out of the given circumstances of a situation and with respect for the intentions of those who made the start of such work possible. The situation was that some workers of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory had asked him to provide their children with a humane education, and that the owner of the factory promised to finance the project. Thus the foundation impulse was eminently social and the last thing Steiner would have wanted was to found an elite school for those whose parents could afford the fees. On the contrary, there was always the hope that eventually the Waldorf School might become a model for others, possibly even for state schools. To look again at the consequences and wider implications of this foundation is today a pertinent exercise. Questions which appeared to have been answered once and for all have suddenly become a matter of debate again. In Britain, the Taylor report which Comment discussed

in the two previous numbers had a remarkable impact. In addition, the question of parental choice of school left open and but vaguely defined in the 1944 Education Act is again under scrutiny. But there is movement also on a second front: educational vouchers. Kent County Council started a pilot scheme in the Ashford district which has now been enlarged. Australia is urged to introduce the scheme and similar efforts are at work in California. But first, back to freedom.

Freedom means, of course, the freedom of the college of teachers to lay down the broad outlines of educational policy for the school which they are working in, and the freedom of the individual teacher to use his imagination, responsibility and initiative to give, within the framework of the school, his class what to the best of his understanding they need. Without imagination, responsibility and initiative a teacher cannot work within a free school. In Waldorf education, once a man understands the place of, say, class IV within the general development of a human being and is aware of what Steiner suggested in response to this particular phase, he is free to create. But a school where only the freedom of the staff is given consideration might easily move to one which is run for the benefit of the teachers, a place where a man can be educationally creative to his heart's content, but owes no wider loyalty. A Steiner school by its very existence must testify to the intentions of Steiner. It must have respect for the intentions of parents and pupils, particularly the older ones. It must respect certain obligations towards society. It must be aware of its social task. All these factors will apparently limit the absolute freedom of the teacher, until it is realised that freedom is truly achieved by giving it to one's neighbour rather than by demanding it simply for oneself. Even in the context of a free school educational bureaucracy appears to have a role to play, though, admittedly, a small one. Society has the right to demand that in a school children are treated without cruelty, that the buildings are adequate and hygienic,

that fire precautions are strictly adhered to. In a democracy it will always be a matter of debate where the boundary is drawn and the area of discretion of the individual school begins.

Space for parent initiatives

In a Steiner school two further problems are likely to arise: what is the area of discretion which the parents of the school enjoy and similarly those who provide or help to administer the money for the running of the school? A school which stresses only the freedom of the teacher will say a parent must make a simple decision: does he agree with the principles of the school and does he trust the particular bunch of teachers? If so, he should no further interfere in the affairs of the school. But another school will create space for parents' initiatives and responsibilities and in so doing will discover that many parents want to support and be involved in the affairs of the school at a number of different levels. Of course, the possibility might arise that parents become involved to such an extent that there is a danger of teachers becoming their paid servants. Again, in a free society boundaries are best left fluid and debate ongoing. But it is the joy and privilege of people believing in democracy and freedom to be creative in such sensitive social areas. The same applies to the realm of finance. A gift is the more appreciated the fewer strings are attached to it. If this is not realised it can turn into an enslavement. But what a difference between 'giving' your money to the government in taxes and not having any say in what this money is going to be used for, and asking a school whether they might not need an indoor swimming pool, finding the money, instructing the architect and finally handing over the finished work to those who will use it and whose advice had been obtained all along.

Here we touch already on our second problem: finance. Without a considerable amount of capital at the beginning and a constant inflow of money the teacher cannot operate, let alone be free. Yet how can we

make sure that he who pays the piper does not call the tune as well? This should not prove a real difficulty in Britain where three factors combined to secure the teacher's freedom, though not necessarily the social impulse behind the first Waldorf School. A number of our schools were founded in the past by the private money of one or more of the original teachers, while some of the more recent foundations arose through the Camp-hill movement sponsoring a kindred activity. Then there was the tradition of the independent school, a tradition almost non-existent in the U.S.A. or Europe. Parents looked around for a congenial school, paid their fees and left the rest to the professionals. Finally, there was the liberal tradition in Britain which left the then Secretary of the Board of Education practically powerless and devolved authority and initiative to local educational authorities and individual schools. Even today, a local education authority can defy the minister and get away with it, something unheard of in most other countries.

Finance from industry

This freedom which Steiner schools enjoy is most welcome — but it made British Steiner schools less social than their founder had intended. He opened a school for the deprived, we founded schools, largely, for the privileged. To Steiner it seemed right that the bulk of the money for his Waldorf School was to come from industry, and in the second place from people believing in this form of education. So fees could be kept to a minimum. Industry, Steiner argued, depends on education in so far as it uses skills and faculties of its workers which were developed at home and in school, and because it builds its production processes on inventions which were made possible only through an advanced educational system.

What Comment wanted to show is that a *free* school is a subtle and difficult concern. The difficulty arises from the fact that in the sixty years since the foundation of the Waldorf School we have become accustomed to the government taking on

ever wider functions, financing these out of our money and so reducing significantly the area of a citizen's discretion. This would hardly be worth saying were it not for the fact that in the English-speaking world, at least, it has becoming increasingly clear that we have reached an impasse and must start to think again. Our social, medical and educational services can no longer be improved simply by the injection of more money. We need radical re-thinking.

So let us start with the free school. A truly free school — the last few years saw the foundation of such schools other than Steiner schools — can at present function only if the teachers are prepared to pay for their freedom by working longer hours for a smaller financial reward than their colleagues within the orthodox system. Still, this is far from enough. Today, a school needs a great amount of money and this must come from outside. Possible sources are central and local government funds, friends of the school and parents. Until a short time ago the writer of Comment would have argued that our long-term hope lay in getting access to public funds while safeguarding our educational independence. This is, after all, the way British universities function, so why not widen the area of educational freedom and allow certain or all schools to work according to their definite educational principles.

Today, three considerations speak against such a policy. In both major parties extremists like Dr. Boyson have become vocal and insist on the central government laying down the law for the schools it is financing. Secondly, there is the widespread doubt mentioned above whether present-day methods can provide satisfactory services in the area which Rudolf Steiner called the cultural or spiritual sphere. The third reason is that Steiner's advice points strongly in another direction: increase the area of consciousness in your social and financial activities. Neither British industry nor the friends of our schools are, in the foreseeable future, likely to contribute more than a fairly modest percentage of our needs. So we

come back to the parents. Can we do better than charge them realistic fees, mitigated, perhaps, by a few bursaries here and there?

Area of responsibility widened

The reality simply is that a definite number of parents, or families, want Steiner schools. They realise that these schools, being free, cannot exist without their support. Equally clear it is that different families cannot offer the same amount of support. These facts must be consciously faced. The aim then is to work for a situation in which a school would say to its parents: here is our detailed budget for 1980/1. We have so-and-so-many supporting families, some of which will only be able to contribute a fraction of our needs-per-family. What can you do? Once the answers are in they will be communicated to all the parents and the school will say: This enables us to embark on stage 3 of our current building programme, or: This will only meet the needs of the school for 10 months. Unless we hear from you to the contrary we shall expect you to pay 20% more than you had initially suggested. In this way a sense of reality would be injected into the financial affairs of the school, and both for teachers and parents the area of trust and responsibility widened.

It is difficult to found a school on such radical attitudes. It is even more difficult to transform an existing school according to these guide lines. For such a school has established certain material standards and undertaken certain responsibilities which cannot possibly be abandoned. But it can be done. Particularly, if we favour a gradualistic approach and think of interim measures. Charge fees per family and not per child. Encourage parents in particular classes to take over responsibility for the total financial contribution which this class makes and leave it to them how to distribute the burden among themselves. Charge three or four different scales according to the financial resources of a family. In any case, schools will need parents ready to give up long-established lines of thought on social

and economic matters. Thus, in the long run we have to face the proposition: if we want free schools and want them to endure we shall have to work for new social attitudes, indeed, for a new social system which fosters these attitudes and so gradually change the society within which we live.

R.L.

Letters to the Editor

The Value of Imperfect Apparatus

Sir,

Having some bees buzzing in my bonnet, I hope that Child and Man will be a good place for releasing them.

Students are apt to assume Theories are the truth, not merely an intelligent guess. With research continuing on faster vibrations, I think the danger will increase (see enclosed example).

Another bee is the high cost to the country of perfect and expensive apparatus, which the student does not value and gaily smashes, not having to foot the bill. Struggling with imperfect apparatus is more educative than taking readings on perfect ones.

Alexander Findlay pointed out that Rayleigh controlled the speed of rotation by his fingers on the driving belt. A modern scientist would need rows and rows of valves.

Newton used an imperfect prism and a paper screen.

Fresnel, for a small lens, put a drop of honey in a hole in an iron plate, etc. etc., but they got their results and made history.

Child and Man in its new form looks most impressive. I hope it is circulating well.

Yours sincerely,

Olive G. Bonny
Edinburgh INJ EH1

Theories are merely Intelligent Guesses

A theory that fits all the data is not necessarily true, as the following story is made up to show:—

A country youth went to work in a seaside town, and walked to the pier every lunch-time. He noted the varying depths of the water as shown there:—7, 8, 9, 10, 12, x, x, 19, 21, 22, 21, 20, x, x, 10, 8, 7, 9, 12, x, x, 20, 21, 22, 22, 21, x, x, 12, 9, 7, 8, 10 ———, Graphed, these made an approximate sine-curve, and he could foretell future depths fairly accurately, so thought that the sine-curve showed the law. Then one day he found some excitement there. A boat had run aground and could not be refloated until high tide, which he thought would not be for a week, but bystanders assured him it would be that afternoon. He waited to return home by a later train, and saw that it was so, and that the times between high tides were just over 12 hours.

If he continued his observations for long enough, he might have found the connection with phases of the moon, but would his error ever have shown up without outside intervention?

O.B.

Rudolf Steiner School, South Devon Project

Sir,

Help! The Rudolf Steiner School South Devon has a building and lots of children but *no* teachers for the Nursery and Class 1, opening in September.

The school is located on the edge of Dartmoor and in an area of tremendous support and interest.

For further information please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Pilkington
Maryland House,
Harbertonford,
Totnes, Devon.

Tel: Harbertonford 209

What Makes Us Move?

Some surprising questions asked and answered

by RUDOLF MARCUS

To stand at the corner of Piccadilly Circus and watch the world go by can be a most instructive pastime if one wants to learn about movement, or to find out *what* makes us move. Why is it that one person floats on his toes, the other beats the pavement with his heels, his fists clenched, his head between his shoulders. Another wobbles his hips from left to right like a seesaw. A fourth goes around like a weeping willow, his nose pointing at his toes. The next has a spine like a ramrod. Another's chest is held high, well forward and his chin pulled back, etc., etc.

Uprightness

It would be interesting to guess what profession each person has, expressed in his or her movements. What makes us move with this or that gesture? The wisdom in the language indicates a direction in which we can seek an answer. One says 'What a spineless creature!' or 'There's a woman with real backbone'. I don't think we are concerned with the physical vertebrae in these cases; rather are we pointing to moral or spiritual uprightness.

When we are exhausted our spine sags; if we are enthusiastic we walk upright, the spine is in balance. It doesn't matter how much physical exercise we do to make us straight; gloom, sorrow, apathy, lethargy, a don't-care attitude produce their corresponding gestures: thumbs hang in pockets, knees wobble sideways, shoulders droop forward again.

We could learn to read in the physiog-

nomony of movement, apart from the facial expression, how states of mind, such as superiority, inferiority feelings or simply self-awareness express themselves. What contrasting movements shall we see in a sentimental person or a heartless person or one who has strong feelings? Movement reflects the state of soul of each human being.

Movement affects our inner life

Then, the other way round, the wise Charlie Chaplin, who had great insight, showed us what movement can do to humans. He shows so beautifully in his 'Modern Times' how a particular movement, made for a long time, tends to go on after we have stopped.

We all remember having rowed all day, and lying in bed just before falling asleep, and lying in bed just before falling asleep, how our arms jerk into a rowing movement; they seem to row by themselves. The same after cycling: one's legs make the same movement involuntarily. Charlie Chaplin shows what a hilariously disturbing effect repetitive movements have on the factory workers.

Every person feels deep down that he is a free creative spirit, and that spirit can't shine through his physical instrument when he has to make mechanical movements, based on the machinery of joints and muscles. Movements with a purely physical purpose create a dullness of mind, affecting the whole sensitive muscular system of the speech organism. Speech becomes a mumbling.



To counteract the weakening influences of our civilization . . .

Photo: Simon Carreras

Photo: Simon Carreras

If the children are drilled in strengthening the mechanised function of the muscles, they become muscle bound until they can hardly move for strength. The feeling-spiritual life gets drawn in too deeply into matter, which could make the life of thinking rigid, closed to finer spiritual realities. If it is possible for movement to affect the inner life in a negative way, so must it be possible to develop movements which give an inner freedom, so that the creative spirit can play on or work through our physical body.

Long, white, pointed beards

The Greeks knew that when one 'walks in a slovenly way', one 'thinks in a slovenly way'. Their whole education was based on gymnastics.

Now we can ask ourselves 'How could we help all those people we saw at Piccadilly Circus?' I once saw a large group of old Chinese men with long, white, pointed beards gathering together in their long, grey

dresses, starting a sequence of movements which were so beautiful, harmonious, peaceful and powerful that one felt an inner tranquility and harmony just by watching them. Here one could feel how these movements create an *inner* discipline, an *inner* strength.

Rudolf Laban developed a school of movement which was based on the experience of three dimensional space, not anatomical structure.

Even eating habits become visible

In the education based on insight into the growing child, Rudolf Steiner gave many indications as to how movements work on the inner development of the child. He mentions that the teacher has to know a great deal, right into the detail of how the movement of the fingers of the right hand works on the speech organism. The movement of the left hand fingers helps the thinking related to speech. We must know how using one's toes

◁ Fourteen-year-olds at Michael Hall explore space. *The nature of expansion.*

or heels works back on one's speech, on thinking, the heels activating the will. If there is a difficulty in connecting or separating ideas and conceptions, this can be helped by giving difficult concentration exercises with arms and legs. This in turn has a beneficial effect on the dental health. If, on the other hand, one rams dead, abstract thoughts into children's heads, this seems to penetrate directly into their skeletal structure and they become clumsy, stiff, uncoordinated, hard, all their fingers become thumbs. The professor puts his watch in the water and looks at his egg to see what time it is.

Even eating habits become visible in a gymnasium. Just imagine a child having bacon and eggs every morning, preceded perhaps by porridge with toast afterwards; another child comes with an empty stomach. They are both listless, but it is interesting to see the difference in listlessness.

Unhealthy element creeps in

Then what about T.V.? Quite a lot of research has been done for a new book not yet published outside the USA; the main essence of the book 'The Plug In Drug' shows T.V. to have a marked weakening effect on the will. When one has worked in a gymnasium for twenty-five years, one can see the effects of our civilization on children and one also can see how to counteract these weakening influences with the *right* movements. If children are made to move in such a way that the breathing gets out of control, as in panting, an unhealthy element creeps in, and through a mechanical muscle training, a burning process goes on which produces too much lactic acid in the muscles, causing a restless sleep.

If gymnastics are performed in an artistic relation to the rhythms in the three dimensional space around us, the child can then harmoniously enter into his ever-changing and developing body. The way Bothmer has developed gymnastic movement from Class III to Class XII is related to the inner growth of the child; yes! the child will even feel subconsciously how these movements are related to the main lessons. For example, the

gym is started in Class III, when the pulse beat and breath come into the four to one ratio. All the movements are activated by imagery created through poetry, describing their main lesson work in farming, building, mining, sawing, axing, rowing, etc. — a wealth of movements in which their imagination can live, continuing up to Class V. The movements of Class VI in the Greek and Roman history are related to triangles, squares and circles or Romans marching in strong, disciplined formation, having rods as swords to wield in sword fights, and so on.

Puberty

During puberty, exercises are given which help the children through this difficult stage. Until this is achieved, they cannot settle down properly to work. It would take too much space here to explain each exercise, but they are all based on giving oneself over to gravity in a controlled fall, making a recovery through rhythm, and carrying what is below back up into height. This happens in Classes VIII and IX. In Class X they have directional exercises coming out of main lessons; for example, history taken from the point of view of the aims, aspirations and ideals of historical characters. In Class XI in history, contrasting streams are taken, e.g. Apollonian and Dionysian streams in art, the polarity of Eastern and Western world conceptions. A wealth of inspiration to transform into movements based on contraction and relaxation! As an apotheosis in Class XII, one can combine all the movements which have been done as a recapping, restringing together. In their main lessons all previous work is reviewed and studied from the point of view of man's changing consciousness.

All the different subjects should relate together and support each other in every class. We must know what the developing child needs at every age, for this is the whole basis of the education, and gymnastics based on this will develop a healthy, integrated person in body, soul and spirit.

Rudi Marcus taught at Elmfield for many years and now practices healing massage in Forest Row, Sussex.

Has Religion any place in Education?

Part Two of a Major Reassessment

by ALAN HOWARD

Truth grows

And now let us try to gather all this together, and make a concrete answer to the question with which we started: Has Religion a place in modern education? — And if I have made my point in what appears above it should hardly be necessary to say more than, Yes! But to assume that without further elaboration is perhaps to expect too much; so —

I have suggested the the question 'Who?' about the universe and its creation is as valid as the question 'What?', and that, allowing for the different field and different method of investigation that Religion involves, the results of that investigation establish universal Being, God, as a truth of human experience. That being so, the knowledge of that truth should have as much place in the curriculum as the results of scientific investigation. Why is this not so?

The business of education is knowledge; but as the matter stands in our day Science is said to be knowledge, Religion merely belief. This is the basis of the case against Religion in education. Let us examine that a moment.

If we take knowledge to mean that which I know because I have had experience of it, then practically all the 'knowledge' which is

taught in schools falls outside of that definition. It is *information*; book knowledge, which the teachers themselves have learned by the same process as that by which they teach it, and in the same kind of institution. They have been trained to believe (with a little bit of natural logic thrown in) that what exists in books is true. And with certain obvious reservations there can be no quarrel with that. It is impossible for any of us to go through life having direct experience of everything. We have to take what others tell us on the basis that if we went through the same discipline we should probably come to the same conclusions. (*Probably*, of course, not always certainly). But that is still belief, not knowledge. It is only knowledge when I can confirm it by my own experience.

But what is necessary for the researcher, direct experience, is not so for the teacher — not in a school anyway. A teacher is not, primarily, an investigator, a researcher. He is a communicator, a passer-on of the accumulated knowledge of human experience, which is confirmed by the best minds working in that field. He should teach on that basis; bearing in mind that all truth is partial. A later discovery will expand it, or confine it within narrower limits. Truth itself grows with the power of the human mind to

investigate it. We should take existent truth as a basis for acquiring further truth. If we once stay still with truth, what was truth becomes untruth. Modern physics has long since gone beyond classical physics, but modern physics would have been impossible without classical physics.

These same criteria must be extended to the study and exploration of religious truth. Might not modern spiritual truth be just as different from dogmatic, traditional truth as modern physics is from classical? Education should be an inspiration to the truth-seeking nature of modern man. There is no need to throw Religion out of doors because we feel it isn't competent to our modern situation.

Teaching not preaching

We only need to examine with an open mind, and on its own premisses, the concept of the reality of spiritual being as it lies at the basis of all religions. This is something that has been experienced by innumerable people down through the ages, and with as much objective integrity and absence of personal bias as ever scientific fact has been experienced. We can tell the children about that, just as well as we can about anything else man has discovered in the course of his earthly pilgrimage. Only, let us be fair. Let us not prejudice the matter from the start by implying that the scientists are bona fide (moral) investigators of truth, but that these others — well, if they were not directly lying, they were talking about things which they only imagined and pretended. (I once heard a so-called 'religious' lesson in school begin in just that way).

Our job as teachers is to put the facts as they have been handed down to us, and if we do that fairly we can leave it to the children themselves, later, if not now, to decide what they want to make of them. All we have to remember is that *teaching* children about Religion in school is *not* the same as preaching to them in church. We are not trying to convert them, but to educate them. It is the fear we have that we might in some way be tampering with the child's freedom if we speak to it about Religion — and especially if we speak with conviction — that

hamstrings us. We don't feel what we are tampering with their freedom if we tell them about the molecular structure of matter, or the wave theory of light, even when we tell them, as we do sometimes, that this is the *only* explanation of matter and light. If it's indoctrination we are worried about, we ought to have a look at how Science is sometimes taught. We can be as dogmatic about Science nowadays as ever people were about Religion, without it seeming to trouble either our moral or even our intellectual conscience.

Education is the means whereby children learn about what man has experienced in his evolution through time. One of the things that has concerned him more than anything else is his connection with the world Being, with God. We do a disservice to the child, and show a contempt for human achievement as a whole if we do not let him know about that with as much sincerity, enthusiasm and strict regard for truth as we do about everything else.

But Religion isn't just a body of knowledge. It is an experience of a special kind of truth. That method I have briefly indicated above. How much of that can we actually initiate and practice with children in school? On the basic religious premiss that the world is the manifestation of Being, it stands to reason that no one can really know about that Being, and certainly make no authoritative statement one way or the other, unless they actually *do* something about how that knowledge is acquired.

We come up against the whole purpose and practice of *devotion* as the cognitive procedure in Religion here. Let us examine that a little further.

Religion as experience

We find ourselves, all of us, grown ups and children, in a world which is surrounded on all sides by the amazing mystery of Being. We meet that mystery especially in ourselves — the child no less than the adult. It is a mystery which is impervious to *sense* observations, and the kind of thinking that goes with it. But our thinking, and everything else about us, are dependent on what that

mystery involves. Is it too much then, or something susceptible of indoctrination, if we regularly and conscientiously bring the *wonder* of that mystery to mind in the children and ourselves?

For that is the beginning and prerequisite of all religious devotion — to bring deliberately into consciousness the wonder of existence. It is what the Bible calls, "the fear (wonder, awe) of the Lord" which is also "the beginning of wisdom". Everything starts from that. If we make a regular practice of it we can awaken in ourselves and in the children a different kind of feeling about the world than we can get by other means.

Wonder can be present in any kind of knowledge, of course (which is another link between the religious and the scientific). Learning about anything, particularly science, when it is not just the product of arid intellectualism can evoke wonder in plenty. In making a regular practice, however, of what I have indicated above as 'devotion' we make wonder itself an object of attention. We bring the will to bear in the experience of what would otherwise arise and pass away as a mere subsidiary and subjective phenomenon, in no way connected with the real matter in hand.

We so often too arbitrarily presuppose what facts are important and what not in the learning experience. The wonder a phenomenon evokes in use is as much part of the total experience as the observed effects. It is one of the effects; and from the religious point of view the most important. Devotion is at first nothing more than gathering up these effects of wonder, and experiencing them objectively and consciously. It is the primary exercise for the practice of Religion as experience, as 'method'.

And that is all we can hope, or should even try, to do in the context of public education in this respect. But it is enough if it is done properly. It creates a basis on which the student can build later in life if he wants to. He will not be able to feel it as something imposed on him from without, because it will be his own feelings he will be

concerned with and exercising all the time. He will be learning a 'skill' of the *soul* in his attitude to the world, just as he learns an intellectual skill in being able to spell and calculate. And if he turns out to be religiously disposed — as some will, just as others are disposed scientifically or artistically — then he will have something to work further with.

Religion has for thousands of years been the main driving force of individuals and civilisations. It is only in the last three or four centuries that man has awakened to a more scientific interest in his environment and himself. It is unfortunate, and particularly so in view of the undoubted prestige it has acquired in our day, that Science has confined its attention to an aspect of the world that completely leaves out the intuitive apprehension of Being. This has been disastrous to the traditional religious life, that, contemporaneously with this development, had itself become largely a matter of blind belief and emotional ritualism, with little beyond dogma and tradition to offer the acuter intelligence which Science had fostered.

But there are signs of change. Too much has happened in the field of paramormal psychology during the last fifty years for scientific enquiry to ignore altogether truths which Religion has known for years. Education has the task of preparing for a future which will differ strikingly from the too-religious past, and a too-scientific present. We have pulled apart the three components of our culture, Science, Art and Religion, and allowed each to assert its uniqueness often at the expense of the other.

But this will pass; but it will only begin to pass when we have an educational programme in our schools which recognises the equal value of all three in the wholeness of human experience. It is not therefore a question of, 'Has Religion any place in modern education?'; but, 'Can we educate at all if Religion is left out?'

Alan Howard, former Waldorf teacher in D. H. Lawrence country, is now advisor, lecturer and author in North America.

Space is Human

by PAUL MATTHEWS

Be happy!

In 1921 Fritz von Bothmer was asked by Rudolf Steiner to develop the gymnastic education at the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart. When Bothmer confessed to feeling somewhat inadequate for the task, Rudolf Steiner simply advised him to 'be happy' in his work with the children. That is what he did; and gradually he evolved a series of gymnastic exercises. Bothmer did not start by imposing abstract theories onto movement. He started simply by moving. He started from the one question, 'what is true human movement?' and grew from there — as we all can. It is the recognition of this starting point that has enabled me to take courage in my own work as a gym teacher.

The tightrope walker knows

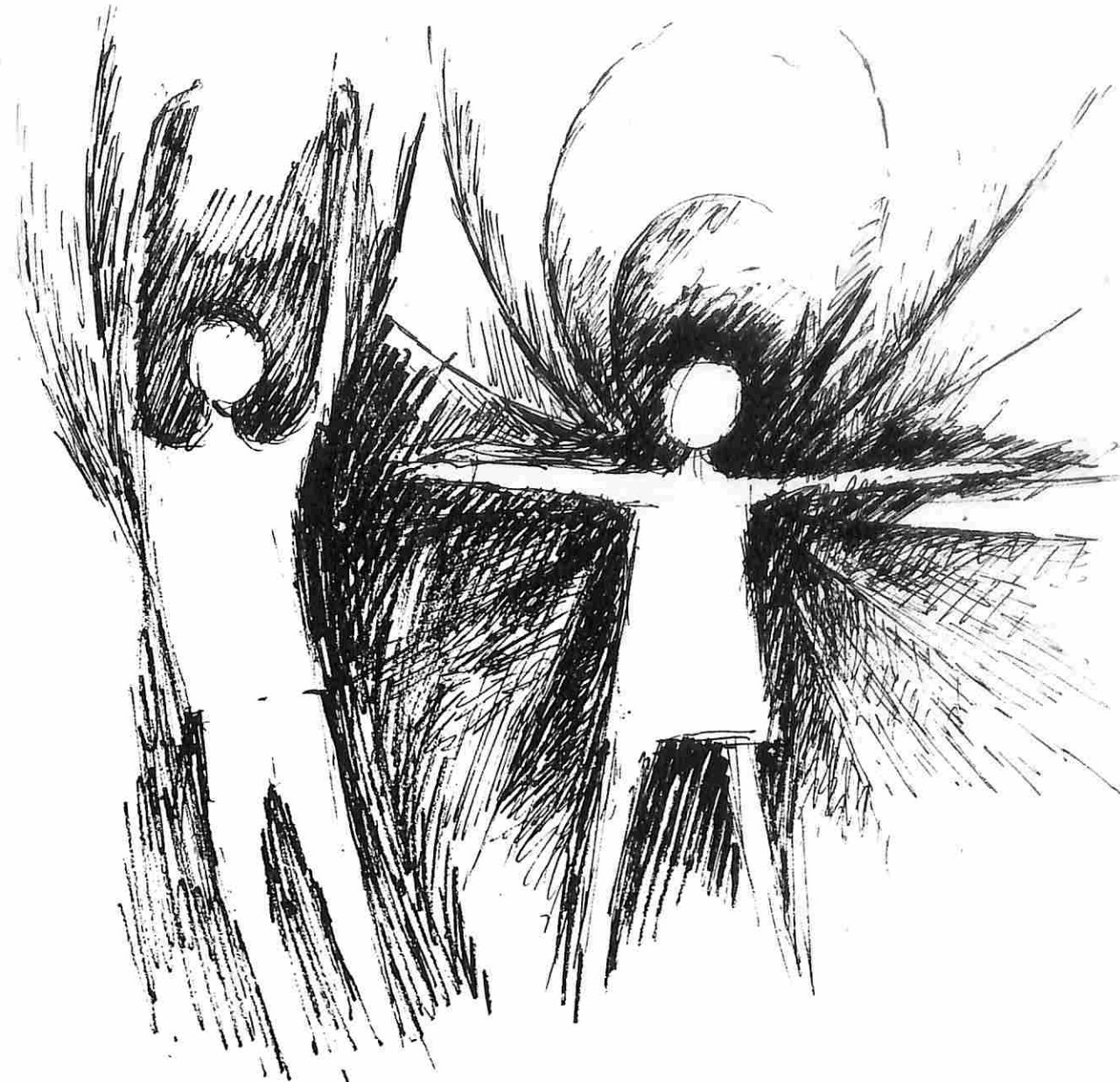
Ralph Waldo Emerson in his essay on Nature says, 'Man is the dwarf of himself. Once he was permeated and dissolved by Spirit. He filled nature with his overflowing currents.' Now this may seem to be just pretty language, but Bothmer had similar intuitions and began to search for practical ways in which that knowledge could inform human movement. Human beings are not just a series of mechanical levers moving in abstract space, as the old gymnastics of 'physical jerks' would have it. We reach out beyond our fingertips; space reaches into us. The whole body of the air sustains us. Surely

the tightrope walker knows this as he carries the pole across, to sense better the wing of the horizon holding him.

This experience of space is plainly visible if you watch the children moving. Imagine them, aged eight, entering the gymnasium for the first time, timid at first, but with a natural grace and flow to their movements. They hardly yet belong to gravity. Walking across a beam they are instinctively confident that the universe will catch them if they fall. Confronting an obstacle — they play with it. It is not yet something standing in the way. The gym teacher at this point has only to link on to what is moving within the children. No formal exercises yet, but encouragement through pictures and adventures drawn from everyday life — chopping wood, ringing bells, building a house, swinging over canyons 1000 ft. deep with crocodiles at the bottom. I mean the 'everyday' life of a child's imagination. And many of these activities can be brought, through simple verses, into rhythmic exercises.

Hidden in what is human

Of course, as the children become more aware of themselves as separate individuals, they fall away from that first spontaneity of movement and need further challenges. Bothmer recognised this, and developed a series of exercises, trying to remain true to



Above the horizontal is a light, awake, conscious realm . . .

Below the horizontal is the heavy, dark, sleeping, unconscious realm . . .

what he saw unfolding in the children. Compared with modern practices of 'free expression' in movement they are, no doubt, 'formal' exercises. But they are not abstract. He did not *invent* them. He would claim to have discovered them hidden in what is human. Though I do not have space here to describe them in detail, I can perhaps indicate the quality of movement with which we try to work.

Bothmer's first formal exercises are still very much in the realm of play — a 'play between weight and lightness'; between what is below the 'horizontal' (made by the arms outstretched) and what is above it.

'In the beginning God created *heaven* and *earth*' — two extremes, between which we can now begin to move dynamically. Normally we think only of gravity as a force. But Bothmer insists on speaking of another,

sustaining, up-lifting force — 'levity'. It is hard to find a language in which to speak of this (official science has not begun to do so), but if we are to transcend the present materialisation of sport we have to attempt it.

One possible language (greatly oversimplified here, but I have found it helpful) is derived from projective geometry.

Earth-bound

The diagrams illustrate two different experiences of a centre: one radial, explosive, possibly even aggressive; the other softer, created from the periphery of space inward. These are two possibilities in geometry. They are two possibilities for gymnastics also. When we do physical jerks we are poking out into space from the radial centre. We confront each other and the environment as separate (even alien) beings. So much in our lives — the noise of the traffic, our enslavement to the clock — cramps us into such a centre. And so much in modern sport — circuit training, the emphasis on competition — serves to enhance this. I do not wish to dismiss these activities as entirely useless. Certainly to be strong in the world we need to be able to take a stand and not be forever

dreaming into things. But there comes a point at which it ceases to serve what is human. We become bound by our muscles instead of being master of them. A grotesque caricature of this is the use of Anabolic Steroids in athletics whereby the human being is sacrificed to what is external — the desire to win, or to break records. Around such a radial centre in ourselves tensions gather, and the possibility of violence and vandalism.

Within the cosmos

Bothmer was not happy with such a one-sided gymnastics. The exercises he developed call upon us to enter a different experience of space, to relate to a space for which that other kind of 'centre' is a reality, and whereby we feel ourselves embedded within the cosmos. That sounds strange, but really it is part of our everyday experience (except that we lack the language for it and so pass it by). Is it not clearly visible in a person's movements whether he moves as part of the environment, rhythmically related to it, or whether he is cut off from it? — a knot of muscle and bone stumbling over everything. This applies to doing the washing-up as well as to gymnastics. It is a common experience

that some of us seem 'earth-bound', whereas others carry 'an air about them', or come 'trailing clouds of glory', as Wordsworth put it.

Observing a child's movements

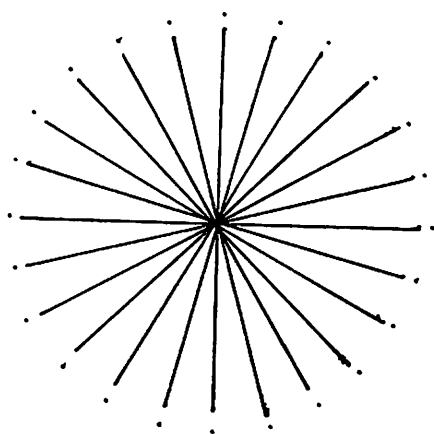
The gym teacher can work with this in a practical way. For instance — in one of Bothmer's exercises for the older children the qualities of the 'four elements', earth, water, air and fire (which in the human body correspond to bone, muscle, breath and blood), are taken as a basis for movement. In my working with gymnastics I have come to see here a key to all the exercises, indeed to every aspect of human movement. We can observe a child's movements and say which one of these four elements is lacking. The two most obvious examples are the child who seems all earth and bone, too rigid, lacking the flow between positions; and the child who is all watery without any backbone. It was the ancient ideal that these four elements should, in the true human being, be mixed equally. Observing such tendencies in the children, I can adapt exercises accordingly. I can ask them to exaggerate the wateriness, to free their muscles from their bones. Or I can ask them to fill the air so

that their movements do not remain locked inside them.

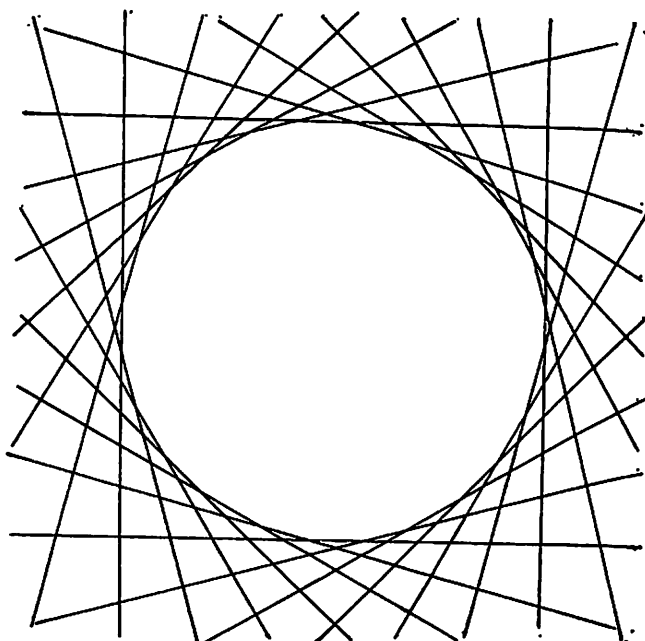
I remarked earlier that the younger children bring with them a natural balance and harmony. As part of the process of growing up, however, they fall away from it. More and more they become related to gravity. The girls change shape, become heavier; the boys shoot into their long limbs (a little later than the girls) and are unable to fill them. You could say that at puberty they are for the first time properly on the earth, even earthbound. This is often a distressing time for them. Their movements become self-conscious; everyone seems to be looking at them. For only now do they look out at the world from the radial centre that I spoke of. Very often they lose their sense of balance. A girl who a year before could skip across a beam without thinking, suddenly seizes up with fear. Unable to trust the wing of the horizon, she shrinks inside herself and tries to hold the balance from there. These young people have to learn their relationship to space, time and gravity all over again.

In a sense all Bothmer's exercises are a preparation for this moment. The exercises, which began as a play between weight and lightness, now become more geometrical,

Two different experiences of a centre:

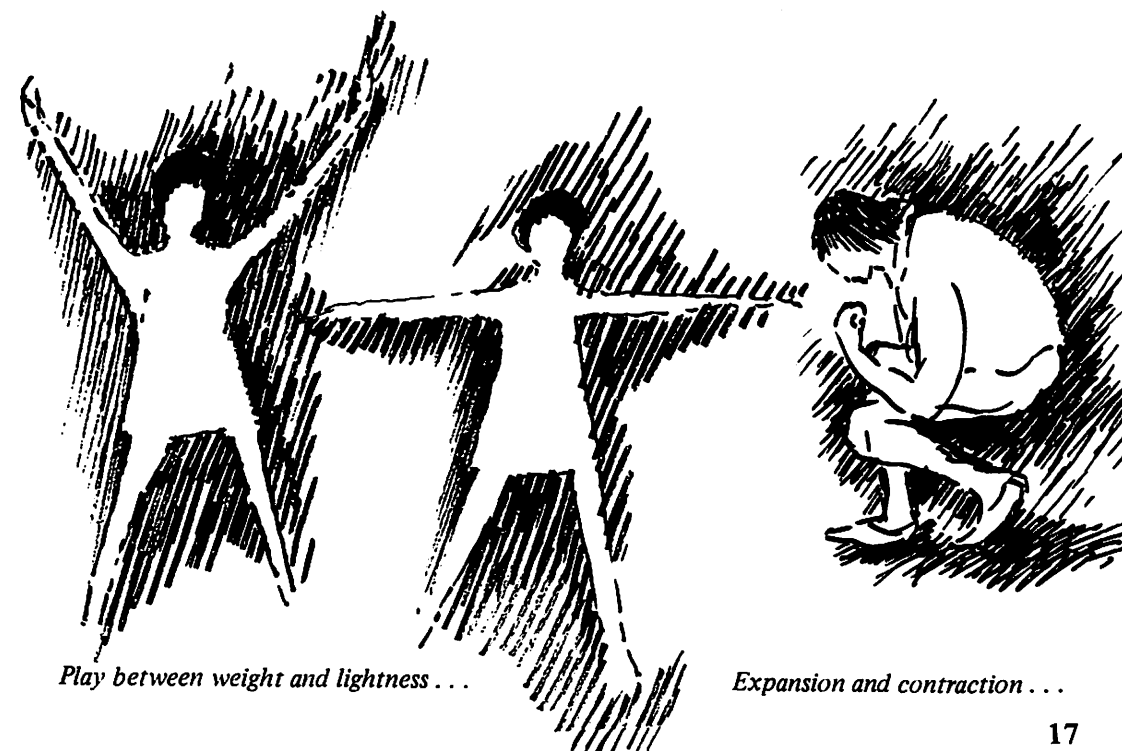


radial, explosive,



gentle, created from the periphery . . .

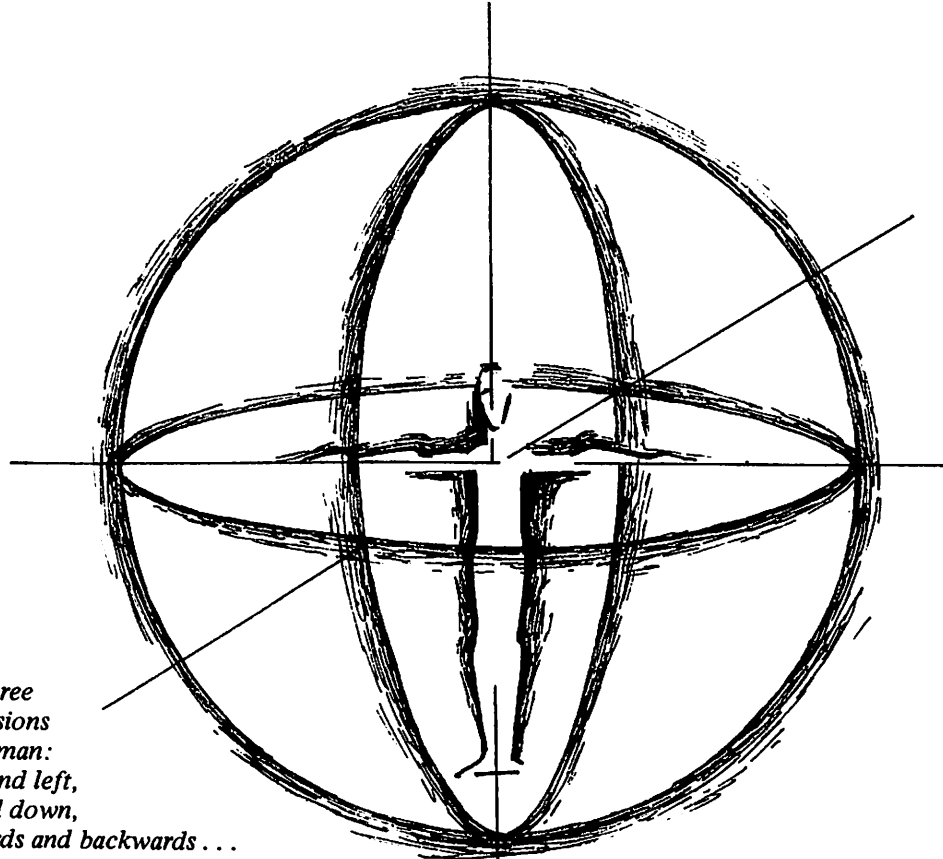
Drawing: Peter Ramm



Play between weight and lightness . . .

Expansion and contraction . . .

The three dimensions are human: right and left, up and down, forwards and backwards . . .



demanding more consciousness within the three ethereal planes of space to which the human body relates.

And gradually the children are led towards a fall into gravity, cutting themselves off from that which sustains them in space, and then finding it again. Tension and release. This culminates in 'the fall into the point' — dropping from one extreme to the other . . . You could call it a fall into physical space out of the light-filled space that as young children they seemed to move in. It is most important that the young people experience this fall in gymnastics. There can be no shying away from it. But the hope is that what has been worked with in the earlier exercises will help the children through this difficult time, so that once more they can move freely in the world.

Adolescents need challenges

Around this time some of the children want to take up gymnastics in a more conscious way. They demand tests on their

strength and skill and courage. This need can be met to some extent through working conscientiously with the apparatus. All the principles that Bothmer worked with in his standing exercises are applicable here. Take the four elements again:— to a child who confronts an obstacle as though he were a bulldozer I can say 'try to pour yourself over it.' Asking a child to do a handspring I can encourage her to feel it in the whole arc of the air so that it takes flight. It is true that some aspects of 'Olympic' gymnastics are hardening, but these can be redeemed and brought to serve what is human. Bothmer himself felt that his exercises led quite naturally into tumbling and work with the apparatus. The adolescents need such challenges if they are not to remain flabby and lethargic.

Some do remain so. Some begin to ask, 'Why should I do gym? What use will it be to me in my career as a marine biologist?' A hard question to answer, and my heart sinks when I hear it because often it means that the children are no longer enjoying themselves in

the gym. Certainly I have answers, but it is difficult to find a language acceptable to the children ('Well, you could do it underwater and dazzle the fishes').

Naked

The word 'gymnast' comes from the Greek word meaning 'naked'; presumably because the Ancient Greeks *were* so at their exercises. But I take it to mean more — that in gymnastics we strive to be sheer human beings, to enact what is human. Maybe gymnastics will not help me to be a marine biologist, but it could perhaps help me to be human. And I do not mean just the physical human being. Bothmer's exercises work also in the realm of morality. It is not coincidence that many of our words for moral qualities are taken from human posture. We speak of the *upright man* and of the *crook*. *Right* means *straight*; *wrong* means *wrung*, or *twisted*. We speak of someone who *stands by his word*, a *straightforward* man. We speak of another who has no backbone to his character — as though truth were somehow related to how we stand or walk. Also we express our feelings spatially, feeling 'low' or 'high', or 'middling'. It is obvious that our emotions are connected with posture. Sometimes, to rid ourselves of a depressed state we have only to stand up straighter, as though standing up into our true human stature once more, filling it out. Perhaps that is why we express our identity, our 'I' with the vertical line — this uprightness that makes us human.

Three human planes

These expressions in the language are not just symbolic. Space really is human. The three planes of space that sustain us can be experienced qualitatively. This surface which gives rise to 'above' and 'below' is where we meet each other, shake hands, embrace. This is the social realm, where all hearts are on the level. In movement we can feel it as a rippling surface of water which flows between us and our surroundings.

The plane which gives rise to 'back' and 'front' is quite different. This does not ripple. It shines out into the world. I feel

strong in it. I can move forwards from it into the world, or can step back. This has to do with the human faculty of Will.

The third surface, which gives rise to 'left' and 'right', is much more difficult to move in. I can do so only with thought and deliberation. It is the surface I move the knife through to dissect and analyse, to discriminate between this and that. All this is becoming rather schematic but I think we can glimpse from it that the three planes of space are not abstract. They relate to human faculties, and so quite naturally we find a language here to express moral qualities.

Receiving our stature

In calling upon the children to be true to these planes in their movements we are not being pedantic. We are in fact asking them to stand within their human stature. Of course it *can* be pedantic if done only from the one-sided experience of the radial centre (in which case I am just physical man protruding into an abstract universe). But the gymnastic education developed by Bothmer strives to overcome this. Instead of raising my arms into the horizontal position and feeling it to be *my* horizontal I can feel that it belongs to the universe and that I am filling out what my body has been built (by the forces of that universe) to relate to. This is a very subtle distinction, but if worked with long enough (and the children have that opportunity) it can change the whole quality of a person's movements. This involves a transformation of the old (19th Century empire-building) image of the human being, confident inside his skin. It means coming to a new image of our humanity, continually receiving our stature out of, and being confirmed by, human space.

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Seasonal Festivals in the Curriculum

DENNIS DEMANETT *describes his innovative year with eight-year-olds*

Part Two: Easter to Midsummer

It is still winter when the children come back to school after the Christmas holidays. And in January the Class Two children are hoping, praying for snow. The Christmas Holiday is long and the children come back to school as strangers at first. The hope for snow soon unites them. 'When will it snow?' is a frequent question asked of the teacher. When?, indeed. The Bournemouth-New Forest area is hardly noted for its frequent snowfall.

Whirling into the snow

We begin 'The King of Ireland's Son' as the term gets under way; then on Thursday morning, it happens. White feathery snowflakes, just like those from Mother Holly's² quilt, come falling out of a pearl grey sky. The whole class runs to the window. The teacher wants to bring the Winter experience to his children but recognizes the limitation of purely artistic experience. Therefore, the teacher's decision had been made several days before: if it snows — we must go out in it! Scarves, hats, coats, mittens and boots are found and off we go into the fields.

Snow is a miracle for the young child. It is the crown of the Winter experience and if the gods comply, as they did this winter, then nothing a teacher can do in the artistic sphere can compete with the experience of real snow. The children go whirling into the snow and spend the whole morning exploring familiar surroundings now changed by snow, playing new games invented for the

snow, building snowmen and ladies out of the snow and rolling, sliding and tumbling up and down the hills of snow.

Destroying the King of darkness

How could this belated Winter happening provided by the Angels, against the backdrop of 'The King of Ireland's Son', prepare the way for the Easter festival? The class is acting out 'The King of Ireland's Son' daily, building up the story as we go along. By the time the climax of the story is reached we are just three weeks from Easter day: the King's Son has just come to the King of the Land of Mist and they meet for their final battle, a scene with a distinctly Michaelic feeling. Yet this image of the young Prince destroying the mighty King of misty darkness seems particularly suited for this moment of the year. The darkness of winter recedes under the bright Sword of Light which the King's Son possesses.

During a class conversation about this part of the story the talk turns to this stone-like King of Mists. 'He doesn't even have a heart,' concludes one child. And this astonishes the class. They all try to imagine life without a heart. 'We couldn't love anybody,' says one boy. 'I couldn't love horses,' declares one of the pony-mad girls. 'We would be just like snowmen,' says the same child who initiated this part of the conversation. So here we have something. For these children it seems as if the heart could



Love as powerful as the sword Destroying the mighty King of darkness ▷
What marvellous inspired lions Saint Jerome's unflinching devotion ▷

now burst through the winter snow and with love could be just as powerful as the Sword of Light itself.

The Easter-Spring experience for Class Two then, seems to hinge on the rising and blossoming of heart forces, experienced not only through main lesson stories but also through an event which presents itself now. A new boy comes to the class. He is shy and by far the youngest child in the class. He quickly gains the protection of some class members and is helped to feel at ease. He comes just at the right moment to benefit from what must be called a growing compassion in the class.

Lion with the thorn

This seems to be the right time to introduce a main lesson period called 'Stories for Easter Time'. We begin with the legend of Saint Jerome and the Lion, a story which meets with deep and immediate acceptance in the children. In Saint Jerome's unflinching devotion to the Lion (and in the Lion's great love for the man) the children can actively express the pervading mood of this time. Again, they act out the simple story daily. What marvellous injured Lions the melancholic children can be! How dangerous are the choleric! The new child in the class, somewhat like the Lion with the thorn in its paw, comes to a group of children ready and able to receive him.

We continue toward Easter with other stories of human compassion for animals: Saint Oringa and the Hare, Saint Launomaur's Cow. Then we go on to the Legend of Easter Eggs, a story in which a poor bird is rewarded by an Angel who hears its plaintive song mourning the death of a beautiful princess. The Angel gives life to the princess; to the bird he gives eggs which shine with jewel-like colour. The children paint and decorate eggs for our own nest in the classroom.

Festive joy

With Easter just around the corner the class mood becomes more festive; the joy of Palm Sunday fills the last week. Borrowing from a Dutch custom, we make and decorate

Easter crosses — gaily coloured crosses bedecked with streamers and strands of dried fruit and cherries. On top perches a cockerel shaped in bread by the children themselves.

The end of term festival is a bright procession of colour. The whole school has made Easter crosses and the children all present work from their classes: Class Two presents a play of Saint Jerome and the Lion. But the last time the class is together before Easter, a more solemn mood prevails. In recapitulating the Easter main lesson the children recall the stories thoughtfully and one child with a very good memory recalls that we had a special story at Easter the year before: Could we please have Snow-White again? The teacher gladly tells this fairy tale to his class once more. The story is met by a circle of happy faces. This tale is familiar, it lives in the children very strongly as a Spring-Easter experience. They listen with silent anticipation. At last, Snow-White awakens to life. One little girl claps her hands with joy.

Easter eggs, crosses and main lesson books are taken home and again we have school holidays. There was never a question of presenting a Gospel version of the Easter story to the children. They could fully relate to stories like Saint Jerome and the Lion and Snow-White, but the Gospel Easter story is far beyond their grasp and would not in any way have helped the children to come into the true mood of the festival.

Flames of red and golden

After the Easter Holiday the class comes back to a main lesson in form drawing. Forms are developed out a story about a child's quest to discover and meet the Elemental Gods: the God of the Earth, the God of the Rain, the God of the Wind and the God of the Sun. Recitation time is spent learning a poem about each of the Gods¹. And outside in nature the elements are active: we have rain and wind and hot blistering days as well, as Spring now turns into Summer. In painting lessons we speak about the Gods and carefully use certain

colours to express each God's mood or way of working. We first do a crayoning exercise in which the four Gods emerge working together in harmony. Then we discover the God of Rain working in blue and green. The God of Wind appears in blue and purple while the Sun God is expressed in flames of red and golden. The Earth God seems unable to appear on wet paper, so the class uses earth-colours in another crayoning exercise: green and red and brown — to discover the Earth God. At the age of seven (and some children are now turning eight) the child's experience of the elements is clearly not on the physical plane alone — these beings who work behind or within the elements speak far more clearly to the children, than nature walks on their own (and we take many) could do. The children openly gather around 'favourite' Gods according to individual temperament. The phlegmatic children find the Earth God peaceful and sedate. The Rain God is a delightfully sad and hardworking being for the melancholics. The sanguine group is blown here and there by the God of the Wind and as for the choleric they love stomping the rhythms of the Sun God's poem.

Love and enthusiasm

The elemental activity of the summer season can be felt as the weeks go by. The class continues to recite the Four Gods poems as we enter into an English language main lesson of stories in which the elemental forces are particularly evident. At Easter it seemed right that the children confront personalities like Saint Jerome or even Snow-White, but as Midsummer approaches the story "The Silver Saucer and the Transparent Apple" seems particularly apt. In this story of Russian origin, which is, like "Snow-White", a story of resurrection, the people do not even have names — the importance lies in that cosmic and elemental forces are at work. The girl buried in the ground seems protected by the loving arms of the Earth God. Out of her breast grows a reed which, when plucked, plays a song of its own accord. She is brought to life in summer

by water from the holy well (not by the mistake of a clumsy courtier, as in Snow-White's case). The cosmic elemental forces weave throughout the story; human destiny is a thread in the greater elemental fabric. The children meet this story with such love and enthusiasm that the class spends much longer on it than originally planned. We go on to another Russian story 'The Firebird' which again portrays in vivid and colourful images the rising and working of powerful cosmic forces.

With the help of Carrier Pigeon

The Spring-to-Midsummer time with its dimension of growth and activity is a natural time for hard work on arithmetic. The Class Two children jump, stamp and clap their way into a mathematics main lesson: they are Number Gnomes on Number Mountain learning their times-tables with lively determination. In the busy and active manner of the Number Gnome the children learn about Units, Tens and Hundreds — they write up to 100 and beyond on long strips of paper. 'Can they reach around the world?' asks one child. The children learn how to carry in addition with the help of Carrier Pigeon, and how to borrow in subtraction. They also work hard on division, though it seems a difficult concept to grasp. Multiplication tables on the other hand, are easy and fun. Can it be that this multiplying time of year has something to do with this phenomenon? That certainly seems to be the case.

Care and love for animals

Following these weeks the class turns its gaze toward the animal kingdom. The children have noticed how active the animals are becoming and we sing many songs about birds and beasts awakening to summer, building nests and singing or calling to mates. We have several animal stories at this time, fables for the most part. We look at the donkey, the frog, the lion and the dog, among others. The children have a special care and love for animals at this age and they seem to appreciate our discussions about the animals as much as the stories themselves.

As Saint John's Day approaches the

Next page: Many songs about birds and beasts awakening to summer . . .
Drawings by eight-year-olds at Folly Farm School



children become more and more lively as a group. We usually talk about more than one animal in any main lesson — in winter a single animal would be discussed for three days or so, but now it seems right to talk freely about two, three or even four animals at once. It is as if the children are more able to grasp something of the whole picture through their sanguinity rather than dwelling on one particular animal. We create a huge animal mural in class by first of all drawing a very tall tree in a field — with lots of branches reaching up to the sun and a maze of roots clutching the earth. Then in the branches can appear birds, squirrels and bats; and further down are holes for woodpeckers and more squirrels; and down among the roots hide the moles and mice and marmots and even a sleepy squirrel. The tree's leafy branches provide shade for a sleeping lion or perhaps a grazing donkey and even another squirrel or two! Over several days the picture, about 6 feet by 4 feet, is finished, a large action-filled picture befitting the Saint John's mood.

Summer: running, ringing, rejoicing

Saint John's Day itself is marked as the day of the school's summer fete. The whole school becomes involved in preparation for this event. The last week of school before the fete is a full time bursting with music and preparation. We make flags and signs for the fete, we sing many songs about summer, we hear about the tradition of the Saint John's fire. But sadly we have to compromise on this last point. There is no suitable place for a bonfire, so we can only create a Saint John's fire through a colour exercise in painting. The children are certainly ready for Saint John's Day. The mood is a joyous, carefree one and the merrymaking of the school fete strikes a clear note with all the children.

The school year ends for Class Two with three summer weeks in which the class enjoys a main lesson that is the culmination of earlier animal stories: the Story of Saint Francis of Assisi. If Summer is the season of the expression of joy then surely Francis's

story is the most summer-like of all saints' legends. Imagine Francis running and singing over the hills and one sees an embodiment of the summer mood: Francis surrounded by his followers, both men and beasts. Francis rejoicing in the experience of God in Nature. Francis is in many ways an image of Man's possibility to grow and change and become — which is also the essence of the summer mood. Unlike the animals we looked at earlier in the term, Man, as represented by Saint Francis, can take heed of the earth's blossoming forth at Midsummer and can, if he wishes, blossom and grow within himself. The children love Saint Francis and it is the mood of Francis that goes with them as they leave school for the summer holiday.

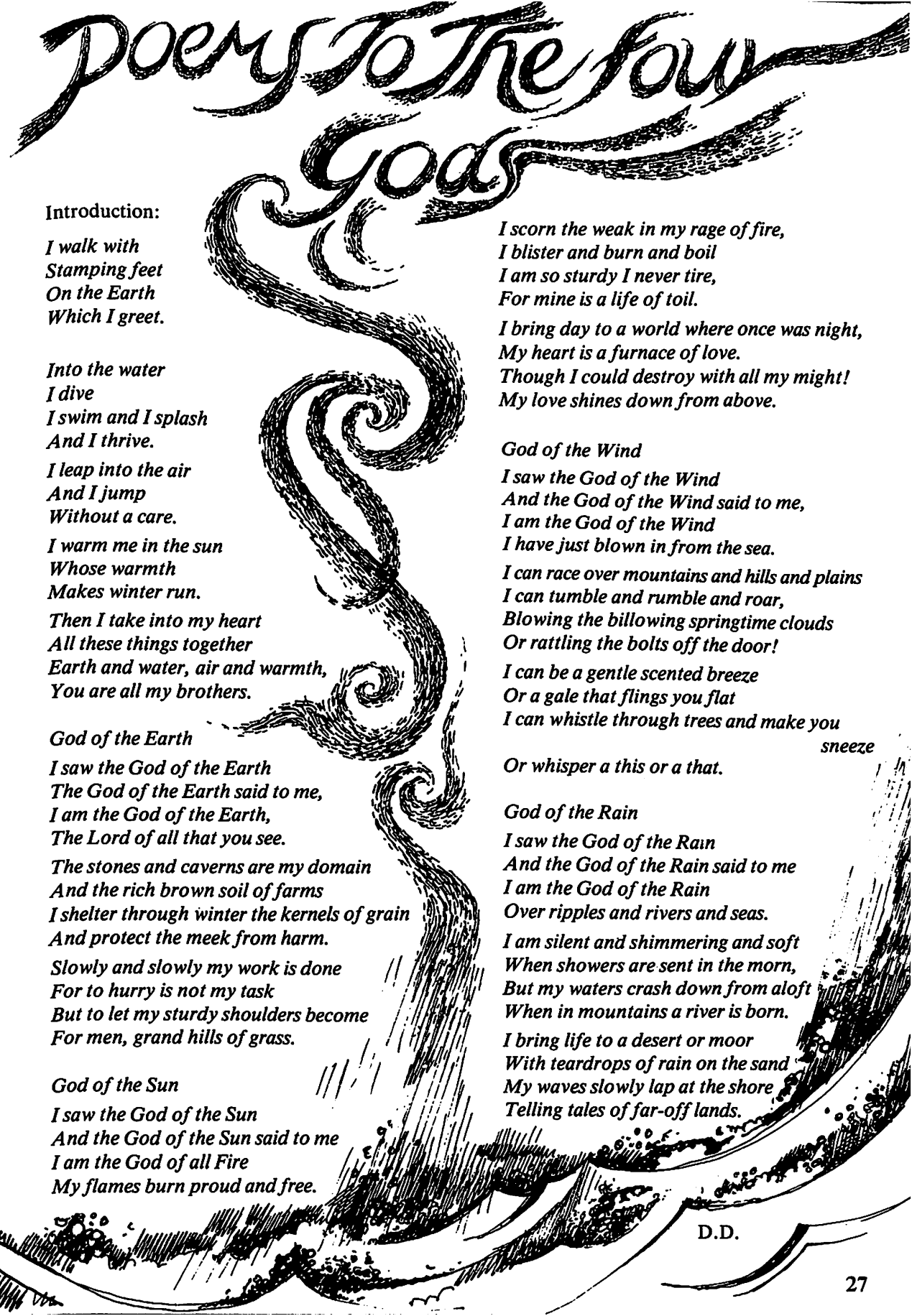
Thus through the seasons the children have been led. And of course it does not end here. Michaelmas follows summer just as Class Three will follow Class Two. The children and their teacher are ready to meet the wonders that lie ahead.

Footnotes

- 1 "The King of Ireland's Son" by Padraic Colum is a collection of Irish folk tales which is often used in Class Two in the Waldorf Schools.
- 2 "Mother Holly" is an old fairy tale which I used in Class One and as a reading book in Class Two.
- 3 These poems included on the following page.

Dennis Demanett teaches at Folly Farm School, Ringwood, England.

Previous page: The Easter Spring experience for Class Two seems to hinge on the rising and blossoming of heart forces . . . Saint Francis running and singing over the hills, rejoicing in the experience of God in Nature.



Introduction:

*I walk with
Stamping feet
On the Earth
Which I greet.*

*Into the water
I dive
I swim and I splash
And I thrive.*

*I leap into the air
And I jump
Without a care.*

*I warm me in the sun
Whose warmth
Makes winter run.*

*Then I take into my heart
All these things together
Earth and water, air and warmth,
You are all my brothers.*

God of the Earth

*I saw the God of the Earth
The God of the Earth said to me,
I am the God of the Earth,
The Lord of all that you see.*

*The stones and caverns are my domain
And the rich brown soil of farms
I shelter through winter the kernels of grain
And protect the meek from harm.*

*Slowly and slowly my work is done
For to hurry is not my task
But to let my sturdy shoulders become
For men, grand hills of grass.*

God of the Sun

*I saw the God of the Sun
And the God of the Sun said to me
I am the God of all Fire
My flames burn proud and free.*

*I scorn the weak in my rage of fire,
I blister and burn and boil
I am so sturdy I never tire,
For mine is a life of toil.*

*I bring day to a world where once was night,
My heart is a furnace of love.
Though I could destroy with all my might!
My love shines down from above.*

God of the Wind

*I saw the God of the Wind
And the God of the Wind said to me,
I am the God of the Wind
I have just blown in from the sea.*

*I can race over mountains and hills and plains
I can tumble and rumble and roar,
Blowing the billowing springtime clouds
Or rattling the bolts off the door!*

*I can be a gentle scented breeze
Or a gale that flings you flat
I can whistle through trees and make you*

sneeze

Or whisper a this or a that.

God of the Rain

*I saw the God of the Rain
And the God of the Rain said to me
I am the God of the Rain
Over ripples and rivers and seas.*

*I am silent and shimmering and soft
When showers are sent in the morn,
But my waters crash down from aloft
When in mountains a river is born.*

*I bring life to a desert or moor
With teardrops of rain on the sand
My waves slowly lap at the shore
Telling tales of far-off lands.*

D.D.

What is Eurythmy Doing in School?

Artistic and Therapeutic Eurythmy speak for themselves. What about Educational Eurythmy?

by MARY WATSON

The most important educational task of eurythmy is to aid the incarnating processes of the growing child, in order that these processes may take place in the most harmonious way possible; a very lofty ideal, but nevertheless one towards which every eurythmist strives.

Plunge into the world

These processes change and assume different forms in the various stages of childhood. The very young child lives very much in his surroundings; he is 'at one' with the world, and it is easy for him to transform himself, through the imaginative pictures of stories, into animals, plants, beings. In these early years he must plunge into and experience to the full, the world around him. He must unite himself with every tree, bird and stone, immerse himself in the rhythms of the created world. At this time the eurythmy teacher can lead the class through a Paradise, where they can learn to know the created and the creator.

Between the 7th and the 9th year, the child will then begin to stand back and observe the world. He will begin to separate himself from it in his experience and even begin to be critical of things around him. The closer his unity with the world before this time, the more his powers of reverence and wonder will be enhanced during these years of separation from the whole. During this time

the spiral form becomes very important in the eurythmy lesson, where the child spirals into his own inner world, and out once again to the outer world. Repetition of this form with various verses strengthens the individuality in its first awakening.

Man, created out of music . . .

In the remainder of the class-teacher years the child learns rhythms, and learns to 'hear' them with his whole body. He experiences beat, melody, sounds and rhythms of speech, and the worlds of music and poetry are introduced to him as not only man's creation, but also that out of which man is created. Through the consonants eurythmy continues the work of the divine in the forming of the physical body and organs. Through the vowels eurythmy nourishes the growing soul forces.

The child learns to orientate himself in space by the practising of geometrical forms which move, dissolve, and reform themselves in new situations. This will help him to understand the mathematics behind such constructions. Basic disciplines of the body are taught through rod exercises, concentration and agility exercises. Even grammar and music theory is taught through movement. This helps to establish what the class teacher has introduced in Main Lesson or subject lesson: what the child has experienced through his limbs he will be able to *re-member*.

Think with the whole body

When the pupil enters the upper school, the artistic element must have a new emphasis. The pupil must begin to take an active role in the creation of the work, so that in the upper classes, the impulses and inspiration can be drawn from them by the teacher.

Also eurythmy gains another aspect inasmuch as it provides a healthy balance to the academic work which will increase as the pupil grows older. Once or twice a week, the growing thinker must think with his whole body, not just his head. He must work into his limbs that which he imagines, he is slowly awakening and training his will forces.

Question from a parent: "If eurythmy does so many wonderful things, why do the children not like it?" I regard this as a very fundamental question, and one which, with a little exploration, can deepen one's appreciation of the importance of eurythmy in any child's education today.

Cannot be captured

The world we live in at the moment is a materialistic one. The movement is constantly away from the whole to the part. Specialisation, analysis, these are terms that apply to our modern age. The living thought is too often killed to become a concept — a definition. What the children must learn in school can only be made alive by the way that we teach it, the way the subject lives in us as a process. Machines, engines are materialised thoughts, seen at their ultimate in the computer and calculator. All these necessary sides of our life today require a balance, if we are to have a true experience of the world.

Noe contemplate eurythmy; an art of movement, *not* gesture, it aims to make visible that which is invisible, and only for a fleeting moment — the moment of creation. It cannot be captured or immortalised like a Rembrandt in the material sphere — this art belongs truly to the realm of the spiritual intangible.

In our time of material values, when everything must be weighable and measure-

able, eurythmy enters as something totally alien and can be easily dismissed by our conditioned materialistic thinking, and this can already be manifest in the growing child. When he can see all there is to know materially about life and death through television, films and newspapers, then that which is invisible, intangible holds little worth for him. He constantly asks: "What does eurythmy *do* for you?" "What does this exercise *do* for you?" always seeking an answer that he can see, touch and acknowledge within his physical experience of the world, and that answer can never be given.

A painful experience

The growing individual must find his own balance in life between the material and spiritual. Within the Waldorf school we balance the learning process with creative processes.

In addition we must recognise that in doing eurythmy, we are revealing our innermost selves, laying bare our soul life and showing it in an artistic form to our audience, or teacher. When one thinks back on those difficult years around the age of puberty, when all one wanted to do was to hide oneself away, then it is understandable that at a certain age eurythmy is actually a very painful experience for most pupils. This the teacher must recognise and carefully lead the pupils through this time, bringing a greater objectivity to the work, but at the same time seeking to enrich the inner experience that the pupils are having. With the right approach, eurythmy can help the pupil through these difficult years.

Put eurythmy on stage!

Lastly, the social element of the eurythmy lesson must not be forgotten. The importance of learning to move together as a group can lay the foundations for working together in other spheres, and living together with the true community spirit which is often so lacking in our time.

Finally, to finish on a more personal note I would like to mention my experience with extra-curricular work. During my time at



Sixteen-year-olds at Michael Hall perform a fairy tale on stage . . .



Photos: Christopher Guy



Give the pupils opportunities to show their work in simple performances, contributing through festivals . . .



Michael Hall School I have produced performances of fairy-tales with volunteers drawn from the upper classes in the school. Firstly I was amazed at the original response, when one considers the general statement — “The pupils don’t like eurythmy” — it was astonishing for me to see 40 pupils out of a possible 120, coming forward eagerly to take part in one of my productions! Secondly, the working atmosphere is very harmonious and invigorating. The pupils begin to explore the possibilities of character portrayal, humorous and dramatic movement, and of course this interest and experience works very strongly into the weekly lessons.

The performances are then enjoyed by the whole school, and the pupils are very appreciative of their friends’ efforts and achievements.

In my first terms at Michael Hall I received one piece of advice which stimulated this work:

“Put eurythmy on the stage — then it will be a success in the school.”

I am still experiencing the truth of that statement, and I fully recommend any colleagues to take courage and go ahead with this impulse — it’s well worth it!

There it is, a new subject on the timetable, dressed with a beautiful Greek word, having the reputation of being important and able to reach far into the heights and widths of development of humanity, being the new art Rudolf Steiner created — eurythmy. We meet it with respect, great expectation, perhaps with understanding, perhaps with enthusiasm.

A trouble-maker?

But yet, isn’t eurythmy also sometimes a trouble-maker, a bit of a stranger? There is so much we don’t know about it. Why does it want special surroundings? Why does everybody have to do it, if people in other

schools can manage without it? Where do all the children’s efforts go? What do all their efforts develop into? Why do these particular gestures arise? And why has the eurythmy teacher so many extra wishes?

The more we allow eurythmy to teach us about its movements, its laws, the more we discover that eurythmy is the art of ‘being in-between’. Gestures appear, but the sounding world speaks through them. Human beings are in movement, but the space around wants to speak; the space between all the different individuals — the small and the tall — is full of life. Non-mechanical, eurythmical forms, moved in sounding time, enliven the space. There appears a picture, a gesture, clearly, but it is transformed into a new one, and the liveliest movement is in the transition, the ‘being in-between’.

There we can feel an inner breathing, a breathing also into the world of real life, and there we are challenged to be active, to

respond.

Bridge-paths

This ‘being in-between’ appears also around eurythmy, in its relationship with other activities in the school. There are many transitions and bridge-paths to explore.

Thinking of life at school one can see how fruitful and important it is to have at least two eurythmists working together. This creates a space in which each can inspire the other in taking care of the sources of eurythmical art.

An important variety of bridges is that between all the different subjects and their teachers, both those working in science and those working in art.

The eurythmist has to find the way to understand the other subjects and their relationship to the development of the human soul.

On the other side, how good it is when all the teachers practise eurythmic forms and

gestures together. The efforts of the eurythmist to enter into other subjects and the practising with all the teachers can create a conversation that opens amongst colleagues an understanding for this art. To study the laws in *botany* and *biology* can help one to recognise the life forces in eurythmy gestures; the purity of *geometry* finds its echo in many of the eurythmy forms; there are many moments in tone-eurythmy that might inspire a *music* teacher. There are many spaces open for creative transition, and it needs time and care to awaken and enliven them.

Another breathing happens between doing eurythmy and watching eurythmy, between life in the eurythmy room and on the stage. One should give the pupils opportunities to show their work in simple performances for the others or contribute through festivals, for in this way their striving towards the inner quality of eurythmy is encouraged. The eurythmists themselves will also strive to give eurythmy by performing it and so help to make another good, healthy bridge-situation in eurythmy life.

The little child

When we meet the little child he has eurythmy around him, is carried by beautiful life-forces undisturbed by heaviness. The eurythmy teacher may enter into these growing forces and find the eurythmy gestures out of the world of the child. The teacher has to learn to adjust the manifold possibilities of movement to the natural inner development of the little growing human being, and eurythmy then unfolds and blossoms in relation to the transformation in the yearly development of the child.

More and more the child grows down to earth, and the young person becomes able to guide his own movement from inside. He learns gradually to judge the quality of art and he is interested to understand the background of eurythmy and its place in the world. And now at, and after puberty, it is important that the approach to the work with young people becomes different.

Teacher and pupil both strive towards eurythmy in its highest quality as art. The themes in speech-and tone-eurythmy should be challenging, and one needs to practise a great deal; if necessary, more than the written timetable dictates.

A rich and colourful art

If eurythmy is alive in the school as a rich and colourful art, it will be able to give very great help to the art of education.

Yes, these are some examples of the moments 'in-between', that are challenging and important and may help to answer many questions about the stranger, eurythmy. These moments are delicate and need our protection and care. Much inner movement and mobility are needed.

And isn't that what eurythmy is asking for?

Mary Watson has taught at Michael Hall for four years. She will be on tour with Elsa Klink's group this summer and will then move to Sheffield with husband John, who is researching improvements in stage lighting.

Curative Journal/Newsletter

Sir,

The second issue is now out with a lively variety of articles and reports.

Write to me for a copy, enclosing 60p donation to cover printing and postage for this issue and the next one.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Baker,
Nutley Hall,
Nutley, Sussex, TN22 3NJ.

Education as Transformation

A devastating analysis and a personal vision

by PETER ABBS

Last year Heinemann Educational Books published *Proposal for a New College*. In this work Graham Carey and I argue the need for a new college based on ecological, collaborative and cultural principles. Informing the book is our belief that education is not a means to secure industrial expansion, is not confined to the intellect, is not intrinsically competitive or solely concerned with quantifiable results. Or, to put it in a more positive form, our belief is that education is primarily concerned with the development and refinement of consciousness within the individual and within the community. Rather than reflect society as it is, we argue that education in the form of schools should seek to transform society, not violently but poetically by increasing awareness. We would like to see schools become ceremonial centres, where through the symbolic recreation of experience, the sense of living is enhanced; we would like to see schools become critical centres, also, developing and disseminating those philosophical principles which illuminate the seemingly dark and uncertain flux of actuality. At the moment, with the dramatic warning of organised religion, there are few centres in our society committed to nurturing the inward life and disinterested understanding. We imply in *Proposal for a New College* that the schools might become, with the proper understanding, cultural centres, and so give, in a new way and in a different form, what the churches once provided. To begin the process, we argue the case for one experi-

mental college. In many respects, as our reader will see, the college we propose resembles Emerson: it resembles Emerson in its emphasis on the arts, its emphasis on democracy and collaboration, its emphasis on self-support and mutual aid.

It is not possible in a short article to present all the arguments in our book but I hope through a guided series of quotations to indicate the general framework of our argument.

Policy of evasion

We begin with what we hope is a devastating attack on the present State educational system. We claim that:

'The problem with most of our schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities is that they seem incapable of representing any coherent body of values, or even one coherent form of pedagogy. There is no longer any immediate consensus as to what ultimately counts in education; in fact nothing matters, and anything goes. Institutions, to avoid the friction and anxiety aroused by fundamental discussion of ends (one of the great sources of intellectual and moral development), tend to smother these deep ethical and philosophical differences and endeavour to create a working unity by purely focusing on technical and mechanical goals. This policy of evasion has had disastrous consequences. It has meant that within places ostensibly devoted to the development of understanding, the various disciplines of knowledge have disintegrated, each developing, in isolation, their own pedagogy

or, often, pedagogies. It has meant that most educational institutions have failed to create within their frameworks any sense of community, for any sense of cohesion they are able to achieve is based not on that power of imagination which is able to embrace and transcend human conflict but on mere organisation, which is not. It has also meant that on the immense moral, political and spiritual issues of the day our schools and universities have remained, without exception, terrifyingly blank . . .

Resurrection or extinction

The syllabus and timetable of the typical college of education symbolizes a certain narrow attitude to education; it would seem to suggest that education is a matter of being busy, endlessly engaged, no matter what: that it is a matter of passive and correct assimilation; that the activity is essentially impersonal, standing erect above the turbulent (and creative) stream of inner life and outside the intricate web of human relationships; that, in sum, education is a matter of simple intellectual conformity rather than a personal reaching up of truth, integrity and wholeness of being. It is not altogether surprising then, that the more mature and intelligent students who in their first months often come to their courses with a receptive enthusiasm, invariably end their days at college in a state of abulia, or if not abulia, armoured cynicism. And in this mood they go out to teach the young!

We argue that the failure of our colleges to educate is an expression of the industrial mentality which invariably regards education as a means to an end, as an instrument to secure adaptation to the technocratic environment, an environment in which there is no place for inwardness, where *technique* has cast out *teleology*, where *having* has sealed off *being*. And yet the industrial system, manifestly out of control, cannot last, although its end could, unless we become aware and develop true alternatives, tragically close the book of man. We thus, argue:

'The challenge facing a genuinely experimental college couldn't be more

momentous. Quite literally, the issues are those of life or death; resurrection of extinction.

Restoring man to himself

Seen in a broad cultural and ecological context the need for a new college, exploring and charting new connections between living and learning, between self and the world, between material frugality and joyous existence, becomes imperative. The greater crisis we face demands not the further regimentation of consumer impulses, not further importation of advanced technology, not even more research, but rather a willingness to innovate, to begin small radical experiments, first-hand attempts to discover and rediscover forms of relationship and creation which do not entail the squandering of depleted resources or require an ant-like collectivity with an alienated elite at the top and a degraded proletariat beneath. The task of the new college is to fashion that community which will restore man to himself, to his neighbour not only for healthy supplies of proper food but also for his sense of beauty, scale, rhythm and pattern. We find some hope in the fact that from the very beginning this has been one of the great traditional tasks of the living arts. It has also been one of the main purposes of a number of traditional communities and earlier experimental colleges.'

In the second section of the book we describe the sanity of many primitive societies and also a number of historically tested institutions of education and community living from which we believe we can learn a necessary wisdom. We look at achievements of the early monastic foundations and at such pioneering centres of learning and culture as Rusking College, the Bauhaus and Black Mountain College. If we had known more about Emerson College we would certainly have drawn on its experience. (We do refer generally to the Steiner Schools and to the Peredur Home School in particular.) In all of these institutions we find that concept of education as *the art of giving form to the act of living itself*, richly embodied. These institutions

form our prototypes. Much of what we are looking to has already been achieved in the past.

Quest for wholeness

In the third section of the book we attempt to provide principles which would give a living coherence to the academic and creative curriculum. There is no space to explore the arguments here but the reader might be interested to see the main conclusions we reach, presented as six related points. We argue that:

1. Most disciplines e.g. Music, Physics, French, Mathematics, are in themselves significant integrations of knowledge and experience.
2. It therefore follows that inter-disciplinary studies (at College level) can only develop meaningfully where the disciplines have been first fully developed in their own right.
3. The approach to learning and creation should be aesthetic. Each discipline should seek to elicit a wholeness of response, in which the traditional oppositions between subject and object, feeling and cognition, values and knowledge, are overcome and reconciled in a higher synthesis.
4. The total organisation of the college should further support and amplify this quest for wholeness of being.
5. One important way in which this can be achieved is by the members of the college both students and staff, forming an active community for the expressive arts. The health of all the arts depends upon such a community and, contrariwise, the health of the community depends on the arts.
6. The importance of each of the foregoing assertions rest on the philosophical foundation that man is not fully comprehended by the partial concepts of 'tool-maker', 'naked ape' or 'reflexive thinking machine', but, rather, by the more comprehensive concept of 'animal symbolicum'. As a maker of symbols man transforms his 'natural' world and his experience becomes simultaneously open,

unique and irreducibly creative. The power to make culture — and in this we would include not only the arts and crafts but all the disciplines of study, including the social and natural sciences, and the many languages on which they depend — constitutes, in the words of David Jones, 'the distinguishing dignity of man'.

Active pursuit of meaning

In the last section of the book we turn to problems of organisation and provision, both aspects of the curriculum in the broadest sense of the word — for we are anxious that there should be no divorce between education and living. Education is the form we give to living — thus includes making food as much as making arithmetic. Analysing our industrial system in the light of ecological and social understanding we conclude that in the matters of work and production man's needs are four-fold: to restrict production to genuine needs: to develop methods of production which do not require the massive use of non-renewable resources: to develop forms of work which confer dignity to the worker and finally to keep the units of production relatively small in scale and democratic in structure. *The challenge for Twentieth Century man is to put in reverse all the main imperatives of manic industrialisation without bringing about world-disaster*. Education, seen as the active pursuit of meaning and refinement of being, must have a distinct part to play in this immense and uncertain drama. A proposal for a new college, thus, represents not a withdrawal from the existing society but a creative response to its deepest needs. Indeed, even to define education as the transformation of consciousness is to begin the quiet revolution. For practice follows in the wake of seminal ideas. At the moment, the new college represents an idea and an image, a way forwards and a way backwards, a new development as old as primitive man, and yet different again because of all that has happened during the period we call 'civilisation', a possibility waiting for development, a new house for

man — if it can be built.

Peter Abbs is lecturer in Education at the University of Sussex and editor of an independent journal, *Tract*, that 'seeks to

Rough and tumble young gentlemen whose arms and legs fly out everywhere...

draw into a living unity the best ideas of our time'. A recent issue focussed on Education and the Expressive Disciplines; available, price £1, from The Gryphon Press, 38 Prince Edwards Road, Lewes, Sussex.



Struggling with Chaos

Why teach Eurythmy?

by JANET WILLIAMSON

*My arms and my legs
and my tongue are never still;
The clatter and chatter
and don't obey my will.
My feelings burst forth
and I don't know why;
I weep and I laugh,
I shout or I sigh.
My thoughts are like birds
flying hither and yon;
One moment they're here,
in another they're gone.*

What am I?

'A child', as every parent and teacher knows, is the answer to this riddle. But an insoluble riddle lies hidden in the depths of each child. We daily struggle to guide an unfolding life out a chaos of impulses into self-directed activity. Only at moments may we glimpse what a child is striving to become as he clumsily sets to work on that greatest creative deed of every human being, his own biography.

Our task in Waldorf education is to nurture the whole child — hands, heart and head — so that he can one day stand in the world as a free human being who acts entirely out of his own initiative. All the subjects of the curriculum combine to bring strength, warmth and clarity to his deeds and feelings, as well as to his thoughts.

Arms and legs fly out

We teach Maths, English, Languages, Music, Handwork, Eu....

What did you say? Myrhythmy? Eurithmetics? Oh — Eurythmy! Whatever is that?

Well, 'Eurythmy' is the Greek word of harmonious movement, so this subject has something to do with moving rhythmically and gracefully. It also....

That's all right for girls, but why should boys do it?

Fair enough. Watch children at play and in school. What do you notice?

From the earliest years, 'little ladies' are more refined in their activities than are the rough-and-tumble 'young gentlemen' whose arms and legs fly out everywhere. While girls tend to be centred comfortably in themselves, boys live in the periphery of their limbs and grow clumsy or silly when asked to control their wild movements. By adolescence, neither girls nor boys have much self-possession and eurythmy exposes their embarrassing consciousness of awkward bodies.

It is perhaps more obvious to an adult than to a child of any age that we can only carry out our intentions in life if we have first mastered the bodily instrument with which we perform them. This is so no less for boys than for the girls.

In his blood and bones

Yes, agreed. So how does eurythmy help the child to master himself?

The key is found in rhythm.

In man, the rhythmic system of heart and lungs is the vehicle for his life of feeling and unites the activities of head and hand. Were he only to think, he would contract into the cold dome of his head; were he only to act, he would expand into the fiery warmth of his limbs. A healthy soul life must maintain balance between these two poles.

During the middle years of childhood, when his rhythmic system is developing, a child lives intensely in the contraction-expansion of his feelings. The rhythms of poetry and music nourish his feeling life. In eurythmy it is not enough to listen carefully to a rhythmic pattern; this is concentration, a head activity. The whole body must *become* the rhythm, through accurately clapping and then stepping what is heard. A surprising amount of co-ordination is required, particularly when complex exercises with copper rods are introduced. The child comes to know a work of art in his very blood and bones.

Anyone who doubts the value of such a discipline has failed to observe that most children today are restless and unconcentrated to an extreme degree. Hyperkinesia is such a recent widespread pathological condition that the word isn't even in the Concise Oxford Dictionary!

Anguish and labour

Why are the children waving their arms about in such a peculiar way?

Every deed we do is an act of will, which normally arises out of a thought or feeling. The world does not know what anguish and labour attend the birth of every creation. It sees only the finished work, the form wrought by the creator out of intense inner movement.

All form is arrested movement. Many religious traditions tell of the Divine Logos, the inaudible Word which shapes the flow of substance and brings the forms of nature to manifestation.

Conversely, whenever we speak or make music, the audible sound creates an invisible form in vibrations of the air. Through gestures of the arms and, indeed, the whole body, eurythmy makes visible the shape of each sound. In our small, imperfect way, we are imitating the activity of those spiritual powers which have uttered us into being. And as we imitate, we are carrying out the movements that brought about our human form. Thus a correctly-done gesture in eurythmy works deeply into the physical body, helping to mould it in a healthy way. How essential this activity is for the young child, whose body is still pliant!

Creative or destructive forces

Why is eurythmy done to music and poetry — or fairy tales?

Through all ages, fairy-tales have filled the imagination with pictures that carry their message to the soul. Even in this age of background noise, we can be moved by the power of language or tone to convey a meaning beyond its sense-content. Tremendous moral force works through all art and the form freed by the artist becomes a pattern for the child's own creative strivings.

Further, each sound has its own character apart from its sense-meaning in combination with other sounds. Poetry and music are born out of this realm where the very sounds themselves are creative or destructive forces.

Eurythmy teaches us to hear once again the Inner Word — even more, to consciously embody it.

The earth-realm of gravity

Rhythms, gestures — it still doesn't add up. What else is there to eurythmy?

There is the spatial world. Eurythmy isn't done by standing on one spot. Each direction of space has its own quality, whereby the rhythm of contraction and expansion is experienced. We contract when we move forwards into the sight-perceptible world or downwards into the earth-realm of gravity. We expand when we move backwards into the invisible world or upwards into the heavenly realm of levity, the counterforce of gravity.

This polarity is also felt in moving to the left or right. Physiologically, we are not symmetrical inside our skins. The heart, home of our feeling life, is on the left and the liver, which has a great deal to do with our will, is on the right. Thus in eurythmy, the contemplative or minor mood is expressed by moving to the left and the active or major mood by moving to the right. This is so whether one is right or left-handed.

A surprising number of children today are cross-dominant, neither firmly right- nor left-sided. It is striking how children with behaviour of learning difficulties frequently have trouble distinguishing right from left. There are many rhythmic, concentration and rod exercises which strengthen the laterality proper to man, enabling the child to establish himself more firmly in his body.

The whole is greater . . .

All right, we've seen what eurythmy can do for the individual child. What does it do for a group of children?

Every teacher can experience that a class of children has its own identity over and above the combined characteristics of its members. The well-being of the group depends on the harmonious unfolding and unjealous acceptance of each individual within it. What a marvellous training in social awareness exists in eurythmy, where so many exercises are based on the fundamental principle that 'The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.'

Imagine how difficult it is to form a perfect circle with equidistant spaces between the children. In a circle, no one is a leader, no one is a follower; each child can be seen and acknowledged by all. The circle cannot move and yet remain a circle unless each child overcomes his own limitations and places his full effort in the service of the group. Even that is only half the story — his unique contribution must be recognized by his classmates if the form is to hold.

This is so for all the geometrical patterns done in eurythmy. Great concentration, accurate timing and confident orientation in space are required by all to execute, for

example, a five-pointed star without collision. The necessity is for co-operation rather than competition. Intellectual cleverness and physical prowess are less important than heart-felt concern for one's classmates!

Human community intertwined

With all these plusses, why is eurythmy such a controversial subject?

Rudolf Steiner said that "one will never meet with obstacles as regards the learning of eurythmy so long as the child is healthy, for in eurythmy it is simply expressing its own being." The healthy child is hardly to be found in our troubled times and all our Waldorf education is increasingly therapeutic. The many children with behaviour and learning problems are urgently in need of the healing power of eurythmy, but they are precisely the ones who are unwilling or unable to contribute their best to the group effort.

It cannot be said strongly enough that every movement in eurythmy, consciously and correctly done, is an overcoming of that which hinders a child from controlling his chaotic impulses. It is hard work to gain mastery over hands, heart and head, and to act at every moment out of obedience to an inner self. The more fully centred the child becomes in himself, the more he can take outwards to the periphery, to the human community with which he is intertwined.

Janet Williamson taught for years at Elmfield and has now moved to Kimberton Farms School.

HELP AVAILABLE

Schools requiring help or introductory courses for the educational side of eurythmy contact Miss W. Woldyk who has taught in Waldorf Schools for over 30 years. and has been teacher-training freelance for the last five years; willing to travel anywhere in the world:

Wili Woldyk, 3 Newlands Place, Hartfield Road, Forest Row, Sussex RH18 5DQ, U.K.
Telephone: Forest Row 3736.

Canada and the Americas provide the basis of a new direction and approach that suggests perhaps we are not entirely encouraging children in the most beneficial way.

Change of any magnitude cannot take place over night, but for anyone in the highly competitive 20th Century society in which we live concerned with teaching games, this book shows how, with a little imagination, games normally dominated by a destructive competitive spirit can be transformed in a way that positively encourages friendship and good humour.

C.G.
Christopher Guy teaches games and gym at Michael Hall, England.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE SIX?

How does it feel to be six years old? How does it feel to be in Class I?

Come unto these yellow sands and see . . .

It was in January, the first snow had fallen. A child came skipping up to me with arms outspread, “Wouldn’t you love to be a tree?” Before I could answer, she danced away singing, “I’m a tree. I’m a tree with snow on my branches. It is so lovely to be a tree with snow on my branches.”

* * *

It was lunch time. There were apples for dessert. “Please peel my apple,” “And mine,” “and mine.”

“The skin is the best part.”

“My mummy says that too, but please peel my apple and cut it the magic way.”

Patiently, I peeled all the little apples and cut them the magic way. When I looked up, not only the apples, but also the skin had been eaten! Of course, it is impossible to bite into an apple without any top teeth and only one wobbler down below.

* * *

TIME: “I’ve got a birthday on Sunday!”

“I wish I had. I have to wait longer than anybody for my birthday.”

“Why?”

“Because my birthday’s right at the end of

the year, after Christmas.”
SPACE: A six year old in the bath: “Look, what long legs I’ve got. They reach right up to my tummy.”

* * *

The children are full of imagination, each one is a Proteus. He does not only imitate; he actually becomes a tree, a bird, a stone. He can even creep inside form — inside straight lines and curves!

The children dance, jump, skip and run. They delight in movement.

Between the ages of six and seven, the children are changing their teeth. The live in the element of time, of rhythm, of becoming, of growing. It is the building of the house, the finding and lashing together of sticks to make a tent, the digging of the cave, the building of the castle which is more important than the living in the finished house, tent or cave. When a garden, a house, a shop is finished, the game is usually over.

The children in Class I are celebrating their second birthday. Their physical body was born at birth. At seven, the body of formative forces — their etheric body — is born. The change of teeth marks this new birth. In order to help the child dwell happily within this body, we must lead him into the realm of form and metamorphosis, using his natural abilities, those of imagination, love of movement, repetition and rhythm.

This extract is taken from 'Come Unto These Yellow Sands' a book on eurythmy in Waldorf education by Molly von Heider, to be published later this year.

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ANTHROPOSOPHICAL MEDICINE

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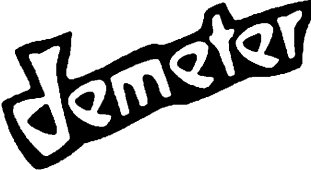
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