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Child and Man

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CHILD AND MAN

A JOURNAL FOR CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

Editorial Board

Alan Howard, R. Lissau, Frank Newell
Roma Browne (*Secretary*), Gerda Jensen (*Treasurer*)

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addressed to: The Secretary, Child and Man, 4 Cavendish Avenue,
London, N.W.8.

WHAT ARE THE FUNDAMENTALS ?

ANYONE who tries to keep up with what is going on in the modern world is up against two great difficulties. One is keeping track of all the changes in thought and opinion which seem to follow one another every few years; the other is to find out what, if anything, is fundamental in it all.

No reasonable person will go on clinging to something old just because it is old. But, equally, he will be reluctant to take to something new just because it is new. Nevertheless, what is new not only has a strong appeal for many just because it is so, but when the new bursts upon us as it does today with all the authority of the expert and the power of publicity, a certainly natural modesty prevents most of us from standing up to it. This must tend, however, to weaken confidence in our ordinary commonsense judgment, and could even, pushed far enough, put us at the mercy of any and everything new.

Such a tendency is dangerous in any field, but nowhere so much as in that of the care and education of children. The child, that young human being who depends so much on living human contacts, becomes the victim of ideas, and those in charge of him are drawn more and more to see him not as this or that particular human being, but as an example of an idea. It can happen that a whole generation of children is brought up according to one of these new ideas, only for the whole thing to be abandoned and something else put in its place. This is most exasperating of all when the "something else" is found to be also something old, now brought forward as something new.

Take all this business of intelligence, for instance. Ever since man began teaching his children it has been known that some children learn quicker and better than others (which is the long and short of what intelligence means). Any teacher worth his salt has made adjustments accordingly. But in recent years one could almost believe that intelligence was unknown before this century.

Gradually abstracted from the sum-total of the human being, intelligence has come to be some special thing existing in its own right. Then when it was believed that it could be pinned down and even measured, the whole business of the I.Q. was let loose upon the educational world, and it became the key to all our educational problems.

But the public in general got used to it, and settled down to no more than hoping that their children would have as high an I.Q. as possible. What, however, do they do now when they come across an announcement like the following, taken from a provincial paper:

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“I.Q. NO LONGER ALL-IMPORTANT—
EDUCATION CHIEF

“Twenty or thirty years ago we thought that I.Q. was all-important. Educationists thought that intelligence was of fixed dimensions. The Crowther Report [a county director of education said] had blown that fallacy sky-high.

“The report would open the eyes of the public to the profound effects on education of family life, social background and tradition, he went on. It revealed the importance of these not only on such things as discipline but on long-range items such as examination results, length of school life, willingness to undertake further education and even on the kind of lives people would lead.

“They would also affect the kind of husbands and wives they would eventually marry, the type of houses they would live in, and the sort of parents they would become. There would be an effect even upon the kind of children they would bring up in the years ahead.”

In short, the whole future of society depends no longer on Johnny's I.Q. but on the kind of environment in which he grows up. But did it really need a government report to tell us that, and a director of education to underline it? Have we really not known this all along? If not, what are we going to do when some body of experts suddenly announces that little Johnny is also a human being, whose chief task in the first 20 years of his life is to grow, and that growing has “profound effects on education”?

In this issue of *Child and Man* we have devoted our three main articles to just this subject of growth in relation to education. We do not bring this out as a new discovery on our part, but we would like to emphasize its significance. The simple fact that the child grows is of primary importance and, moreover, as it seems pretty likely he will go on growing along the well-established pattern he has been following for centuries, our chief educational concern should be how far our modern methods promote or hinder this process.

In order to deal with this we must be prepared to look at this old phenomenon in a new way. Steiner regarded the whole evolution of man as a phenomenon of growth, a phenomenon which was not only repeated in each individual, but which had a special kind of repetition in the first 20 years of his life.

This special repetition is a kind of education by nature. What we add to it must either enhance nature's work or hinder it. Steiner suggested a line of education which took nature's work into account all along the line, and sought to cooperate with it. Whether that satisfies the demands of our modern civilization is perhaps a debatable issue. But whether or not it can promote a fuller development of man in the line of his evolution, there can be, we think, no doubt.

“AND THE CHILD GREW . . .”

Alan Howard

WHENEVER we see anything move, or change its shape, we are impelled to ask why, and to look for the cause. The whole edifice of human knowledge rests on this simple fact. How far our investigation can proceed, however, will depend on the depth of our inquiry.

Usually our curiosity is satisfied when we discover the immediately preceding cause. If we observe the grass move when we are out for a walk, and at the same time feel the motion of the wind, the one is satisfactorily explained by the other.

It is a different matter, however, when we ask why a seed when planted puts forth roots and shoot, and subsequently leaf, flower and fruit. Different again when we ask why the little black specks on a cabbage leaf gradually turn into caterpillar, chrysalis and butterfly. What changes “the infant mewling and pewking in its nurse's arms” into an intelligent, self-possessed person of 20 or so, is more elusive still. So elusive that we just accept the fact that he or she grows, and leave it at that.

It is usual to lump growth and the maintenance of life together, and imagine growth going on all through life. The fact that a human being completely renews the substance of his body every seven years might account for this. But the growth of a child from infancy to maturity at 21 is something different from just the renewal of cells and the maintenance of life. It is obviously a separate process, which reaches a stage of completion at a certain age, and never again repeats itself.

If, therefore, we would seek to know something about that, we must ask what is doing it, and what happens to the growth-producing force when growth stops. Where does it go?

It is not enough to probe into the nature of bodily tissue and organs, and draw attention to changes in them as explanations of growth, even if it can be demonstrated that these changes are confined to the period during which growth takes place. We are merely transferring observations which we make outside, to observations we now make within; however microscopic they may be, they are still the *effects* of growth, and not growth itself.

The question we should have to put is one about growth itself: who or what is causing these changes? Many, of course, would deny that such a question is justified. Our world of science is still largely dominated by the materialistic conception of the world, which makes a closed circle of explanatory causes, any one of which is fundamentally no more explanatory than any other. We can observe material changes; we can link them together in a logically

ordered sequence; with modern instruments and techniques we can trace finer changes lying behind the ones we were formerly familiar with. But we cannot, so it is believed, observe the changing principle itself. And this way of looking at things continues to be the standard point of view of natural science.

But there is another—a spiritual—science which holds a different point of view. It claims a method and results, based on the observations of this changing principle itself. If anyone, of course, repudiates such a science out of hand, no more can be said. But one can examine its conclusions, even though not yet able to verify the observations, and can ask, do they fit the facts? If they do, then here is obviously a line of inquiry to follow further.

Spiritual science takes its start not from matter but from spirit, from a spirit so wisely and creatively active that it reveals itself as beings. Spiritual beings, not material processes, are the origin of all things. These beings have created, and are still actively working in, all that we know as the natural world. The so-called material sense-perceptible world is nothing more than a manifestation of the activity of those beings. In the crystallization of rock, in the unfolding of the plant, in the movements of the animal, in the growth of man we actually behold part of this manifestation.

Let it be granted that all the elements that will later appear in the characteristics of a grown man lie already, infinitesimally small, in the seed of the parents. Let it also be granted that it is the *will* of the parents that starts the process of fertilization that will bring it about.

Nevertheless, that those elements come to be there at all, that the parents' will sets the process in motion, that gestation takes place—all is the manifestation of the activity of spiritual beings. Beings superior to man are active in the way a man appears and grows in the world.

If we see an intricate mechanical device that claims our interest, commonsense prompts the question as to who made it. It is still regarded as unscientific to ask such a question about the works of nature, or to answer dogmatically "God." No doubt this kind of answer has done more than anything else to prevent the question being raised scientifically at all.

But the question itself is nonetheless scientific, and a pertinent one to ask. Only if it is found upon investigation to be completely unanswerable should it be abandoned. Spiritual science finds the question justifiable and answerable, and discovers spiritual beings as the cause of the works of nature.

Growth in nature, then, for the scientist of the spirit, is the manifestation of the activity of these beings. In the special case of the growth of man another spiritual being is active who holds a unique position in the total hierarchy of beings in that he is spiritual but manifests physically at the same time. That is man himself.

Man—each individual human being—is a spiritual being who periodically incarnates in a physical-material body by means of which he gradually achieves two things: he acquires self-consciousness, and he becomes able to put that self-consciousness creatively and freely at the disposal of the evolution of himself and the world. At each successive incarnation he is able to bring into the world of man renewed spiritual forces for that purpose. Coming as he does as a purely spiritual entity he is only able to link himself to physical-material corporality at that point at which it is itself most spiritual, i.e. at conception.

Therefore, man has to grow. For what he takes up at conception is as yet not a fitting instrument for self-consciousness. He is then in the state at which all living creatures were aeons ago at the dawn of evolution. Although he contains in seed form all that man has acquired as a result of that evolution, he still has to carry it through a recapitulation of that evolution in order to mature it to a point where he can make use of it now.

The first stage in this recapitulation is reached when the child is born. Some 20 years or so have then to elapse before he is able to take his place as a responsible, self-conscious individual in the world of today. He, the incarnating spiritual being, is certainly definitely incorporated, but he is still not able to use that incorporation fully.

The beings that work in nature unfold one after the other the various stages of maturity, and put at a person's disposal the various capacities that have come to him through heredity (like handing a man his different tools as he needs them). With increasing self-consciousness he accepts or rejects what he is offered, and ultimately emerges at the age of 20 or so with what he has acquired, to use for good or ill.

This process of growth, the work of man and the beings working in nature, will of course go on in any case, but never takes place in isolation or under perfect conditions. It takes place in a human and world environment which, while it cannot stop that process (short of destroying it), can do many things to hinder it.

This human and world environment in which the child grows is education in its widest sense. Education in the particular sense is our cooperation with those beings in the way in which they work, by providing them with the best possible conditions for their work, and by adding those things which only human beings can add to the process.

THREE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

E. Frommer, M.B., B.S., D.C.H., D.P.M.

THERE are of course many stages of development throughout life, each of which may be regarded as a significant milestone in its own right. They may be grouped in various ways, each grouping having its own justification. Steiner lays emphasis for educational purposes on the first three groups each of approximately seven years, which form the prelude to adult life.

During these 21 years all the influences which mould the personality from outside are absorbed, and the young person remains *in statu pupillari* because of his vulnerability to these influences. With the achievement of adulthood at 21 a new kind of self-reliance is reached, and influences from outside can be more critically selected.

The first period of approximately seven years concludes with the coming of the second dentition. Comparing it with the second seven-year period bounded by the arrival at sexual maturity, it is apparent that each of the two periods unfolds a distinct group of physiological and psychological changes, progressing towards the conscious active use of the physical body in the first, towards procreation in the second.

The changes in the third seven-year period are more subtle and less easily defined. Physiologically there does not seem to be any further obvious change apart from growth to full stature and physical maturity. Steiner points out the psychological vulnerability during this period, and the need for further education to meet the needs and problems of the older adolescent.

At the risk of appearing to theorize, it is possible to see as regular and consistent a pattern in normal psychological, intellectual and emotional development throughout the first 21 years of life, as there is in the physiological development. The emotional development, however, appears to depend upon the emotional climate in which the infant grows to adulthood. Taking these factors to their logical conclusion, we find that the way to the child in the home, at school, and during apprenticeship or other training lies through his emotional experience.

This apparently simple fact explodes upon one rather like a time-bomb, as we consider the learning problems of unhappy or unattached children, and the range of responsibilities for our children's future which rest upon our management of our own complex adult emotions and difficulties. Steiner therefore regarded the task of being a teacher as one of the greatest moral challenges of our time, and constantly stated that the striving of individual adults, parents and teachers to overcome their own difficulties has an important educational influence upon the children.

There have of course been many schools of educational theory, based upon child psychology and development. Isaacs, Gesell and Piaget have made outstanding contributions in this field, among many others. The contribution Steiner made is largely an illumination of the same phenomena from a new angle. Building upon this new look at familiar manifestations he gives a strong practical lead in methods of handling teaching material in an educational way.

Steiner points out, for example, how the will in the child can be stimulated in practice without prior intellectual stimulation. He gives examples of handling material and children in such a way that moral responsibility and social awareness can be educated in the children, and how the teacher can continually work at his own job to make progress in it.

The aim of Steiner education is not so much academic success as a morally responsible individual who is socially awake and cares for his fellow-men and the world. This is also obviously the aim of forward-looking educationists everywhere. The value of Steiner's ideas and suggestions lies in their practical nature, fruitful quality, and totally undogmatic form. He does not present a theory of education but a way of doing things which carries educational qualities both for teacher and student.

In the following brief description of these first three periods of life, it is freely admitted that an idealized norm rather than a "perfect child" is being considered. In practice, however, this "idealized picture" has proved a useful starting point for defining the educational needs of children, although the individuals themselves show considerable variation. The educational syllabus of Steiner schools is based upon this idealized picture, because it presents a skeleton to which school work can be realistically fitted as flesh and blood, with appropriate modifications to allow for the teacher's and children's varying capacities.

One is constantly led to new discoveries as one begins to look at the educational needs of children during their development. During the first seven years the child traverses infancy, "toddlerhood," and pre-school and the infant school stages. Steiner points out the reliance upon the goodness of the world and particularly of the other human beings which the child has throughout this time. It is an expectation of morality, which places a corresponding responsibility upon those around the child.

The great milestones which distinguish the human from the animal young are, of course, the acquisition of the upright stance in walking, and of speech and thinking. As these become established the child approaches his first purely psychological milestone, the feeling of self separated from his surroundings and especially his mother. This culminates at about the age of three in the meaningful use of the personal pronoun "I."

In Steiner's view the spiritual human being has now arrived fully upon the earth. His imaginative faculties can begin to function, and he begins to develop an inner world of his own. Normally, memory also dates from this point. At the same time the child has become a perfect mirror of the behaviour of those around him. He is an entirely unconscious, faithful mimic. His whole life consists of action. In his speech he begins to experiment with the possibilities of the new skill; in his ideation he tries to form pictures of what is told him; in his activity he explores, mimics, and exercises the mobile possibilities of every climbable height or explorable cavity.

The educational importance of the quality of speech and action offered for imitation at this stage is obvious, as also of the quality of the environment, specially the toys, offered for exploration. It is *par excellence* the period of education through action and example. The intellectual faculties are left dormant during this period in a Steiner school.

At about the age of seven, with the onset of the second dentition, normal children enter a new psychological phase. The children often produce serrated ranks of spikes, battlements or other "teeth" in their drawings at this time. They begin to be able to use imaginative pictorial ideas as concepts. This is a much subtler milestone. In a Steiner school this is the time when the three Rs are introduced, but the work is still presented in an oral, freely artistic form. The children now need an adult referee outside the home circle. An 11-year-old described this time very well when he said, "You know, mother, until a little while ago I thought that grown-ups had always been grown-up, now I realize that they were children once too."

A new individuating experience arises for the child between the 9th and 10th years. It is characterized inwardly by a feeling of intense isolation, often accompanied by the first flood of doubts. Outwardly the child no longer accepts the teacher's authority in the same unquestioning way, and he begins to have a secret life which he often fails to confide to any adult. This time is really a watershed in the soul life of the child. If the adults about him can reestablish contact on a basis of mutual trust and respect, the child is able to lay a foundation for a healthy relationship to the older generation throughout the rest of his youth. If, however, the child's behaviour at this time is misunderstood, misconstrued or, worse still, ignored, there is the danger that he may retreat from contact with those supposedly older and wiser than himself and become unsocial or even antisocial in his feelings and actions for the rest of his days.

Gradually towards about the 12th year the child's thinking has matured sufficiently to combine concepts in a logical fashion. If real contact between the teaching adult and the child has been maintained through the previous critical phase, the child of 11, 12, 13, is a delight to teach. He is not yet tossed about by the emotional storms of adolescence, and his interest in life is relatively objective and

impersonal. Children at this age often produce marvellous creative work and make great strides in initiative in learning.

At puberty there is a major upheaval of the psychological organization. The child's thinking now becomes capable of handling abstractions. With this comes the possibility of idealism, and merciless criticism of all that the older generations may offer. The children are ready for a completely intellectual technique of handling learning material, and demand a much greater degree of independence in their learning. This is the third experience of loneliness, of the self, in these three periods of childhood and youth as described by Steiner, and in some ways the most drastic. The adolescent cannot rely upon the stability of anything. His thinking has become a new tool for testing out; his feelings are an unknown ocean with unexpected gales and currents; his impulses to act often catch him unawares, and may be uncontrollable.

If the preceding years have been a relatively harmonious and stable experience and a good relationship with the teachers has been maintained, the learning situation can prove the steadying influence at this time. There is so much that can only be learned when the faculty of abstract thinking has fully developed, that the newly experienced ego can be launched upon a journey of exploration and discovery quite as exciting as any undertaken by the heroes of the past. Whether this is in the scholastic or practical apprenticeship sphere is relatively immaterial; it is the attitude of the teachers and the personal relationship with the pupils which matter.

Steiner warns of the new profound question which the 17 to 18-year-old asks more or less unconsciously, about the meaning of his life. This question must be met. It is a further manifestation of the third stage in the individuation process, the beginning of self-knowledge. Who am I, why am I here? Only the widest educational canvas can give the young adult the security of his human heritage, particularly in our present time.

The above sketch is only intended as an introductory stimulus. Very much more is contained in Steiner's educational work and in the syllabus for the schools than could be indicated in such a brief article. It was hoped merely to indicate the attitude which lies behind the construction of the syllabus, and in no way pretends to present a comprehensive picture.

NEW YORK'S STEINER SCHOOL

L. Francis Edmunds

THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL in New York, the first Waldorf school in America, was founded in 1928. It began in a private apartment, later found a home of its own, and eventually came into possession of a fine four-storeyed building, finely placed in the city, at 15 East 79th Street. Central Park, a few paces down the street and across 5th Avenue, conveniently solves the problem of recreation grounds. The interior of the building with its commodious rooms makes a welcoming impression.

In spite of these favourable circumstances, the growth of the school was slow. At the celebration of its 25th anniversary, it numbered scarcely 140 children and reached only to an eighth class. The reasons for this were not obvious, for the work was good, the children were happy, and the parents well satisfied. It became an earnest question at that time whether it might not serve better to transfer the school to some rural but developing area outside the city with its turbulent pressures and ever-shifting population. And yet the thought, after so many years of effort, of abandoning the hope of a flourishing Waldorf school in the midst of Manhattan, was hardly to be borne.

Late in the autumn of 1954 came the contrary resolve, not only to maintain the school where it was but to push forward to an upper school. On the face of it, this seemed wellnigh an impossibility. The existing building could not by any manner of means be made to stretch beyond a ninth class. Where was a suitable property to be found, sufficiently near at hand to make the extension to an upper school practicable? And, with the price of property on crowded Manhattan mounting by leaps and bounds, where was the money to be found with which to purchase such a property?

At this crucial moment it was privately learned that not only a building but an actual school building, just round the corner, 15 East 78th Street, was about to be sold. This startling piece of news fired off an immensely vigorous moneyraising campaign and, in a manner little short of a miracle, this second building was procured for the school.

From that moment, a new life began for the school. The autumn of 1955 saw the setting up of a ninth grade, and then each year a further grade until, by the autumn of 1958, the school was complete from nursery to twelfth grade. For some time now it has been full to capacity with about 300 children. It stands, today, a firmly established Waldorf school amid the massive buildings and traffic-laden streets of the biggest and busiest city in the world. To expand beyond its present dimensions, however, would involve a capital outlay of between \$2m. and \$3m.

Now a word about the inmates, the children themselves. If ever there was a city of utmost clamour and distraction with life speeding

along at a frenzied pace, it is New York. To a newcomer from Europe, the effect is strikingly evident in the children. At a first impression, they appear to be too noisy, nervous and garrulous, too conscious and even selfconscious for their years and, in their attitude to grown-ups, disconcertingly casual.

Living, as many of them do, in flats piled high on one another, there is little enough escape for young life and limb. Parents complain that they do not know what to do with their young children. In the circumstances, television, even in the better homes, takes a heavier toll than it otherwise might, and the movie picture, too, claims a formidable share.

One asks how children can survive these conditions and still be children. And yet—and this is the wonder of it—there are children to be met in every grade, sensitive, imaginative, responsive to a high degree, and devoted to their work. To know these children is to learn to feel that there must be intangible counterforces working for good. They love their teachers and their school and are greatly loveable in turn.

Their startling frankness bears with it also great warmth of heart. This applies equally to the critical youngsters in the high school grades. For the most part they both perceive and cherish the human element in all they receive. And the alumni (old scholars) at their annual gatherings pay happy tribute to the values offered them in their schooltime. They inspire the confidence that they will not easily be led astray by political rant and ideologies.

There is a feature of the New York school, though not peculiar to that school, which marks it out as being distinctly American. The American nation is a composite one. This, too, can be clearly seen in every classroom. There are children in the school who are themselves immigrants able to recall their pre-American life, and others who are first, second, third, fourth or fifth generation Americans, or whose American ancestry reaches still further back. The population of the school has, by its very nature, a cosmopolitan air. Yet at the same time, and even because of this, there is great stress laid on the nation factor, on "being and becoming American."

The process of Americanization never ceases. The "early fathers," the founders of modern America, are never forgotten. American history is a compulsory subject. Independence Day is solemnly recalled each single year. Thanksgiving Day is a national festival. The birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington are regular commemoration days.

The stranger sees in all this the welding of a nation still in process. One would expect that nation to consist of individuals transcending all national and racial differences, whether biological or in matters of outlook. The fact that this is so often not the case should not obscure the truth that here are new and germinal possibilities, though overlaid with much jingoism, in which there lives the real America of a further future. To realize this makes a difference in stepping into an American classroom or before an

American college audience. We of the Old World, so much conditioned by the past, confront a New World which may seem crude and chaotic in some respects, but where all is tensely addressed to shaping a future. Every immigrant who first steps on to the American shore experiences this. He has left his past behind in order to make a new life. It is the ever-present example of the pioneering spirit of the "fathers," not their antiquity, that endears them to the heart of America. History acquires another aspect here.

It goes along with this that the social life of the New York school is more vigorous than that of most European schools, including the Waldorf schools. It is the parents, not the teachers, who issue a monthly newsletter, with the aid of their teacher consultants. It is they who organize the termly lectures to the parent body, the themes for the lectures being proposed by them. They take the entire responsibility for the annual bazaar, also for an annual benefit performance in a New York theatre, both in support of the bursary fund, and for other social functions as well.

And for several years now, it is parents who have maintained a weekly educational study circle among themselves, inviting this or that teacher from time to time to clarify certain points. Each grade has its parent representative, and these representatives are particularly active in seeing to it that their fellow parents should also be active, for example, in attending the class evenings given by the teachers.

So, too, with the scholars. For years now, the older pupils of this young high school (they prefer to be called students) have maintained a monthly paper of their own, *15 East*, with up-to-date articles on a variety of themes: the political scene at home and abroad, the theatre, art exhibitions, a recent event in the scientific world, some new publication of outstanding interest, impressions of travels abroad. Also on the internal affairs of the school—criticisms or appraisals of some visiting lecturer, of the activities of the student council or of student conduct generally, of the dance programme, the sports programme, and so on.

In addition there is a highly commendable annual publication, *The Key*, devoted to fine writing. The initiative for this rests with a teacher, who enjoys, however, a whole supporting editorial staff of children.

The student council of elected representatives has a serious standing in the school. It is not at all a case of student government, for that rests strictly with the teachers. Students are encouraged to air their views, vent their criticisms, and offer and carry through practical suggestions for improvement. From time to time, there are consultative meetings between the teachers, or the teacher executive, and the student council, for greater clarification and mutual understanding on given issues. All this is intended to foster a sense of individual responsibility not only for the welfare of the school but for social life beyond. The important thing is to learn to *care*, where care is needed.

Mention has been made of a dancing programme. One would think that dancing is a particular American preoccupation, for there are many parents eager for dancing instruction to begin from the sixth grade up. In the high school, it is customary for each class in turn to throw a dance once a year for the rest of the high school, visitors from other schools being invited.

All these activities together tend to foster a sense of social community which ranges beyond the particular communities of the separate classes. It finds its crowning deed in an annual *Year Book* with photographs of the teachers, the leaving students, the different classes, school activities within and outside the school, and appropriate comments all through.

It may be said in general that what is customary in other schools in America as part of the American training is taken up by the Steiner School as well, but is there given an emphasis in keeping with the character and ideals of a Waldorf school. This integrates the life of the school more closely into the social community at large. Like everything else, it can be driven too far, can lead to over-organization, to too much talk for too little done, and yet there is much that is wholesome to be learned from it.

A word about the academic life of the school. The Waldorf plan is studiously followed, yet American custom also has to be adhered to. The latter affects the high school mainly. It should be noted that in America almost every student leaving school hopes to go to college. In addition to the large state colleges which are free, there is a vast variety of private colleges, each with its own distinctive character.

The placing of students in the colleges most suited for them becomes an art in itself. This concern for college entrance is a dominant one in the high school years. The school has to maintain detailed records of each student's performance in each subject taken, even the number of hours devoted to each subject. Further, the student has to show that the various courses he has taken in the last years, calculated in points, count up to a minimum of 16 points. And then, on top, comes the public examination or college boards.

The positive factors in this elaborate system are the following. In the first place, a student is not wholly judged on his performance at the final examination. Secondly, room is left for purely human considerations. For example, a student may be accepted into a given college, irrespective of examination results, if it is thought his personal influence may be of benefit to the college community as a whole.

The negative aspect is that the system lays stress on preliminary tests over a period of years, and this can work its way right down to the elementary school. Even so, much depends on the way the teacher handles the matter. Where the relationship between teacher and children is one of confidence and trust, the tests, for the younger children at least, assume the character more of a friendly game and can be conducive to clear and accurate learning without serious detriment to the Waldorf method.

EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT

R. Lissau

THE possible advent of a Labour government (by the time this article appears, the result will be known) has led practically all schools outside the jurisdiction of local education authorities to reconsider their position, policy and future. In doing so they cannot but be conscious of the fact that the Conservatives, ever since they came to power in 1951, have scrupulously avoided doing anything against the spirit of the 1944 Education Act. Without actively weakening the public and independent schools, the Conservatives have consciously and continuously built up the schools maintained by public money and thereby increased their value, efficiency and reputation.

In the spring the *Observer* carried two articles on the future of the public schools. The author, a schoolmaster at one of these schools, was looking forward to certain changes in the public schools which both a Labour government and the schools themselves could accept. When clarifying their own position Steiner schools must emphasize that their underlying impulse aims at much more than the setting up of a few independent schools. It concerns not only education in general, but the whole complex relationship between the individual citizen and his government.

We have to distinguish between two questions—the best way of establishing a national education, and the social and economic framework in which this education is to function. Lately we have heard a great deal about new school buildings and the raising of the school-leaving age. These things are important. But as long as our children are to be taught by men and not by machines, the existence of a proper body of teachers and the establishment of good working conditions for them is even more important.

The good teacher will teach from a sense of vocation and will not change his job with anybody else, unless he feels he is getting stale and needs a temporary or permanent break. Such a man or woman will be socially responsible and creative. If he feels that his services are not adequately paid for, he will also reflect that owing to the length of his holidays he has more time for sheer living than most other members of the community.

Once it is accepted that good teaching can only come from good teachers, and that good teachers enjoy their work, are deeply interested and take a pride in it, one of the main problems of the Minister of Education will be to attract the best men and women into the profession. If it is further agreed that we want devoted, socially responsible and creative teachers it follows that we have to offer them a job with scope for responsibility and initiative, and reasonable social standing.

Thus we visualize a national education system in which the head of a school is fully responsible for the syllabus, the method of

teaching, and the general social atmosphere of the school, a responsibility which he will share to a large extent with the more experienced members of his staff, unless the example of Steiner schools is preferred and full responsibility for a school is borne by its college of teachers which allocates to some of its members certain administrative functions.

Such an educational system not only gives fullest scope to all that is creative and socially valuable in a teacher, but also enhances his professional standing. No longer is he an employee who carries out certain allotted duties, but he becomes a schoolmaster, in the most literal meaning of the term. As such he will not only be one of the body of men primarily responsible for the education of children in a particular district, but will also expect that representative teachers will be consulted whenever cultural and social questions affecting his district or the country as a whole are being discussed, since they almost invariably touch upon the physical and moral welfare of the younger generation.

A system of national education based on individual schools is bound to provide a very wide range of schooling, and thus allows much choice to individual parents asking themselves which form of education might best suit their particular child, and to individual teachers anxious to apply their particular gifts in the best possible surroundings. That such a system need in no way lead to educational anarchy would require its continued supervision by (i) the Minister of Education and the local education authorities, and (ii) the inspectorate. The former would be mainly concerned with social, the latter with purely educational, problems.

The community through national and local authorities must see that every child attends school, that diversity is not driven so far as to make transfer from school to school impossible (most necessary if mobility of population is to be maintained), that buildings and installations are up to scratch, and that parents and children do not fall victims to cranks, frauds, profiteers or criminals.

Who would pay for the service which the schools would offer? Steiner visualized a state of affairs in which every parent paid school fees. This presupposed, however, an entirely different distribution of incomes. Whether Labour or Conservatives preside over our mixed economy, it seems unlikely that the system of paying by wages and of accumulation of capital will be significantly changed. In our social set-up the only alternative is the payment for all schooling by the government.

The present system, by which the government pays for a decent education while some parents pay privately for what (rightly or wrongly) seems to them a still better form of education, is inherently unfair, as long as only a small percentage of the population can make use of this alternative. The actual arrangement visualized would not be much different from that pertaining at present in regard to universities—only that provision would have to be made to find a school place for every child—or from that regulating the payment

for the National Health Service. Once a school was certified by the inspectorate as efficient, and its buildings and installations as sound, parents would be free to send their children there.

This is, of course, an ideal state of affairs, not to be realized by a few administrative measures during the next few years. Nevertheless, let us once more stress its advantages—an educational system which gives to parents a wide choice of schools, allows teachers to take their own decisions over a wide field freely and responsibly (instead of having to carry out measures devised by official bodies), and establishes a social climate in which the art of teaching can freely flourish. It combines the advantages of the present system of local authority schools—fairness and comprehensiveness, with that of the independent schools—freedom and diversity.

A number of steps can already be taken towards realizing this ideal. Local authorities can be encouraged to provide alternatives to the present tripartite system, in the way Leicestershire, among other authorities, has already done. Heads can be encouraged to give their schools a distinct character and personality. The public and independent schools can be opened up to children of all social backgrounds, while leaving to these schools their typical characteristics and freedom of action.

CHOOSING THOSE CHRISTMAS TOYS

Josephine Spence

SAND and water, as Paul Abbott has pointed out, are of vital importance as play materials for children. But it is doubtful whether by themselves they are sufficient. Children nowadays also need toys to relate themselves to civilization.

Some parents make toys for their children. One imagines they are parents who have enjoyed playing in their own childhood and realize its value. In the old days this was probably the only source of toys—the peasant toys.

The peasant tradition is remote from us in Britain. But I think one can study these toys and ask what it is that makes them survive—the best of them—almost as works of art.

Their origins were in everyday life—the horse and cart, the plough, the woman feeding doves, the pecking bird, the doll in its cradle—and folk stories. Because they came out of everyday life and out of the folk tales, they must have helped children to root themselves into the life around them, both the life of the farm and the home as well as the imaginative world of tradition.

There is, for example, a wooden toy of a man and a bear both chopping at a log; you can move it backwards and forwards and they chop. Such a toy relates to a time when man and animal—man and

nature—were much closer together, and man was dependent on his own skill and guile to tame the brute forces.

The quality that makes such toys survive in their appeal and significance is the quality of truth. They have a content. They belong to a world of children which is full of imagination. A child lives in his world of play, an intact little world, and his playthings have an important relationship to him. He can relate himself to such toys because he has experienced the life out of which they grow.

My aim in designing animal toys for the young child was to simplify, to shed unessential detail, so that the result would be a wooden shape that was simple “dove” or “horse.” The dove need have neither wings nor feet but must be reduced to its lovely primal shape. It would then be a “truth” to put into the hands of a child.

I modelled both shapes first in clay and discovered that my simplified shape of “horse” needed only the slightest adapting—a different tip to the nose or angle of neck to become another animal. This was specially so in modelling young animals which are nearer the embryonic form. A foal, a lamb and a calf needed only a pinch to the clay here and there to emerge from this “urform” I had found. This was exciting and when I later discovered the Vitalli toys made in Switzerland I felt at once that here was someone else who had discovered the inner truths about shape in animals.

What a different kind of impression the child receives from some of the hideous caricatures of animals one sees around as toys nowadays. These are false fantasy and, as such, damaging to the impressionable child.

The moving toy is the next stage. The movement must on no account be arbitrary or just comical. It should again seek to capture the characteristic of the animal or figure and this calls for observation and ingenuity from the designer. This is selection as opposed to exaggeration which would become caricature and therefore present a falsehood—amusing perhaps to the adult, but a falsehood to the child.

If one looks in shops or catalogues one will find stress laid on the kind of toys that are designed to teach something—the “educational toys”—meaning in fact learning in number and measure. One example is the brick set, where two small bricks measure exactly the same as one large one. Then there are the special shapes that have to be “posted” into a similar shaped opening. These are not undesirable toys, but they put the stress on laying an unconscious foundation in the child that will be a grounding for later intellectual understanding of numbers. For the young child to have only such toys is limiting.

“It is important,” Steiner said, “that we adults refrain from making rules for the child as far as his playing is concerned, and that we do not try to introduce our pedagogical ideas into the child’s playing, because the characteristic and educational qualities of the

child's play depend on his being left free to live in his own inherent forces.

"And what will a small child do when we leave him to his own forces? He will try to move about outer objects in this or that fashion. He will be active in his will, and in a playful way will learn by his own experience how the outer world reacts to his efforts, in a far better, healthier way than through the pedagogical ideas, or the personality of an older person. It is therefore of great importance that we do not introduce into the child's play anything leading towards an intellectualizing activity."

I will conclude with a few suggestions for different toys for different ages. The soft toy for a young child should be simple, safe, not too big or too small and preferably made by mummy—a rag doll or animal. It certainly should not be grotesque. The "feel" is very important for a young child and here the qualities of materials come into question. A preference for natural materials—wool, cotton and wood—as opposed to plastic or nylon would seem to follow logically from the argument that an early uniting with nature is important.

Dolls are too big a subject to be gone into in a short article. It must suffice to say that they are usually important to both girls and boys. They can be the recipients of much feeling and the best dolls are the ones that are not too committed to representing one personality. The child should be able to use its imagination and dress the doll as a king or a fairy or a shepherd boy as the need arises.

Apart from nature material the next toys should be simple and strong. They should tend to be large and fundamental and not cluttered up with detail. Leave room for the child to add his own ideas. A lorry should be able to be loaded and tipped. A boat should be able to float as well as to be pulled, and have space for a cargo and perhaps a little hole where the child can add a flag, creating something for himself. A car should not be a model at this age, but a large, serviceable, basic car. The tactile quality is still important, the design should take into account the child's handling.

These early toys will be largely "doing" toys. They engage the child's will. Later, after about six years of age, the social element comes into play, the need to do things together, to act, to make things together. This is the age, too, for the large constructional toy, not the one with a lot of fiddly bits. One could call this the age of feeling and experiencing in relation to others.

In school the child learns a great deal through artistic activities at this time. Painting materials, dressing-up clothes, puppets—all are good toys. Later still, model-making, scientific kits and mechanical constructional toys come into their own because the child has entered into a thinking stage where he wants to puzzle out and plan. This is the right time for intellectual activity.

A lot could be said about the strain put on children by giving them too early toys that demand too much and call on faculties not yet developed.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Is anthroposophy as such taught in Steiner schools?

ANTHROPOSOPHY is a science of the human spirit and its relation to the evolution of man and the world. It is certainly not taught in Steiner schools, because this would make of them sectarian schools, and this is not their task. The whole point of the Waldorf or Steiner method of education is that it can be adapted to any and every kind of educational situation. The first Waldorf school was called the Free Waldorf School, the "free" meaning that it not only accepted all children, but that it educated them on one basis only, the human one.

The fact that, usually, most of the teachers in a Steiner school are students of anthroposophy must, of course, create a certain atmosphere in the school. But no more than there would be in any other school where, if it be a good school, the staff work from a certain outlook on the world and man.

Nor is there any reason why, specially in the upper classes, the teacher should not talk to the pupils about Steiner and his ideas, as they would about any other important figure. That would only be wrong if the teacher made propaganda for such a teaching or such a figure. But just as little as that is likely to happen with any other teacher who has strong convictions of his own, so is it with Steiner teachers.

What is the purpose of teaching eurythmy in Steiner schools?

THE purpose of teaching eurythmy is to bring into harmony the outer movements of

the body with the inner movements of the "life-structure" of the child. This life-structure—it is sometimes called "life-body" in the sense that just as our physical material body is part of the physical material world, so the life within us is part of the world of life—is a supersensible, mobile entity within the physical man. The movements in eurythmy repeat in bodily movements these inner supersensible ones.

If a child does this long enough—throughout his whole school life, for instance—it is productive of noticeable effects. The person walks and stands better, and is less liable to nervy, erratic movements, and even to the rheumatic disorders of later life and all that such disorders reflect of an inner soul condition.

The intimate connexion of eurythmic movements with the speech centres has had a great effect in many cases on children with difficulties in speech and even in learning to read. Special or "curative" eurythmy, or extra eurythmy, given in some cases, has been productive of a general improvement in a child's health and capacity to learn.

The power of eurythmy as a harmonizing medium, however, especially in this age and civilization where so much exists to jar and distort the subtler workings of the human organism, makes it a "must" for all children.

Is there streaming at any age in a Steiner school?

In any class the individual children vary as to ability, and any teacher will have to make adjustments for this fact. Moreover, this difference is not just in ability in general, but in ability

for particular activities—"Good in English, poor in maths," etc.

This inequality is not only something the teacher has to make adjustments for, but something the children themselves have to accept. How they accept it is again part of the teacher's job, and can at all ages be made the opportunity for learning many important lessons about life itself. Children will of course sometimes suffer because of this knowledge. But it is a suffering which will—or can—help them to grow.

If, however, they are constantly reminded of this inequality and a social value is put upon it by sorting them into streams, and labelling them as such, then there is no hope of helping them. They are branded, and to a certain extent doomed.

There is, therefore, no streaming in a Steiner school, though the

children there as anywhere else cannot help noticing these inequalities. Everything, however, is done to help them meet these "facts of life" as human problems and situations which they themselves have to deal with.

This does not mean, however, that the class must always work as a whole. For certain purposes classes are divided. This applies to practical lessons where we might have to deal with a smaller number than the total, or the language lessons when children who have no knowledge of languages join the class at a later stage.

At the very end of the school, moreover, there is naturally a certain amount of specialization which means that the more intellectual child is able to go in for more examination lessons than his less gifted classmate.

NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Josephine Spence is the daughter of E. L. Grant Watson, zoologist and author. Trained at the Slade School of Art. Taught at Elmfield School for five years and then went with husband John to Potterspury Lodge, a home and school for maladjusted children. They studied together children's needs with regard to toys and, back at Elmfield, established with some friends "Woodpecker Toys," and a small independent industry based on craftsmanship. One son.

L. F. Edmunds has seen all the five continents and taught at least in three. Worked as a class teacher, as science master in the upper school and as a lecturer to adults and adolescents. Founded Emerson College, now established at Forest Row, Sussex.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Leicestershire Experiment and Plan. By Stewart C. Mason. Councils and Education Press. 4s.

THE latest edition of this pamphlet contains the observations of the Director of Education for Leicestershire, made in 1957, 1960, 1962, 1963 and 1964, regarding the planning and progress of the reorganization of some of the schools in his area. Although this reorganization is by no means revolutionary, but soundly pragmatical both in its intended scope and its actual implementation, it is of greatest interest to every educationist in the country. It is of special interest to Steiner schools.

This is so, firstly because each of the reforms involved brings the organization of the Leicestershire schools nearer to that of Steiner schools, secondly because the criticism and opposition which the Leicestershire Plan aroused is all too familiar to Steiner school teachers, and thirdly because it offers factual confirmation for the claim that educational initiative based on the free cooperation of individual teachers will arouse what is best in them and call forth warm support from parents and pupils.

Mr. Mason explains how he at first accepted the system of education which the 1944 Education Act had heralded in. In the course of a decade of supervising the practical working-out of this education, however, he began to have grave doubts about the underlying assumptions of the Act. His criticism hardened into a line of reasoning which is practically indistinguishable from similar observations made from 1946 onwards by Steiner school teachers, particularly by Mr. A. C. Harwood.

The assumptions on which our present system of education is based are that (i) it is right and proper to separate children according to their intelligence, (ii) it is possible to do this fairly, because the intelligence of an individual remains practically constant throughout his lifetime and can be measured objectively, (iii) technical ability as a special aptitude can be diagnosed, and (iv) the age when separation should begin and a new start be made is 11.

At the time of the 1944 Act there seemed to be factual confirmation for assumption (ii), although many practising teachers would have denied its absolute validity. Today there is enough evidence to show that prognostications as to the career of a pupil based on his I.Q. are of only limited value. Assumptions (i), (iii) and (iv) are now seen to have no factual basis, to have arisen largely from the academic prejudices of the 19th century, and to lead to absurdities in the context of the social problems of today.

Over the years this situation became clear to a number of educationists. Most of them set their hopes on large comprehensive schools, but Mr. Mason was unable to share their enthusiasm. He wanted "to avoid any system where the headmaster or headmistress becomes a remote administrator shedding both teaching and pastoral duties, where the staff is so large that it is bound to associate in groups, if not in cliques, where the pupil can never comprehend as a whole the social and educational organism of which he is a member."

A system of comprehensive schools, moreover, involves an equally comprehensive building programme. To reform here and

now Mr. Mason had to start with existing school buildings and add to them as circumstances warranted. So he decided on a three-tier system of schools—primary school, high school, grammar (or upper) school. It seemed clear to him that advantage should be taken of the only psychological turning point between 8 and 16, i.e. puberty, and so transfer from the high school was fixed at 14. This meant that most children entered the high school at 11 years and thus many organizational problems for primary and high schools were eliminated. But whereas formerly children at the end of the primary school were channelled into either the grammar or the secondary modern school, under the new regime the whole group entered the high school together. The 11-plus examination was dropped.

After three years at the high school every child, whatever his intelligence, was admitted into the grammar school provided his parents gave an undertaking that he would stay at school at least for one more year after reaching the legal school-leaving age of 15. So Mr. Mason made provision, at first in a few districts, for a genuine universal education.

There are a number of features which the schools of the Leicestershire Plan have in common with Steiner schools. They provide education for every child until the age of 18. They are not hamstrung by any internal examinations and only in the last few years at school do examinations play any part in the life of the school. Even then, no child is given a one-sided academic education, but is engaged in practical and artistic activities as well.

Near the top of the school, moreover, pupils work on a timetable which is largely devised according to their individual needs. There is a tendency in the

Leicestershire schools to dispense with streaming before the age of 14. Finally, Mr. Mason is "coming to appreciate more clearly as the Plan gets into its stride that its greatest advantage is the psychological one of a break at the age of fourteen."

The Leicestershire Plan aroused much antagonism among traditionalists. Since the Renaissance the educational ideal has been that of the scholar, the doctor, appearing now as Jane Austen's Mr. Bennett, now as the academic member of the B.B.C. Brains Trust. Concern was expressed that under the Leicestershire arrangements the very intelligent child, the potential scholar, was bound to suffer.

This attitude makes the assumptions that (i) the doctor is the socially most desirable type, (ii) he therefore must be helped to develop as fast as possible, (iii) he owes nothing to his less intellectual contemporaries, and (iv) the best way of achieving outstanding intelligence in adult life is to train it as hard as possible and from as early an age as possible. In the light of 20th-century thought on social affairs and psychology not one of these assumptions is tenable. Nevertheless, the attitude persists.

The Leicestershire Plan brings many advantages. Teachers are put before a choice. Those who cannot accept the challenge will go to a more orthodox school. The others, knowing that the success or failure of their work will be closely scrutinized, will give of their best to the new opportunities. Mr. Mason consciously relied on the professional pride and competence of his teachers. He believed "that the teachers concerned should use the methods they personally favoured and the textbooks which best supported their particular approach."

The fact that primary schools were no longer geared to the 11-plus examination meant that teachers could concentrate on teaching, explore new and livelier methods, and introduce a wider syllabus containing practical and artistic activities and the teaching of a foreign language. Most encouraging was the progress made in the two basic subjects, English and mathematics, simply because teachers were free to respond to the needs of their particular classes and learning was "channelled away from textbooks towards live situations of intense interest to the child."

The high schools, too, have changed in character. "The presence in the schools of children of intellectual quality," Mr. Mason says, "has stimulated and delighted the staff, and this coupled with their new position in the educational spectrum has had a striking effect on the schools' morale." Perhaps the most convincing witness to the efficiency of Mr. Mason's reforms is that more and more children stay on beyond the legal school-leaving age. This can only mean satisfied parents and happy children.

On unstreamed classes Mr. Mason writes, "Those who have no experience of this way of organizing the work are apt to state categorically that it must retard the pace of the brightest children. Those who practise it assert that it advances them more quickly." The head of one grammar school affected by the Plan wrote, "The commonest criticism levelled against the Leicestershire Plan is that academic standards are bound to drop. Nobody has, to my knowledge, adduced any evidence in support of this claim—and indeed with the best will in the world such evidence would be extremely difficult to provide."

When more figures are available about G.C.E. results in Leicestershire grammar schools, we shall for the first time have relevant material for comparison with the examination performance of Steiner schools. For both types of school cater for any child whose parents are interested in a wide curriculum—including academic studies—that extends beyond the legal school-leaving age.

R.L.

Questions and Answers on the Rudolf Steiner Education.

By Roy Wilkinson. New Knowledge Books. 4s.

THE philosophy of education is not a layman's subject. As a rule he leaves it to the expert. Interest in education, however, is so keen and widespread that the layman often asks questions which cannot be answered without going into the philosophy of it. In so far as it is a matter of generally accepted ideas, this can usually be done quite easily.

It is a different matter, however, when a method of education is practised which stems from a philosophy of life so new to the modern mind that it demands a reorientation of one's thinking to understand it. Many a teacher has got lost in a mass of detail in trying to explain what "really lies at the bottom of it all," and many an inquirer has given up in despair in trying to follow it.

Nevertheless the questions are continually put and must be answered. This little book by Mr. Wilkinson, which seeks to do so, is therefore welcome. As a teacher for many years in Steiner schools, Mr. Wilkinson has been able to choose the questions most frequently put, and the fact that he himself has so often had to answer them, enables him to

provide clearly and succinctly what people want to know.

He ranges over a wide field. He deals with the more practical questions—on the size of classes, homework, fees etc.—as well as bravely tackling in one page an answer to the question, "Could you tell us a little about Dr. Steiner's philosophy or views on man?"

A.H.

The Changing Grammar School: Educational Papers No. 2.
By H. Davies. University of Nottingham Institute of Education. 2s. 6d.

A QUIET revolution is going on in educational thinking which, while not forceful enough to please all of us, is certainly not going to be held back. Its aim is clear: nothing less than the replacement of the fact-filling, examination-taking preparation for a job by a cultivated, humanistic preparation for life.

Mr. Davies leaves no doubt as to which side he is on. As a grammar school teacher who feels that the grammar school still has a large part to play in the school world, he nonetheless has definite ideas about how it should put its house in order for the future. Selection at 11-plus he regards as indefensible, streaming as mistaken, and G.C.E. O level as "an incubus and an educational catastrophe . . . an encouragement of lazy and rank bad teaching."

"Ought we not," Mr. Davies asks, "to be educating our children for membership of a world community from which has been banished consciousness of class, colour and race," and "to be devising situations which compel our children to think for themselves" rather than wasting their time in laboratories doing traditional practical work. Classes,

he thinks, should sometimes be 90 strong, and often only 12 to 15, depending on whether speaking to them or discussion is afoot. Even rooms should be of different sizes, for "there is nothing sacred about 480 sq. ft."

School discipline, he holds, should not have as its aim conformity to arbitrarily fixed standards. He cannot see that an obsession with school uniform, hair styles, width of trousers, etc. have anything really to do with school. Games must not become a fetish or a religious rite. Sixth-formers should be treated as young adults, with "special accommodation . . . in which they can behave as grown-ups . . . with common rooms and a coffee bar." The role of the teacher is "to provide the stimulus, to act as the whetstone on which the pupil can sharpen his thinking."

A.H.

The Act of Creation. By Arthur Koestler. Hutchinson. 42s.

KOESTLER is an outstanding example of modern man who cannot rest until he has come to terms with the social and scientific facts of his time. He longs for the absolute (see his *Arrow in the Blue*), loves science and its discoveries, and is unable to be a mere onlooker. His love of commitment led him to become a Communist. His subsequent disillusionment (described in *The Invisible Writing* and *The God That Failed*) did not reconcile him to our acquisitive society. So he turned east (*The Lotus and the Robot*). But investigation at first hand convinced him that, for all its faults, the west has little to learn from ancient, pre-scientific civilizations.

Our culture must, then, be based on science. But will not science

enslave man, just as Marxism has done? That depends on the kind of science, Koestler answers. *Insight and Outlook, The Sleepwalkers* and now *The Act of Creation* deal with this proposition. Scientists are human and they interpret the world in terms of their prejudices and idiosyncracies. Some of them get a perverse pleasure out of distorting facts in order to debase man. "For the anthropomorphic view of the rat, American psychology substituted a rattomorphic view of man."

Certain schools of neurology, Positivism in physics as well as in philosophy, Behaviourism, neo-Darwinian genetics—all show tendencies of looking at man as so much machinery.

Behaviourism, Mr. Koestler writes, "is inclined to take a view of man which reduces . . . the human condition to that of a conditioned automaton. I believe that view to be depressingly true up to a point. The argument of this book starts at the point where, I believe, it ceases to be true."

The Act of Creation falls into two parts. Part I discusses the genesis of original discoveries in art and science. It states, broadly speaking, that original genius has the ability to see a problem outside its conventional terms of reference—the jester does the same—and to fuse it with a new set of facts or experiences. This fusion of two different planes of experience Koestler calls "bisociation." He then shows that the fusion is never a rational process, but depends on sudden insights, moments of intuition.

Part II is called "Habit and Originality," and is a scientific description of the intricate bodily functions which make hereditary and acquired skills possible. It describes embryological, phylo-

genetic, neurological and psychological processes which support the theories of Part I.

The book seems to this reviewer important, although its parts are unequal in value, and to a layman the theory of bisociation seems so obvious as hardly to warrant an exposition of 700-odd pages. The section called "The Jester" is only an introduction to the problem of bisociation, and the one on artistic creation is meagre and unoriginal. The book's real importance lies in two other fields. According to Professor Cyril Burt's foreword it is "a highly original contribution to psychology" and Mr. Koestler is "admirably equipped for the task."

For the general reader there is the story of many scientific discoveries, and an analysis of the historical circumstances, scientific traditions, psychological difficulties and moments of insight which combined to help or hinder these discoveries. And there is an interesting introduction to contemporary thought on the development of human skills and organs which had a liberating effect on one reader acquainted with the psychology of Steiner. For Koestler treats all living beings as organisms, hierarchically structured, and any function or organ as a part-and-whole. He thus leaves open the possibility of a religious or spiritual view of man.

Probably, in order to remain "scientific," Koestler often uses terms taken from the world of machinery when describing the physical basis of the mind. But is this scientific? Machinery is an apparatus designed by somebody for a definite job. Why does an independent thinker like Koestler employ this language, if he cannot say anything about the "somebody" or the "job"? We all have first-hand experience of man. So why not describe human

phenomena in human terms? This seems the more important as Koestler himself is fully aware of the problem and calls for a new approach to science.

Then there are certain questions which an imaginative investigator like Koestler might have tackled. More light, one feels, could have been shed on the act of creation if first a study had been made of the creative aspect of memory. Memory is treated too little and too late in the book. Useful investigation could also have been made into the conscious training of the imagination and of the will,

i.e. of the unconscious, in order to achieve greater integration of the creative personality. This could have been studied in many artists, notably in Rilke, and a great deal could have been learned from Steiner.

Lastly, there remains the question of intuitive knowledge. Does it reveal anything objective, or give us merely an insight into the workings of the mind? Another question, this, on which a study of Steiner's work could have been helpful.

R.L.

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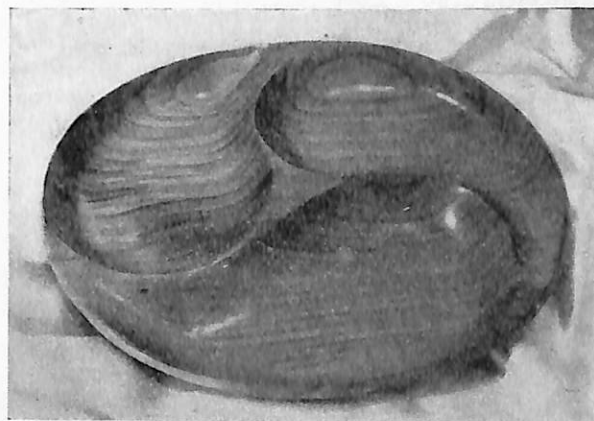
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