

A Course of Lectures on "Education and the Teaching of Religion"

Given by DR. KARL SCHUBERT (Stuttgart) at the Rudolf Steiner House,
January 2nd—5th, 1935.

The writer of the notes on these lectures takes full responsibility for any inaccuracy of statement.

*Third Lecture, Thursday, January 3rd,
1935, 11 a.m.*

*Rudolf Steiner as Leader to a New Life
of Art.*

FROM Rudolf Steiner's Autobiography we learn that in his early youth he was surrounded by the beauty of Nature in Austria, and throughout his school life he strove for beauty.

As a boy he already experienced a higher reality and knew that what he saw as Spiritual Activity must be found again in the world where he lived.

In mathematics and geometry he first found a way; in the clearness of both these subjects is living a Spiritual reality.

His great work came in connection with Schiller and Goethe; in Schiller he found a man striving to find the reality of a world of beauty; in Goethe the living spirit of Germany waiting for someone to continue the work he had begun; in Nietzsche a man striving for clearness of will, but without success.

It may be said that three signs were given to Rudolf Steiner at this period of his work, and in connection with the work of these three men: Schiller fighting for purity of feeling; Goethe for purity of thought; Nietzsche for clearness of will.

Schiller tries to show a world where freedom and necessity reign in Nature and the law of Morality, and in between the two a realm where man feels himself free, the realm of beauty.

Goethe died in the year 1832; he had as yet many things to say, but the time was not ripe, so he waited; his fairy tale, "The green snake and the beautiful lily,"

gave the key to the secrets of man's nature, but there were few who understood. At the close of the 19th century the time was ripe for man to know the secrets hidden in the fairy tale, and Rudolf Steiner heard the call, "The time has come."

His first book was written on Goethe's fairy tale, where esoteric life and truth were shown to us; this tale is the forerunner of what can be seen in the Spiritual Worlds, and in "Faust" we have the story of a man who crossed the threshold of the Spiritual World. The fact that Rudolf Steiner could reveal the secrets hidden in Goethe's works reveals to us that he was the great renewer of Art.

From that time onwards he strove always to put into works of beauty that which could be seen by Spiritual insight; beauty is the messenger of the Spiritual into the physical earth; its meaning is "shining through."

His books, "The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity" and "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds" illustrate how Spiritual truths can be given form.

The "Mystery Plays" are the greatest masterpieces of Art, which future epochs will understand better than we do.

What powers are working in them?

We see the evolution of dramatic Art from Greece, where it was born; the drama was at first performed in the "orchestra"; the chorus moved across the stage, and the audience had the idea that the chorus was a manifestation of God. The Greeks perceived in the power of Will, in action, the working of the God Dionysus, and later an actor was added to the chorus, a man who personified Dionysus. Later still, when evolution brought mankind nearer to the under-

standing of the Earth, not only a God but the inner being of man was personified, a godly being; and such dramas as showed the character of man were enacted; and how man fights with the powers of temptation. The great dramatic poets show this.

Rudolf Steiner saw that since the beginning of human evolution *all* is drama; evolution could have remained as the manifestation of the will of God, but the dramatic element came in with the powers who create hindrance, and these powers had the right to work. A struggle began between good and dark powers in the Spiritual World and then passed to man on earth.

There are two powers of temptation, those we know as Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers.

In works before the time of Rudolf Steiner the hero of the drama may stand in the scene with the temptation to lose himself in the realm of clouds (Lucifer's realm) or to be bound to earth, to possess, to have, to gain (Ahrimanic temptation); even Goethe gave Mephistopheles a double character, but Rudolf Steiner showed that there were two beings who tempted man, and gave their names.

It is important that the disguise of these two be lifted; in the moment they are recognised, they are overcome, but the *way* in which they are overcome is different for everyone.

In ancient times when a Greek entered the door of his temple he saw the words, "Man, Know Thyself"; this was the greeting of the God to man.

When he entered the temple he exclaimed "Thou Art," the greeting of man to God; *more* than cognition is necessary now; the greatest Initiator, Christ Himself, when He gathered His three disciples together in Gethsemane, said, "Pray that ye fall not into temptation." Not only "Know Thyself," but Pray—fight against temptation.

Man to-day challenges the powers of temptation, does not like to be without them, but is not strong enough to fight.

In the Art of Rudolf Steiner man is taught how to get new powers, new light; in his "Anthroposophy" we come to a knowledge of Art, and, out of the exercise of Art, we slowly gain an understanding of the creative word, by which the great Architect formed the worlds. In

Eurhythmy, painting, sculpture, building, the Art of jewelry, in writing and lectures, we are shown the way to a new understanding of the world and of man.

If one stands before a work of Art one must not say, "What does it mean?" but should allow it to work on us and explain itself. Any work of Art which needs explaining is not Art.

The first Goetheanum was the greatest work of Art; it had its own perspective in space, brought about by the colours themselves, whether they were strong or pale; perspective was produced by their activity and not by line. When one stood in the old Goetheanum it was as though the dome were not there, but that man was raised to higher activity. Nothing needed to be explained, all was there. Rudolf Steiner has said of precious stones that they should be liberated by their setting, and if an artist is working in metals he should have a connection with the reality of the metals and an inner devotion to the Great Beings of the Metals, so that new forms arise; he should learn to see how, in a metal, its Spirit is revealed in form.

Greatness and beauty have been manifested in the Art of the past, but in Anthroposophical Art we have a *new* greeting from Spiritual Worlds.

We should not be able to appreciate Anthroposophical Art if we had not had the works of great artists in the past, but Anthroposophical Art is for our time, something due to arrive *now*, in whatever medium it may be, wood, metal, or stone.

A new stream of life speaks to us when we see Anthroposophical Art, the stream of Jordan, which comes to the shore; all we produce in our lives shall become the bearer of Spiritual Life.

The highest and last work of Art is the "Way of Initiation"; however small a thing a man may do to raise his life will be a help for further evolution.

By chastity, by righteousness, all done will be an addition to the new earth.

If we forgive an injury done to us we transmute mortality to immortality, we change the moment to eternity.

Thus we come to a picture of the Holy Isis, the Holy Being of Wisdom, who is veiled; no mortal being has seen her face; one must become immortal to see the Virgin of Wisdom.

Rudolf Steiner shows us the path in his Art and his "Way of Initiation."

Fourth lecture, Thursday, January 3rd,
1935, at 8 p.m.

"Art as Sacrament."

DR. SCHUBERT commenced this lecture by reminding us that if a crystal of salt is put into a glass, it absorbs moisture from the surrounding air, and, therefore more humidity is concentrated in it, than in the space around it. If we meditate on this fact, we reach the conclusion that each work of Art, visible or audible, concentrates, in itself, Spiritual Life and Activity, greater than in the space surrounding it. In this sense, it is possible to speak of Art as Sacrament, mediating Spiritual powers to man.

Man was driven out of Paradise, and all beings with him, but to man, alone, a gift was given, the faculty of Art; as man left Paradise, he received the promise that he would be called back again—this call is heard in Art.

The whole evolution of the world and man can be seen from an artistic point of view; the gradual change from Chaos to Cosmos; a crystallisation process—a "salt" process; the first great Sacrament took place when High Beings sacrificed themselves and all beings were invited to sit at the table of evolution, to eat the bread of space and drink the wine of time.

Rudolf Steiner has told us that walking, willing and the foundation for Architecture—the human quality of being able to build — are based on the power given to us during the Saturn evolution. Sculpture takes us back to the Sun evolution, and painting to the Moon evolution of the Earth. Music is connected with the Ego, whose activity is first seen on the Earth; from the collaboration of the Ego with the Spirit-Self of Man, poetry is born; from the co-operation of Life Spirit and Spirit-Self Eurhythmy appears.

The last Art is the Art of Man — Anthroposophy—it already exists in the germ, brought into being by the working together of Life-Spirit and Spirit-Man.

As we sit at the Platonic Table, and bread and wine are served, we take, there, spiritual nourishment for Eternity.

Mankind, passing through these stages, develops creative powers, which are expressed in the Art of the various nations.

The Egyptians were a strong nation and liked to work with Granite, this has a deep meaning; in granite forms, it is not so much the individual feature which is represented, but the Cosmic laws of measure, number and weight.

The language spoken by Granite is quite different from that of marble or wood.

The Greeks worked in marble; marble is finer and less weighty than granite; in it Artists gave expression to the individual character of man, and showed how he stood on the earth, or ran or jumped. Wood was used in Egyptian and Greek times, but the important time for its use, was when the Holy Being passed over and permeated the earth with Its Life Spirit; wood then received the power, in its substance, to speak the language of invisible man.

When we compare Greek carvings with those of the Middle Ages, we see this brought to expression; in the Venus-de-Milo a human being is radiating, shining through the skin; the skin is very fine, it serves as a covering for the "joy to be alive" for the "joy of being a human being on earth."

In a carving of Mary or John by the Cross, character is shown, crystallised sorrow is there, the sorrow which brings wisdom.

But we can look at the nations from another point of view; we may see the Mediterranean Sea as a great table, around which all are invited to sit, and those who were hungry for life strove to get near it—to the East, the Jews; to the North, the Greeks; to the West, the Romans. The Romans were strong and wished to possess the earth and to them came a message from the East, a message of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The Greeks had no desire to possess the earth, they lived and worked in beauty—in Art—luxury was not cultivated in Greece—only beauty.

The Jews were forbidden to make sculptures, pictures or buildings, and this nation must seek to express itself in music and words; the Psalmists, when singing their Psalms, permeated the rhythm with Cosmic Art, they knew that the voice of Jehovah could be heard in the rhythm and their hearts entered into it.

The contrast between the Greek and Jewish nations is marked; the Greeks had joy in being alive, joy in being a Spirit in a body, this is expressed in their Art, and as they gazed on the sculptured figures of the Gods, their own bodies were influenced, and the human body reached its highest stage of beauty and perfection in Greek times.

Edward Schuré describes how the Greeks danced in the Temple to praise God, so that God could rejoice that he had created man.

In Atlantean times, when the human form was different from that of to-day, the great leader and Initiate, Manu, presented to the pupils for Initiation, a picture of Man, and the pupils, meditating on this picture, shaped, transformed and brought into being, the form of Man, which reached its apex in Greek times when Man danced before God.

In the Greek nation there was a feeling for the body as in the Jewish nation there was a feeling for the blood, which must be kept pure. It was in the Jewish nation that the event took place by which the Logos incarnated in a human body, an event which was prepared for throughout the ages and many generations; it was there that Mary the Virgin was born, purest of all bodies, the Chalice in which the Spiritual Word could be received. In Mary, substance was transmuted to the highest purity, pure enough to be touched by the Spirit Itself.

If there were no Gospel and no visible sign, we could still know from the Artistic work of man, how his consciousness has changed from Joy to Sorrow, and from Sorrow to wisdom and love.

As the evolutionary stream passes from East to West, but by the North, the Artistic life-stream becomes permeated by the Light of Christ; this is expressed in Gothic Art, which reveals secrets of the Jewish and Celto-Germanic nations. These peoples were artists in words and in music, and where the quality of Art is expressed in words and music, a free space is developed, a "chest space," what may be called a "Mary" form of Art, where something Spiritual can incarnate.

The Spiritual Life-Stream of Christ

flows through the Ages, and as the Logos could incarnate in a body of the Jewish time, so also Spirit can incarnate in Gothic Art; it has great beauty and is founded on the Cross. The Cross laid on the earth becomes the ground from which the building rises, and the resurrected cross is seen transmuted in the rose window of the Tower.

If we compare Italian pictures of earlier and later time, in the earlier ones can be seen how the human figures are placed against a golden background to show that the Spiritual World is not far from man.

In the later ones the background is darker, but there is more movement; the "coping stone" of this period is Rembrandt, his figures almost disappear in the dark surroundings, but light radiates out from them. Christ makes man independent and free; Greek joy is transmuted into the strength of later times. Poetry and music have yet to be considered.

Rhyme in poetry comes to expression after the time of Christ, when hymns begin to be composed; it was seldom used before that time; in Rome, an Orator had flute players who stood behind him, and as he finished his oration, he flung his mantle over his shoulder and his last words were accompanied by the music of flutes.

Music is the greatest of Arts, it touches and uplifts at the same time, it is the purest earthly manifestation of the Spirit. Many instruments have been used by the different nations and at different times, but the Organ appeared when the message of Christ had spread amongst many nations, in the Organ many instruments are brought together, as are the nations in the Life of Christ.

Art in painting, sculpture and architecture came to a kind of end in the seventeenth century; since then there has been no really creative Art, only copies.

With the twentieth century and Rudolf Steiner, new life is given to the stream of Art; in a deep moral sense the call of John the Baptist has been heard — "Change yourselves, enter the water and you shall have more life." Through Rudolf Steiner Art becomes a power to change the earth.

The walls of the first Goetheanum were transparent to Spiritual Life, the Dome did not shut man from the sky, but lifted him up and united him with the Universe. The world of colour calls to

man to unite himself with Higher Worlds.

The Art of Rudolf Steiner is not an end, but a beginning; it is an invitation to the Spirit to enter.