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Child and Man

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CHILD AND MAN

Summer 1964

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AIMS AND OBJECTS

SINCE its beginning many years ago as the school magazine of Michael Hall School, and in its continuation as the organ of the Rudolf Steiner Educational Association, "Child and Man" has had an intermittent career. It is unnecessary here to go into the reasons for the changes. But it is interesting to point to the fact that each time it has lapsed its absence has only confirmed its necessity, and before long, as now, it has again reappeared. We hope our readers will welcome its reappearance and will look forward, as we do, to its future.

The object of "Child and Man" is to provide a medium for the expression and discussion of the ideas and principles of what is known as Steiner education. We believe that this is not only something worthwhile in itself, but also for education as a whole.

Let us make one point quite clear from the start. The criticism is sometimes heard, not without some justification, that we in the Steiner school movement are not aware of other important developments going on in education. We tend, it is said, to regard our schools as the only places where any real educational advance is being made, and Steiner as the solution to any and every educational problem.

But education can never be something shut up in this or that school or ideology. It is what transpires between men and women working with children anywhere. Whenever they begin to look beyond the everyday needs of the children in their care they are bound to make discoveries and to elaborate ideas which are also in the spirit of Steiner's own work. He himself was the first to acknowledge this. During one of his visits to England, for instance, he both saw and delighted in the work of that courageous and enlightened pioneer of nursery education, Margaret McMillan.

Steiner certainly gave a new direction to educational thought, based on certain discoveries which he claimed to have made regarding the nature of man. But he left it to others to develop and to work out the practical problems involved in the various places where they were applied. Those "others" are by no means confined to those who work in a Steiner school. Rather, those who work in a Steiner school are simply those who have perhaps a better opportunity to go into all the ramifications of what he suggested.

We hope, therefore, that our readers and contributors, particularly those in other countries, will help us to keep in perspective the widest possible field of educational enterprise. We shall certainly try to do so ourselves. Though we repeat, the

policy of this journal is to promote an interest in Steiner's work. we have no intention of being either pontifical or parochial about it. What Steiner did is something for the education of all children everywhere, or it is nothing. What he said is something that must survive the closest scrutiny and test, or it is not worth emphasizing.

That, we believe, is what he himself would have wished, and we would not have it otherwise. In the final analysis Steiner's work is not even to be judged by what goes on in the schools that bear his name. What goes on in those schools will certainly and ultimately be judged on the basis of what he himself envisaged as the educational impulse of our time.

But we must also put the other side of the case. Let there be no misunderstanding about our own view of the supreme importance and value of Steiner's contribution to education. We have no doubt that it is an epoch-making one, and our task is to make it as widely known as possible, and to report anything that is being done anywhere in the world to bring educational practice in line with what he showed could be the aim and goal of human achievement. This will mark out the position of this journal in relation to the Steiner schools themselves. Though this journal is sponsored by the Steiner Schools Fellowship in Great Britain, and though we shall draw much on these and other Steiner schools for our information and contributions, this journal could still have its place in the educational life of our time even if there were not a single Steiner school in existence.

Ten years before the opening of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart in 1919, Steiner had already lectured in various places in Germany on education. He later published the substance of the lectures as an essay under the title *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*. That essay is still the basis of what he later worked out in greater detail; it was true 10 years before there was a single Steiner school in the world. It is still true now there are 70 such schools.

An interest in "the education of the child" is what we hope this journal will arouse and promote in its readers the world over. But it will be "in the light of" what Steiner had to say about man (that is what the last word, anthroposophy, in that title means) that we shall do it. May what we have to say, therefore, find, if not agreement, at least a response that will deepen that interest, an interest in what is perhaps the greatest task of the adult world, and one to which all other tasks are in some way contributory.

The theme of this number is "The Social Being of the Child." To it we devote three of our main articles. We shall follow this practice in subsequent numbers, devoting the same number of

articles to a theme which in our opinion is both topical and important. Our contributors will be free to develop that theme as they think fit. We shall take no responsibility for what opinions they may express, but we have every confidence that those opinions will be the result of careful thought and wide experience.

On subsequent pages we shall devote our attention to providing information and comment on what seems to us significant and new in the educational world. It is not possible to hope for a lively interchange of opinion between readers in a journal which can only appear once in six months. Nonetheless we hope that readers from all over the world and out of all kinds of educational situations will write to us on anything which strikes them. We shall do our best to incorporate their ideas in one way or another in "Child and Man."

FACTS AND FIGURES

We are indebted to Mr. Mann (Michael Hall) for the following summary of the present position of Steiner schools in the world.

There are 70 schools in all, with 20,000 children and 1,500 teachers. In Germany and Switzerland one child in every 6,000 goes to a Steiner school, in Great Britain one in every 80,000.

Fifty of the schools are in Europe. Germany has 26, Holland 7, Switzerland 5, France 3, Norway 2, Denmark 2, and Sweden, Belgium, Finland, Austria and Italy have one each.

The remaining 20 schools are scattered over the world in the United States (8), Great Britain (6), South Africa (2), and one in each of New Zealand, Australia, Brazil and the Argentine.

All the 26 schools in Germany have state support, and 18 of them have new buildings.

THE WORLD IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE GROWING

IN *The Watcher on the Cast-iron Balcony*, reviewed in this issue, the author describes how as an Australian child he gradually built up a coherent picture of life. He was fortunate in that most of his childhood was spent in the country. For a vast number of children in England the surroundings are industrial. Even in agricultural areas, tractors, electric milkers, radio and television are everywhere in use.

At the beginning, even in towns, children woke up gradually each morning to the movement of the day. They heard the neighbourhood coming to life with the sounds of horsedrawn milk carts, men and women trudging to work, the taking down of shutters and the opening up of shops—everything taking its pace according to human rhythms.

Today the roar of traffic continues through the night and the first impressions with which children become thoroughly familiar are those connected with machinery. At three many boys can already tell from the sound of oncoming vehicles whether vans, lorries, tractors or cars are on the way. They can imitate with uncanny accuracy the roar of aeroplanes or the grind of electric drills. They are more fascinated by the work of cranes and bulldozers than by anything to be seen in the world of nature. While still under 12 they can deal with most electric appliances, repair or make their own radio and television sets, drive the family car out of the garage, and work the tractor on the farm. Their most intense early experiences are likely to be in connection with machines.

Growing girls find it more difficult to connect themselves with an industrial environment. Few town-dwelling mothers are fond of domestic work. Home tasks, cooking, sewing, washing and cleaning are reduced to a minimum. The children thus have little to imitate except the craving to be smart. Girls, more often than boys, are apathetic and listless. They too, however, can generally make an easy conquest of domestic appliances, and take to driving through traffic jams like ducks to water.

The rapid industrialization of country areas and the transformation of familiar parts of the city with new shopping centres and ring roads—saddening to many of the older generation—are thrilling to the young. Change, speed and technical achievement give them satisfaction and stimulus.

The modern child seems to have little interest in material possessions. In schools, lost clothes, watches, pens, books and

instruments lie unclaimed in the lost property department. In town parks, trees and shrubs are broken, plants trampled under foot, and pavilions damaged without any special malice or compunction. In a rapidly changing world, where new models are appearing all the time, nothing is highly valued.

This perpetual seeking for change leads to a general restlessness. It is difficult for most children to sit still without wriggling or twiddling. It is almost impossible for them to leave things alone. Warnings not to touch pass unheeded. There is a reckless unawareness of danger in the way most youngsters handle machinery. Most boys with their first motorcycles go in for speeding.

Mechanical efficiency is won at a cost. Young persons today miss many of the richest experiences of boys and girls 50 years ago. Impressions awakening the senses of smell, taste, sight and hearing pass unheeded. The smells and sounds of the farmyard, the haymaking and the gathering of fruit, the hum of bees and the burning of dead leaves—all the activities associated with the fundamental needs of life are strange to them. Their pictures of healthy human labour depend on television programmes and children's books, which can call up no rich visual imagery because they appeal to no experience.

Many teachers have found in the last 10 years a marked decline in children's ability to follow what they read or are told. They cannot create mind pictures in response to words. Not only do children read less, but are also less responsive. There is frequent indifference to subjects which should be of worldwide interest, because so many themes are presented in the daily television programmes, and it is impossible to coordinate them. To many poetry is becoming meaningless. Fairly intelligent pupils of 14 have found Shakespeare more difficult than a foreign language.

Children find it equally strenuous to listen with full attention to music. In an environment where transistor sets are taken in cars and on picnics, it is hardly surprising that concentration is impossible. As long as there is a whirlpool of movement and sound, all is well.

In this void, understandably, young people fall under the spell of music based on a powerful rhythmic beat and dynamic but incoherent movement. The lighthearted lilting folk song and dance fall out of favour. When dancing the twist, young people seem to be inspired by some grim determination which cannot come to fulfilment. Each advances and retreats on his own, twists and writhes, but never comes together with his partner. The dance seems to express will impulses pounding in a vacuum, ending in frustration.

ALL RIGHT, JACK ?

Alan Howard

An important aspect of young people's lives is their relationship with their elders. Conflict between the generations is nothing new. Elizabeth Barrett ran away from her tyrannical Victorian father to marry the man of her choice. In the 1920's the "bright young things" scoffed at the "stuffiness" of their parents. Today young people scrutinize elders who have abdicated from their responsibilities.

It is now a common event, for example, for parents to move out of the house and leave teenagers in charge of the party and the drinks. Many adults are in difficulties with their own human relationships and can give no guidance to their sons and daughters. All too often schools are expected to supply the discipline which the parents have evaded. On religious and moral questions there is rarely any unity of opinion in the grown-up world about what is good and desirable social behaviour.

With this lack of direction young people have to find their way as best they can. They are disillusioned but on the whole far more perceptive of the aims and intentions of their elders than were the more strictly brought up young people of the last century. They tend to be tolerant but cynical. The danger is that they are predisposed to reject everything offered by older people, and are driven to make heroes of their contemporaries.

Lacking confidence in the advice of their elders, they are likely to build castles in the air. Boys want to go into the R.A.F. and attain to greater and greater speeds and thrills. Girls wish to be air hostesses and see the world. The fact that definite qualifications are required means little to them at the age of 14. It is difficult to get them to work steadily here and now, for they imagine that in a year or two they will be able to do all that is necessary without any special effort.

Too late they find themselves caught in monotonous jobs in factories or shops. They are faced with a routine life in which there seems to be little meaning or purpose. The natural longing for companionship and community of interest finds outlet in gatherings at street corners, meetings in cafés and dance halls, sometimes in the excitement of crime. All too rarely can they unite in creative activities.

What can the adult world offer? It is not within the scope of this article to give an answer. But there is evidence (the Newsom Report amply illustrates this) that many educationalists are facing these questions seriously. They realise that forms of education which seemed adequate before the last war no longer meet the needs of a great number of older pupils. New methods are being tried, and where these are inspired by a genuine understanding of the growing boy and girl, promising results have been observed.

E.H.

"I'M all right Jack," is one of the most biting satires of recent times. This film comedy exposes—and as adroitly conceals—the fact that selfishness is the main impediment to real human social life. To have stated the fact blatantly would have cut no ice.

For we have become case-hardened to moral exhortation. We must be moved to tears or laughter if exposure of our faults is to make any impression on us. Even then the impression is not likely to last long, unless it can also contribute something to putting the fault right.

This, however, satire can never do. Only education can make such a contribution. Education is evolution towards social living, gradual replacement of self-seeking motives by social ones. The education which goes on, or should go on, in our schools is but a special case, a preparatory form of such evolution.

There are two kinds of education. One is by bitter experience, the slow process of trial and error by which civilization has heaped itself destructively upon civilization during man's progress beyond the animal. The other is by enlightenment, whereby the knowledge of what a situation requires can be so presented as not only to inform the mind, but also to inspire the will to its mastery. By way of experience our progress is determined almost entirely from without—circumstances force us to change. By way of enlightenment, we determine ourselves from within, and by that part of us which alone can determine anything—our human spirit.

Education, then, is the change that can be brought about in a person by knowledge. Social evolution is the change in man's social life that can be brought about by knowledge of himself as a social being. Not that knowledge alone can do that. It still has to be willed by the human spirit. Unless we have lost all confidence, not only in the human spirit, but in education too, we may safely leave it to that spirit to bring about the change, provided that we, the educators, do our part to show what all history, all science, all knowledge teach: that man can exist only as a social being.

One of the tragic things about our modern world is that despite the existence of universal education this fact is not sufficiently stressed. If "Jack" goes on thinking that, as long as he is "all right," nothing else matters, there is little one can do about it. But if Jack's son grows up with different ideas, then in whatever

else our education may have failed, it will have achieved its primary task.

This is the tremendous responsibility of teachers everywhere. To accept this responsibility regardless, or if need be in the face, of egotistic and sectional interests is the only thing that will give the teaching profession any real professional dignity, and attract recruits of the right calibre. For teachers are becoming more and more the real legislators of mankind. The school, not the family, is the social unit of the future.

It was out of considerations such as these that Rudolf Steiner accepted the invitation of a group of businessmen to found the first Waldorf School in 1919. He planned it, going into every detail of its curriculum and methods, to meet just such requirements. What made Steiner regard the school, not as merely an interesting educational experiment, but as the beginning of a new social development?

Steiner was a scientist of the spirit. The term means neither more nor less than what it says: an investigator of the spirit by the scientific method of observation and thought. It is a spirit which individualizes itself in every human being. Though working, so to speak, behind the scenes, and inaccessible to any direct apprehension by the ordinary senses, it is nonetheless revealed to the thought of any unprejudiced observer.

Among the results of Steiner's investigations was the discovery that the evolution of the human spirit is something that accompanies the evolution of the world as a whole. He repudiated the sudden disappearance of the individual human spirit at death, as strongly as he did the materialistic conception of the human spirit as a byproduct of the body at birth. The human spirit, he held, is not subject to birth or death. It makes use of both as a means of renewing and continuing its evolution, much as it makes use of waking and sleeping to carry on its earth life.

The human spirit, in Steiner's view, began as a spark of the divine creative spirit, lay for aeons in the consciousness of the slowly forming physical universe, then gradually began to make those reactions to life which we now associate with the plant world, and burst eventually into the storms and passions of instinctive living of the animal, until it finally emerged to self-recognition within the human form, the transmuted essence of all earlier forms. In this form it could at last hear its own real nature speaking to it in the language of the creative word, the "I am," that had called it into being. It could at last recognize itself as the creative image of that from which it had originated.

But this, according to Steiner, is only half the story. In so far as self-consciousness is the climax of a creative evolutionary

process taking place from without, it is also the beginning of a creative evolutionary process taking place from within. Persons will more and more be conscious, not so much of their identity with a particular body or time, but with mankind as a whole. Just as the particular body any one individual inhabits is the fruit of all evolution, so the individual consciousness of the future will be a consciousness transcending the merely personal.

Becoming more and more individual is a process of expansion, not contraction. An actor does not develop as an actor by playing one kind of part only, but in so far as he can put himself into any and every dramatic situation. So the more an individual identifies himself only with himself, the less will he be himself, the less able in subsequent incarnations to keep pace with evolving humanity.

Who or what, then, is this evolving human spirit? It is the individual in every child, the individual who, if the opportunity is given him—and education is that opportunity, can see in all experience and knowledge the connexion of his own existence with that of everything else. Just as he could not come into existence without that which the whole of evolution has given him, so he cannot continue to exist without devoting himself to that to which he owes his existence. "I'm all right Jack" is the cry of a species doomed to destruction. The future lies with the individual who sees himself as and in humanity.

Only such a man will be able to build a human society. Men of like mind will draw together freely and naturally in that society, for it will be their nature, as it will be the nature of those shut up in themselves mutually to exclude each other from all society.

It is the privilege of education both to serve the needs of today and to prepare for the society of the future. This is not an idea existing somewhere in the beyond, but one working as a spiritual force in all true education. If it did not exist, there could be no hope for mankind.

HISTORY — AS LEARNED

"Martin Luther married one of six nuns who had *devoured* their vows; however, they had five or six children, which pleased him very much and made him feel that he had been right. He led a very busy life." (From a child's account).

GROWTH'S SOCIAL BASIS

R. Lissau

IT is only in our time that we have become aware of the full weight of the statement that man is a social being. For this knowledge we have to thank not only Rudolf Steiner, a man of extraordinary insight, but also those psychologists who were content to study phenomena as they really found them and who refused to be hampered by the blinkers of nineteenth-century materialism.

Many of us will have come up against the person who when confronted with the challenge of a liberal approach to life invariably objects: "This is all very well but, human nature being what it is . . ." There are two bland assumptions in this objectionable attitude, namely that human nature is a thing given, defined and unalterable, and mean, petty, concerned only with the realization of a few basic instincts (greed for money, lust for power, struggle for survival, sex). We know today that neither of these two assumptions is correct.

Apart from a very few obvious instincts concerning his own survival, man is the creature without instincts, infinitely pliable, infinitely varied, capable of the most amazing forms of behaviour, able to change and to develop from age to age and from place to place. Laurens van der Post's *A Bar of Shadow* and the film *The Bridge on the River Kwai* make one realize the futility of judging the Japanese from the vantage point of an alien, western civilization. What to the Hebrew was the vice of Sodom seemed to many ancient Greeks the expression of the noblest love of which man is capable.

We believe in the social value of competition, while our ancestors in the Middle Ages practised cooperation and were convinced of the literal truth of the parable of the camel and the needle's eye. The form which a person's personality assumes depends to a very large extent on the community in which he grows up, and therefore is a gift of a group of men with their own culture and attitude to life, which have been growing up over many generations.

The most basic of man's faculties, moreover—those which mark him off from the animals (upright walk, ability to speak and to think)—are as far as the individual is concerned gifts of human society. Man is so devoid of instincts that though capable of walking, he will not make use of the capacity unless he lives in a human environment. Human speech, again, arises through a

subtle interaction between the adult and the infant child. Steiner stresses repeatedly the tremendous responsibility which rests on those through whose ministrations the child learns to speak. Their every word, every thought will have far-reaching consequences.

Every human community thus gives rise to its own particular type of man. Man never establishes his humanity out of nature only. We live, and are what we are, because of the ministrations of innumerable other beings. We literally are "members of one another." Man is a social being.

Most of us now live in an atomised world. The old groups—village, church, family—have lost their coherence and strength. All the more important, then, is the part which the teacher has to play in shaping the growing personality. In particular he must understand the child's basic needs for security and recognition. This Steiner schools have done.

There is form and order in the way the day in these schools is organised. Particularly among the youngest children a daily and a weekly rhythm shape their activities. Every day begins (and ends) in a similar way. In between, outflowing activities and more reflective pursuits alternate. There is stability. The child in the kindergarten knows but one teacher, and as he grows older and begins his more formal work there is the class teacher who for eight years will be his friend and guide as well as his teacher.

Every day the class teacher can use at his discretion the first two hours of school not only for formal teaching, but also for all those social activities, practical or artistic, which meet the needs of his particular class. He need not formally divide his teaching into subjects. For weeks on end he can put the same theme into the centre of his work, drop it once a certain conclusion is reached, and draw on it again after months or even years. He is thus utilizing and integrating man's polar nature—waking and sleeping, memorizing and forgetting, the conscious and the unconscious, thought and will.

The comprehensive nature of a Steiner school—the child sees spread out before him the full range of childhood and youth—further strengthens this feeling of stability. A similar influence is exerted by the school's college or council of teachers, which guarantees a common approach to all facets of school life in spite of great diversities among the individual teachers. Form, order, stability—a basis for learning is thus established before we even begin to teach.

Recognition means two things. First, the child himself feels recognized as a unique member of his class through the personal and permissive atmosphere which permeates all school activities.

THE WALDORF SCHOOL, STUTTGART

Secondly, through the help of his teacher he recognizes an ever-widening sphere of the world as something related to himself and therefore comprehensible, possessed of personal character, and shaped by and dependent on men. All instruction is based—at least, as far as the young child is concerned—on the teacher-child relationship. No abstractions, no impersonal facts, no educational “gimmicks” stand in the way of the child. The teacher mediates between him and the world which thereby becomes recognizable in the only way appropriate to the child’s consciousness.

So the basis for a strong and healthy personality is laid. But what kind of person does a Steiner school produce? Like all other social groups such a school is bound to have an influence on the emerging personality. Its main endeavour is nevertheless neither to produce or even to encourage any particular type. The teacher endeavours to remove the obstacles which prevent the unfolding of the individual personality, rather than encourage any general trend. He acts more positively by appealing particularly to the artistic, creative, imaginative side in the child and by making full allowance in every lesson for the active, spontaneous participation of all members of the class.

In a Steiner school the child has the fullest opportunity for questioning the teacher, for discussion with the rest of the class, and for making his own contributions. There is constant scope for practical and artistic work. The class teacher will use part of his lesson for social activities in response to the needs of his particular class. Through all this a feeling of involvement and participation is engendered which will in the adult ripen into initiative and responsibility.

A strong and healthy personality, responsibility and initiative, artistic and moral sensitivity—such qualities arise out of the life of a Steiner school and will be of positive value to every person, however unique his character and personality.

The teacher was very appreciative of a little girl’s painting. “Ah!” said the girl, “but you should see my best one!”

“Then show it to me, please.” — “I’m sorry, I can’t. You see, I haven’t done it yet.”

IT seems but proper to begin a series about different Steiner schools with an account of the oldest of them, the Freie Waldorfschule in Stuttgart, founded by Rudolf Steiner in 1919. For the centenary of Steiner’s birth one of the original teachers of this school wrote an account of this founding which in my opening paragraphs I propose to follow.

Steiner never worked in the abstract, but rather in response to concrete situations and human needs. In a small pamphlet on education he dropped a hint—so delicate that it was overlooked for many years—to the effect that he might have concrete suggestions to make if he was ever asked for help in founding a new form of education. The man who realised the importance of this offer was the owner of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory at Stuttgart, Herr Emil Molt.

Molt was trying in 1919 to introduce into his factory certain fundamental changes to enrich the life and experience of his workers. Much as they appreciated this attempt, it was felt that for them it came too late in life. So they began to wonder whether something could not be done for their children. Steiner, Molt and the workers of a cigarette factory: between them the impulse for a new education was born.

Division of labour, said Steiner, was unavoidable in modern circumstances, but the consequent narrowing of experience of the factory worker could be combated. So the new school aimed at an ever-wider enlarging of the child’s horizon, at opening for him the fullness of human experience.

First, Steiner set out to find the right teachers for his school. He assembled around himself a group of German-speaking men and women from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Russia, who varied both in age and previous experience. Few had been teachers before. Many had lately returned from the war and longed for some constructive occupation.

A restaurant had been bought and refurnished, and in the two weeks before the start of the new venture Steiner there held the three courses for his teachers which have since become the foundation of all Steiner schools: “A Study of Man” “Practical Course for Teachers,” and “The Seminar Course.” In these courses the prospective teachers were given concrete pedagogical problems to solve in their own individual manner.

For the remaining four years of his active life Steiner kept an intimate connexion to the school whose director he had become. Several times a term, whenever he happened to stay in Stuttgart, he visited classes, gave lectures to parents, teachers and friends of the school, and took part in the teachers’ meetings. There he discussed with the teachers the policy of the school, its syllabus,

methods and timetable, the problems of individual children and teachers, and answered the innumerable questions put to him.

The school which had started with 300 children had more than trebled its numbers by the time Steiner died. It later reached 1,300 before the Nazis decided to close the school. At first they were satisfied with letting it run to a standstill, by simply prohibiting any new admissions. But this procedure seemed to them too slow, and in 1938 they closed the school completely. The teachers dispersed, but a good number of them went abroad to work in or help found other Steiner schools.

Less than six months after the end of the Second World War, at a time of starvation and ruins, the Waldorf School started again. Some of the original teachers were still active enough to pioneer the school a second time, and they were joined by younger men, some of whom had grown up only just before or even during the war. So great was the demand for places that it was soon decided to build a second school in another quarter of the town.

Today the original school has been spaciouly rebuilt after the severe ravages of the war. But it still lacks a hall large enough to assemble all the pupils and, being in a built-up area of large suburban houses, it does not have adequate playing fields. Indeed, open space is at a premium, as a visitor from England will notice in every break.

The original teachers made an overwhelming impression on anyone who met them. Indeed, they had such an abundance of intellectual and artistic brilliance, insight and understanding, that during the first years of the school the question must often have arisen in people's minds whether a second school staffed by more ordinary teachers would have any chance of success. But in fact the original teachers, by their example and their teaching through books and lectures, have inspired a whole generation of pupils, and teachers throughout the world, many of whom are still practising. The Waldorf School still has an outstanding staff who not only bear the responsibility for the senior Steiner school, but also for a teachers' training course and many other educational activities.

R.L.

AH!

During the religious lesson in Class Three the teacher intercepted a carefully folded up bit of paper that was being passed from one of the children to another. Opened up, it contained in sprawling childish characters, "I love you Johnny. Ah, God, how manifold are thy ways."

TEACHING MACHINES

OUR German opposite number, *Erziehungskunst*, recently published two articles on teaching machines. One was by Dr. E. Betz on "Mechanized Learning—Manipulated Language," the other was a review of an article in another journal on "The Problem of Programmed Education." Both are instructive and interesting. But their combined length exceeds by far that of our three feature articles put together, so we have no choice but to summarize their contents.

The whole idea of teaching machines is only 10 years old. It is based on behaviourist psychology and the logic of the "electronic brain." The same vocabulary is used by the scientists who devise calculating machines, the scientists who discuss animal experiments, and the psychologists who deal with the problems of human learning. In devising a course of study for a teaching machine a definite method is followed, regardless of the nature of the subject.

Such a course is divided into small parts, which are then arranged in logical sequence. Many methods, like that of Dr. B. F. Skinner, a professor at Harvard, make the steps between the various parts as small as possible. Each exercise is so easy—fill in the missing word, answer with yes or no—that it must be properly solved. The machine tells the pupil that he is right, and he goes on to the next step. This confirmation by the machine is supposed to make the pupil happy and encourage him to further progress.

Other methods work with somewhat larger units. You are offered a choice of answers. If you choose the right one, by pressing a button, you are allowed to proceed. If you are wrong, you are told by the machine which chapter of your instruction you have to repeat. Psychologically, two ideas are used—procedure by trial and error, and reward for the proper reaction to a given stimulus. This is, of course, the way animals are house-trained.

The programme is devised with all refinements of modern, abstract (or, shall we say, dehumanized) thought. The type of child to whom it is directed is first tested scientifically and statistically so that, for instance, no words are used which might give difficulty. The amount of knowledge which the programme is to pass on is carefully measured. The time allowed for answers, the speed at which questions are asked—all these problems are subject to calculations, deliberations and experiments before arrangement and presentation are exactly defined and limited.

All this effort, of course, does not remain within the realm of scientific and academic studies. From the beginning it was meant to be put to good use. It now forms a definite part of American big business, with the most advanced methods of sales promotion

and quotations on the stock exchange. Learning may be planned, but at least profits are free and limitless. Here is, for example, a quotation from the sales talk of the Centre for Programmed Instruction in New York, directed towards European teachers:

"Actively collaborating and independent pupils: a process of learning for individuals, in harmony with particular pupils: freedom from feelings of anxiety, from the compulsion of inadequate syllabuses, from narrow ideas of maturity and ability: a chance for the teachers of how best to unfold their specific pedagogic abilities, to give them a wider sphere of activity towards forming personality and character: a help towards relieving the scarcity of teachers the world over."

Add the words "creative" and "artistic" and this might pass for a passage from the prospectus of any Steiner school. But programmed learning is the antithesis of what Steiner schools stand for. Instead of the child deepening his experience at every step he takes, learning to find his bearing in a world full of love and strife, sorrow and joy, trust and respect, individual endeavour and social understanding, it presents him with harsh, abstract calculations which, in the real world, are hardly to be found.

Programmed learning is, in fact, nothing but the stillborn offspring of desiccated calculating machines. Its real intention is a deliberate emasculation of the human spirit that could lead us straight into Huxley's *Brave New World*. One of the German protagonists of teaching machines has the following happy vision of the future:

"In a technical school where enthusiasm for learning as such is in any case small, there are also those more gifted pupils who at present because of their brilliance achieve a certain intimation of cultural values. In the new circumstances they would devour the curriculum and come much sooner on to the labour market. At more advanced stages of learning, moreover, programming could separate a small group of quick intellects from the rest of a class. They would work through university programmes while still at school and feel miles apart from the crowd of ordinary pupils."

R.L.

We might all willingly be imperialists if we could live—not, as a boy was asked to put down in his dictation, in "a maritime empire" — but as he actually wrote, in "a merry-time empire."

NEWSOM AND ROBBINS

Half Our Future. Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England). H.M.S.O. 8s. 6d. *Higher Education*. Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the chairmanship of Lord Robbins. 1961-63. H.M.S.O. 15s.

IF the Government is ready to implement the proposals of the two reports which it commissioned we shall witness another great step forward in giving this country universal education in more than mere name. Until about 100 years ago it was believed that education was the privilege of the leisured. Since then we have had more or less two educational systems: the one, culminating in the two ancient universities designed to foster an appreciation of culture, the other giving vocational training. We who look proudly back to Rudolf Steiner's foundation of the Waldorf School which aimed at giving working-class children the full inheritance of human culture can but welcome any step which leads to an enrichment of experience, both of the individual and of society.

Anybody able to compare will be impressed with the way these reports have been produced. The Government, ready to act but uncertain what to do, appoints a committee of experts. These consider the problem, get the relevant facts and interview a great number of interested people. They sift the evidence and present their conclusions in an orderly argument, together with the most important facts. Both reports under review are written in a straightforward manner and show a truly human outlook. The Robbins Report concerns itself much with administrative questions, but *Half Our Future* contains many suggestions of immediate interest to the practising teacher.

If one agrees with Rudolf Steiner that education at all stages is concerned with the whole human being, the main proposals for the training of undergraduates will be welcome. There will be less overcrowding and the ideas pioneered at Keele* are to be applied more widely in order to avoid the dangers of specialization. Specialists will, however, still be needed and therefore the number of postgraduates is to be increased by half, so that in future one third of the students would take postgraduate degrees.

Most classes are to be small, each student is to do written work and have a tutor. There is to be plenty of opportunity for discussion and for social contact between student and staff. Teaching and research are to complement each other. There should be generous provision for students who embark late in life on a university course and in particular for married women taking

* With its introductory year common to all students, followed by combined, broadly based courses.

refresher courses. All this will enrich university life and prevent a narrow academic outlook.

An equally liberal outlook characterises the suggestions concerning schools. Their help in selecting students is essential and they should be kept informed of the progress made by their former pupils. Universities and schools ought to cooperate in devising new syllabuses and textbooks, prune much that is merely irrelevant tradition, and bring teaching into harmony with the realities of the present day.

Two points are of special interest to Steiner schools. Teachers' training colleges are to be increased in size—most of them will have over 750 students—and regionally grouped into a school of education of a particular university. This will render linking the training college of the Steiner Schools Fellowship with the national system a formidable task.

The other point concerns the administration and finance of universities. The governing bodies of places of higher learning are to have a majority of lay members. These men will act as individuals, not as delegates of a corporate body. There is to be one single grants commission for universities, colleges of advanced technology, the Royal College of Arts, the Royal College of Aeronautics, etc., and this is not to be accountable in detail to Parliament. This means still wider scope for the principle that he who pays the piper does not call the tune, which in the circumstances prevailing today is probably the only way of safeguarding the freedom of education.

Lord Robbins carefully weighs up the claims of national needs as against those of academic freedom. "A highly educated population is essential to meet competitive pressures in the modern world," he says. But if we were to yield completely to these pressures we should ultimately jeopardise the dignity and freedom of the individual, and not only academic freedom. Therefore the grants committee is "one of the significant administrative inventions of modern times." The question might well be asked why such an excellent device should be the prerogative of higher education.

The Newsom Report can be summarised in a few sentences for it raises no questions of principle. It is eminently practical and, as was to be expected from the former chief education officer of Hertfordshire, a mine of sound educational advice. Its main suggestion, the raising of the school leaving age to 16, has already been accepted. How far its other recommendations are to be realised will depend not on administrative action, but on the effort and imagination of teachers, headmasters and local education authorities.

The report makes a stand against the "external pressure to extend public examinations" and advises against any external

examinations before the last year of school. Instead, it advocates a leaving certificate, "combining an internal assessment with a general school record." It discourages unnecessary streaming. It believes in an education for adolescents which is "broadly related to occupational interests," but pays equal attention "to the imaginative experience through the arts, and to the personal and social development of the pupils." It gives many helpful examples of how this could be done and deals with the problems arising out of specially bad environmental conditions. Above all it constantly shows how teaching can and ought to be linked to the world at large.

The consequences of both reports, if acted upon, will be that every child in this country will go to school longer, that many more will go to university and that learning will be less academic and more conducive to the unfolding of the full human being.

DIAGNOSIS

A surgeon's eight-year-old son had suspected appendicitis, and father called in a colleague to investigate. After prodding the little boy's stomach for some time and asking, each time he did so, "Does it hurt?", the little chap eventually said "Yes."

Later, after the two doctors had consulted together, the father had a few private words with his son in order to allay any anxiety. He was surprised when his son told him that he had no pain at all. "Then why did you tell the doctor you had?" asked the bewildered father.

"Well, you see, Daddy, he kept on poking my stomach so much, even though I said 'No,' that in the end I had to say 'Yes' to get him to stop."

EMERSON COLLEGE, CLENT

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

THE trustees of Emerson College, Mr. D. S. Clement, Mr. L. Francis Edmunds, and Mr. M. H. Wilson, wish to announce their decision to accept the proposals made to them by the administrative council of Michael Hall, Forest Row, Sussex, (chairman of the council, Mr. A. C. Harwood) and the Steiner Schools Fellowship (chairman, Mr. R. A. Jarman).

In accordance with these proposals, Emerson College from the autumn of 1964 will be transferred to Forest Row, where, continuing its own policy as heretofore, it will, nevertheless, adapt its programme so as to incorporate into its School of Education what is now the Training Centre for Education and Allied Arts, conducted at Michael Hall under the auspices of the Steiner Schools Fellowship.

The combined work will be under the leadership of the principal of Emerson College, Mr. L. Francis Edmunds, in close association, for its educational section, with the teachers of Michael Hall and the other schools of the fellowship.

An interim prospectus to cover the new arrangement is in preparation, with a full prospectus to follow. All communications regarding the year 1964-65 should be addressed to The Secretary, Emerson College. Until further notice the address of the college remains: Clent Grove, Clent, Stourbridge, Worcs.

BOOK REVIEWS

Man and Science. By W. Heitler, F.R.S. Oliver & Boyd. 21s.

IN the mystery centres of ancient times it was a crime punishable by death to disclose any of their secrets, the reason being that knowledge in indiscriminate hands could be dangerous to mankind. Knowledge itself is, of course, not dangerous, but partially understood and misapplied knowledge can be. In *Man and Science* Professor Heitler suggests that the misapplication of modern science is such a danger. This is a bold statement, but Professor Heitler has authority for saying it.

He is professor of theoretical physics at Zurich University, and was led to write this book by the discrepancy he finds in the scientific view of the world, and the view of the world as man finds it and lives in it. With what science, particularly physics, discovers in the field to which it applies he has naturally no quarrel. In the first part of the book he clarifies some of the important developments from classical to modern physics.

Professor Heitler insists, however, that this is a limited field, and that extension of its laws beyond it is both unjustified and dangerous. "The unthinking transference of deterministic thought," he writes, "to matters in which it has no place, must be regarded as one of the most dangerous tendencies of our time, the more dangerous as it takes place only half consciously and under the guise of science."

He pursues this more closely in the chapter, "The Science

of Living Things." Admitting he is no expert in this field, he nevertheless claims that the trend of modern biology towards the casual and the quantitative, which is his field, entitles him as a physicist to "have his say." "Can a basic understanding of vital processes," he asks, "be reached through physical laws?" He then proceeds to examine the obvious differences between the molecular structure of a living cell and that of inanimate matter.

Not only is the original "information" about form and size "already contained in the original chromosome of the germ cells," but "there is nothing at all comparable in the physics of inanimate matter, a portion of which can assume any shape or size." This leads him to discuss the whole question of mutations in the evolution of living beings, and to repudiate absolutely the possibility of chance playing any part in their occurrence.

What, then, is at work in the coming into being of consciousness, and particularly that highest form of it, say, the consciousness of a Shakespeare? Where shall we look for the origin of "mind" in man?

Professor Heitler does not attempt to answer this question. He is a physicist, not a metaphysician or a philosopher. But he has no doubt that the question can and must be answered if the dangers of misapplied mechanistic science are to be avoided. He believes there is a field of research as yet untapped by scientific research which may yield an

answer. The whole purpose of his book has been, he says, to push open a door in the barrier which surrounds the validity of present-day science, and on the far side of which "lies a wide terrain which is, scientifically speaking, practically untrodden."

A.G.H.

The Watcher on the Cast-Iron Balcony. By Hal Porter. Faber and Faber, 18s.

IN *The Watcher on the Cast-Iron Balcony* Hal Porter gives a vivid account of his boyhood in Australia. In the first chapters he describes how a child's consciousness slowly awakens to its surroundings and how the countless incoherent impressions are gradually unified to bring an understanding of life.

His earliest memories are encircled by his mother's warmth and bounty. He could feel her changing moods; he could sense her movements by sounds heard through the wall; but he formed no visual picture of her before he was six. He became aware of his mother's appearance at the moment of his first remembered tears, when the family left the lower middle class town house and moved to the country. There for several years his existence became timeless and flowed with the changing rhythms of nature.

It is interesting to note that adults did not supply the answers to the question about life. He learned most from other children. His school work made little impression on him, except for his discovery of poetry; but he developed a penetrating observation of

people. His portraits are full-blooded, sometimes caustic, but entirely convincing. The most captivating is that of his mother, with her zest for life, her mocking gaiety and the note of vulgarity which made her all too human. The most realistic is that of the extravagant, dirty shiftless Adams family.

The landscape, with its scents and colours, its violent heat and lurking dangers, is a suitable setting for his journey into life.

He writes frankly about the problems of adolescence. Adults were not equipped to protect or guide young people in their meeting with the uglier aspects of human behaviour. The author implies that only the innate qualities of the young themselves could bring their discrimination and strength. His own attitude of interested observer led him to contact many ways of life and conduct without too fully committing himself.

The book begins and ends with the theme of death, and this brings the writer's impressions into a significant pattern. The death of his mother at the close of the story is realistically told and deeply moving. Until this moment, in spite of his enthusiastic pursuit of many interests, he had felt that the meaning of life was eluding him. Now at last he had grown up.

"At that moment I am sure that God is dead, that any love I must have for the world I must make for myself — beginning, at last, after years of happy nothing, at nothing. It has become simple. Mother is dead, God is dead, love is dead, all that I was is dead . . .

"I do not know that, not only have I not started to die, I have not started to live."

Journey into Russia. By Laurens van der Post. Hogarth Press. 30s.

AN American magazine commissioned Colonel van der Post to go on a comprehensive journey of Russia and write down his impressions and thoughts, the result of which is now published in a volume of well over 300 pages. Van der Post flew to Moscow and from there set out on four journeys. The first and most extensive was to the south of the country, starting at Alma-Ata near the Chinese frontier and taking in Turkestan, the Caspian, Georgia, the Crimea and the Ukraine. The second one took him to Siberia, the third to the Soviet Far East, and on his last journey he visited Riga and Leningrad, and finished up at Moscow.

Few people visiting the Soviet Union can have travelled so far and mixed with so widely different peoples as Laurens van der Post. There can only have been a few, moreover, whose outlook in general is as sensitive, generous and tolerant as his. In addition he is an accomplished writer, and his book abounds in magnificent descriptions of scenery: the Siberian taiga, the cotton fields of Kazakhstan, the shore of the Black Sea. All are evoked in poetic descriptions whose effects are so much longer lasting than a whole series of photographs or slides. For they have one more dimension, the depth of human experience.

Van der Post is particularly good when describing the Russians *qua* Russians. He has experience of living among

people of different cultures and knows that there are various forms of consciousness in the world of today. In previous books he had taken great pains to describe for us the mind of the Japanese and of the Negro as contrasted with our own. On this journey he was again and again struck by the behaviour of the Russians as something arising from a kind of consciousness different from that of the Western European. His observations and comments on this subject are striking and compelling. He also understands the modern Russian in relation to his history and his geography: the Tartar domination, Peter the Great, the radical break with the past in 1917, the dominant part played by the rivers, the immense horizon over the Russian plain.

Probably the least convincing elements of the book are the remarks about Communism, although certain phenomena come out very well. The impact of a May Day crowd and of Soviet architecture on a western observer, the bland assertions and evasions of many well-meaning people—all drive home something of the essential nature of this philosophy. But the impression persists that this historical phenomenon lies so much outside the circle of van der Post's sympathy that his most important instrument of investigation has been blunted.

Lastly there are his meetings with individual Russians, many admirable people whom we can understand and appreciate, and whose every reaction we constantly and anxiously watch. Can the human mind, we ask, be collectivized and standardized, or will individuality break through all fetters?

R.L.

Worlds Apart. By Owen Barfield. Faber & Faber. 28s.

SPECIALIZATION is one of the characteristics of our technical age. There is so much to know that no one could learn it all, even if the years given to education were much extended.

Indeed, the danger is that specialization starts earlier and earlier, so that the well-trained man comes to know "more and more about less and less."

One result is that the specialists tend to be cut off from each other. Their own investigations lead to their own lines of thought, their own conclusions about the riddles of life, expressed in their own vocabulary. Although the schoolboy may often read "Science says," it is becoming more and more obvious that the individual branches of science (not to speak of other forms of knowledge) are "worlds apart."

In Greek times philosophy united all branches of knowledge, but modern philosophical trends lead far from that satisfying solution. Where, then, can the specialists of today find common ground? Above all, where can the thinking layman find firm ground, when those on whose knowledge he relies differ so widely from one another?

In *Worlds Apart* Owen Barfield has answered these questions in an interesting and living way. His narrator invites six specialists (physicist, biologist, theologian, psychiatrist, philosopher, rocket research worker) to spend a weekend with him and compare their very different ideas about the universe and man, and

about what it is possible to know. He has also invited a retired schoolmaster, Sanderson, who later turns out to be an exponent of Rudolf Steiner's views. The eight people discuss together, explaining their views clearly and frankly, questioning, criticizing or openly disagreeing.

As far as a layman can judge, the various points of view are fairly put forward. All are given a hearing, and only the linguistic philosopher fails to make any significant contribution. There is plenty of the cut and thrust of argument, and skilful interpolation of quotations and references.

Sanderson, who says little at first, gradually comes more to the fore, and explains, not only much of what Steiner has described as the evolution of thinking man, but also how man can by deliberately strengthening his thinking attain to the possibility of becoming conscious of what was previously unconscious, i.e. of seeing for himself what Steiner described.

Throughout the book the argument is lively. Through their conversation the characters take shape as real persons, and in their stimulating company the reader is encouraged to think hard and to find where he himself stands.

If you enjoy discussions which go deep into scientific and philosophical problems, if you want to understand the basis for the most varied contemporary views of the world, if you want to know the background from which Steiner teachers work, this is a book to read.

M.H.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What kind of training do teachers in Steiner schools receive?

THERE are two training centres for teachers in Steiner schools: one in Stuttgart, the other Emerson College (see announcement) at Kidbrooke Park, Sussex. In both of these places the students receive a basic course in Steiner's psychology of the child, and his directions about the art of teaching itself. In addition they do practical work in modelling, painting and speech, and go into the classes in the schools and both observe and take part in the lessons. There are other training centres in other countries in the course of development.

The existence of these centres does not, however, prevent any school (they are all entirely independent bodies) from accepting as a teacher someone who may have had no previous training or experience, but may be eminently suitable for teaching. In that case, the authority of the school itself—the college of teachers—decides how they may use or train the applicant concerned. In many countries on the Continent teachers in Steiner schools have also to be state-trained as well, but this is not insisted on in Great Britain.

Does not education in a Steiner school tend to make a child feel "different" from his contemporaries, and therefore cause inner complications?

OF course education in a Steiner school will tend to make a child feel different. One of the aims of the schools is to combat the uniformity which is spreading over our modern social life, by trying to give to each child the courage and confidence of his own essential difference. Whether this difference will cause inner complications will depend largely on why the parents have sent their child to this "different" school in the first place, and how much they supplement its education by their loyalty to their choice and their understanding of it.

Education is not something one can hand over to another department, as it were. It is something one has to take part in. A difference in schools, and the fact that children are aware of them, need cause no more inner complications than the differences in homes, which children also feel and discuss among themselves. But if the parents for any reason just take no interest in the child's school or, what is worse, send the child there but discuss it critically or antagonistically in the child's hearing, then that is likely to cause grave complications.

How is discipline enforced in a Steiner school?

THIS question almost inhibits any answer by its use of the word "enforced," thus fixing the meaning of discipline (something to be enforced) before it has been discussed. Fundamentally, discipline is simply the relationship between one who teaches and one who

learns, between teacher and child. From the child's point of view this is a recognition of authority.

But that recognition need not be enforced. It can be given and, what is more important, given because it is wanted. This is the kind of authority which the class teacher in a Steiner school tries to establish. He is with his group of children for eight years, and thus has a good opportunity of achieving it. Whether he also achieves it with what we call "good order" (which is what the word discipline almost always means in people's minds, to the detriment of any rethinking of our educational problems) is

another matter.

Some classes are much noisier than others; in some the children seem constantly on the move. But the relationship between them and their teacher, discipline need not in any way be affected thereby. The point is whether the teacher can use the noise and the movement of the children, or must have them absolutely still and quiet before he can start.

It depends on the teacher. There is no hard and fast rule. While no one in his senses would allow a child to run berserk, we would all do well to ponder whether we tend to keep children quiet and still for their good or for our own.

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