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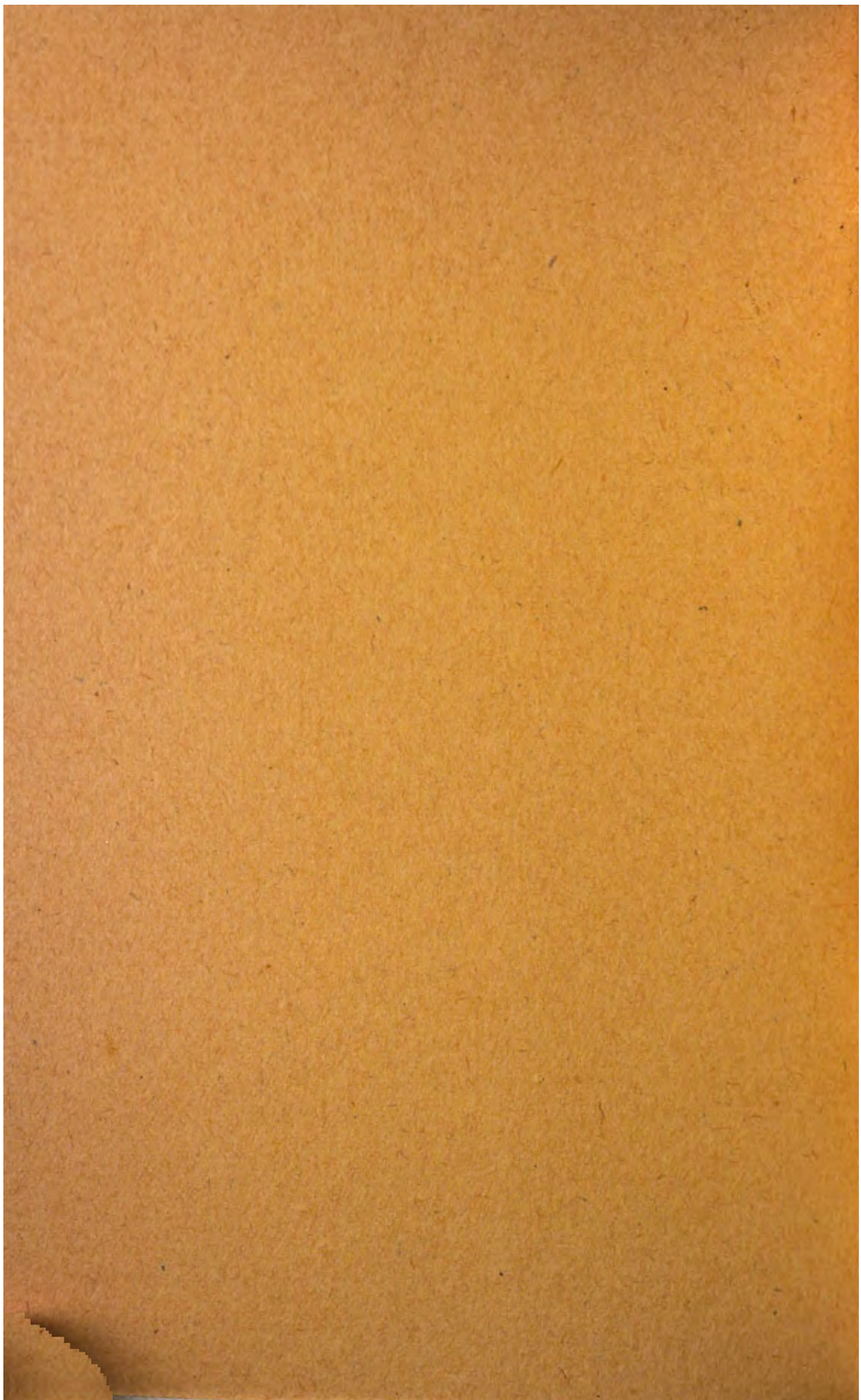
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The Free Waldorf School at Stuttgart

F. HARTLIEB

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FOREWORD

As will be seen in this article, the Free Waldorf School was founded under the direction of Dr. Rudolf Steiner, whose educational principles it was the first to embody. The writer, Herr F. Hartlieb, went in the ordinary course of his duty to inspect the School on behalf of the Ministry of Education of the State of Württemberg. The official report of Herr Hartlieb is naturally not available for publication; but the following article, translated by kind permission from the *Württembergische Lehrerzeitung* of October, 1926, indicates the impression made upon this official School Inspector by the spirit and practice of the School. It thereby affords an approach to those educational principles which the Rudolf Steiner Educational Society exists to further.

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It is a good test of the value of any institution to ask ourselves whether our contact with it has made us better and more capable men. From this point of view I can only express my regret that I myself had not the good fortune to become acquainted earlier with the aims of the Waldorf School and with its psychological and educational basis. If this article proves to be full of praises of the Waldorf School, I would like it to be understood that I am guided only by genuine interest in the facts, and I beg that no one will read into this account any disparagement of the State Schools or of their teachers. These schools are differently constituted and the teachers are working under different conditions. One point must be emphasised at the outset. Anyone who enters the Waldorf School for the first time without having made himself conversant with certain vital considerations through the study of the pedagogy and literature of the School, is setting foot in an unknown land. He cannot possibly

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do justice to the School and its work unless he is ready to study thoroughly and without prejudice the special characteristics of its psychological and educational basis, and also to try to understand, in its deepest and innermost being, that peculiarly individual life which even the State authorities recognise in it. Without this, no one can form an objective impartial judgment of a school which differs so vitally from the ordinary schools.

In the following essay I shall not endeavour to build up an elaborate or detailed account. I shall rather present a picture of those parts of the School's life which have aroused my deepest interest, and which, in my opinion, best express its peculiar merits.

1. HISTORICAL.

The School is called the **FREE WALDORF SCHOOL**. It is free in the sense that it is not bound by any State curriculum—free, too, in the sense that it is not supported financially either by the State or by the town of Stuttgart, but is dependent entirely upon its own resources.

The School was founded at Stuttgart in the year 1919 by a Councillor of Commerce, Emil

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Molt, who is still more than ever devotedly and energetically attached to the work. The foundation of the School grew out of the burning need to bring about a solution of the social question, which is—in the highest sense of the word—a spiritual question. On this Emil Molt has some interesting things to say in "*Rudolf Steiner and the Waldorf School*," published in *Die Drei*, vol. 7, No. 5, a monthly Anthroposophical periodical. He agrees with Dr. Steiner's observation: "You can help the individual merely by providing him with bread, but you can only provide bread for the community by helping man to a comprehension of the world." The proletariat had made the Marxian doctrines their gospel. These doctrines were the expression of an entirely materialistic outlook on the world, and for the adult a change of outlook is extremely difficult. To bring about a really fundamental alteration in the way of thinking you must begin early with the child's education, and quite new methods of teaching must be used. A school standing exclusively by the Marxian doctrines must lead *ad absurdum*. For where man can scientifically comprehend himself only as the highest of the animals, a true social progress is impossible.

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The idea of founding a school took tangible shape in the beginning of the year 1919. The Waldorf Astoria Factory set aside a fund for the foundation of a school for the children of the factory workers and employees. On the 25th of April, 1919, Dr. Rudolf Steiner gave his first lecture in the Waldorf Astoria Factory and aroused "true enthusiasm in all who heard this gospel of the social question." He declared himself ready to undertake the direction of the school which was about to be founded. The work was begun with confident optimism. "It is thus with all the great ideals for which we strive; as soon as we begin to calculate, the forces needed to reach the goal vanish; but if we allow the ideal to become active within us, it carries us over all the difficulties that present themselves and enables us to reach our goal." The School had to come into being out of absolutely nothing. It had no teachers, no school buildings, no apparatus or furniture, and had not been approved by the authorities. But with great courage the restaurant Uhlands Hohe was bought; the consent of the authorities was sought and gained; a teachers' preparatory training course was held at the end of August and beginning

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of September; and on the 7th of September, 1919, came the opening ceremony, at which Dr. Steiner gave the opening address, concluding with the following words: "A living Science, a living Art, a living Religion—that is true education, that is true teaching."

By 1920 the School had become economically independent of the Waldorf Astoria Factory—which now pays only the school fees of its own children. The School administers itself and is supported financially by the Waldorf School Union and by the help of friends. It has become the model of a spiritual institution, independent of State and industry.

To-day the pupils number over a thousand, who, since the School ceased to be a factory-school, have been drawn from all classes of the community. It must be expressly stated that the Waldorf School is not exclusive, and no attention is paid to differences in social standing. That is proved by the following statistics which apply to the year 1924–1925. Of the children then in the School, 284 had been in public elementary schools, 50 in intermediate schools, 187 in secondary schools and 245 were at school for the first time.

The School is a single comprehensive institu-

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tion in which boys and girls can go through all twelve classes, and at the end of the twelfth class take the School Leaving Examination.¹

As soon as the limitation imposed until now by the authorities as to the number of pupils taken in the preparatory classes is removed, the School numbers will, I believe, grow considerably, provided that it is possible for the School to make room by supplying more classrooms. The existing class-rooms are healthy, and all suitable arrangements are made for the various kinds of instruction. For the teaching of physics and chemistry, for Eurhythmy and music, for hand-work, book-binding and technical instruction, there are special rooms with the necessary equipment. Particularly worthy of attention are the well-stocked and very valuable library, and the gymnasium and assembly hall, fast becoming too small for the monthly assemblies, concerts, Christmas plays and other performances which are given there.

So out of the tiny plant has grown a stately tree. This outer growth reflects the inner

¹ School Leaving Examinations are set by the State authorities and are of a higher standard than the English Matriculation.

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development which has made it possible for the Württemberg Ministry of Education to recognise the School on the basis of Article 147 as one approved by the State.

2. RUDOLF STEINER'S TEACHING CONCERNING THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD- HOOD.

Anyone who studies Rudolf Steiner's writings must be struck by the rich and deep content he gives to the idea of education, and by the very great responsibility he lays upon the educator. A teacher and educator in the exercise of his calling easily falls into the danger of thinking only of the growing human being between six and fourteen years, or at the most up to twenty-one. Dr. Steiner insists on the necessity of keeping in mind in every educational measure the whole of the earth-life of the human being: "For what we plant in a child of eight or nine years has its results in the forty-fifth or fiftieth year of the grown man. And what the teacher does for the child at the elementary-school age sinks deep into his physical and spiritual nature. It lives and works under the surface often for decades, and

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comes to light again in a remarkable manner years afterwards. Indeed, it is often only at the very end of a man's life that there appears what was set in him as a seed at its beginning. The teacher has the right influence on the years of childhood only when, with a real knowledge of human nature, he keeps before his eye the whole of human life."¹ Indeed, the vista is still more expansive: Anthroposophical knowledge sees man, not penned between birth and death, but extending beyond the earth-life into existence before birth and after death

The methods described here cannot be understood apart from the main features of Steiner's teaching.

One must distinguish between the different beings in man. First there is the physical body, which lies wholly under the laws of physical life, and is composed of the same substances and forces as all the rest of the so-called lifeless world. Man possesses this physical body in common with all the mineral kingdom. A second being in man is the life body or etheric body, which is not a mere theory, but a reality; and for all who have developed their higher

¹ Cp. Rudolf Steiner's *Essentials of Education*, pp. 12 and 13

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organs of perception and who have freed themselves from the rigid claims of materialism, it is an object of observation. Man has this life or etheric body in common with the plant and animal kingdoms. It brings it about that the substances and forces of the physical body conform to the phenomena of growth and propagation, of the inner movement of sap, etc. It is thus the formative building force of the physical body, its in-dweller and architect, and is the bearer of the habits, of the permanent inclinations, of the temperament, character and memory.

The third member of the human being is the sentient or astral body. It is the bearer of pain and pleasure, instincts, desires, passions, etc.—in short, of the sentient life. This man has in common with the animal world only.

Finally man possesses yet a fourth member of his being, which enters him alone and no other created being: the ego body, the bearer of the higher soul of man, the "I". Education is concerned with all four of these bodies. But it is to be noted that at birth all four do not stand at the same stage of development. And a knowledge of these stages of development is a necessary foundation for a right education.

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At birth the physical body frees itself from its mother sheath, and at once the outer world begins to influence it. The etheric or life body becomes quite free only at the time of the change of teeth; freedom comes to the sentient or astral body with the approach of puberty. Before those turning-points are reached the etheric and astral bodies are each enclosed in a sheath. The existence of these sheaths makes it comprehensible that before the change of teeth certain impressions that come from without do not reach the etheric body, and that before puberty nothing from without can influence the astral body. But as the etheric and astral bodies exist from the beginning, and as the release from the sheaths gradually takes place, so the change from one stage of development to the other gradually appears. Anyone who is not an Anthroposophist must hold fast to the main point in what has been said so far, namely, that anthroposophical pedagogy recognises the change of teeth and puberty as two milestones in childhood's development, and demands quite special educational methods for the periods between these boundaries, each being treated according to its own peculiar nature.

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The Child before the Change of Teeth.

“Until the change of teeth in the seventh year the human body has a task to perform upon itself which is essentially different from those set for the other periods. During this time the physical organs must be brought to a certain form, their structural condition must be given certain directions and tendencies. Later growth will take place upon the foundations of the forms which have been developed in this period. In the time that follows, what has been neglected before the seventh year can never be made good. In this period of life moralising and appeals to reason are useless; what the teacher or educator *does* is alone effective. Whatever goes on in the surroundings of the child, whatever can be observed by the senses, be it moral or immoral, intelligent or foolish, will be imitated by the child. Through constant imitation “his physical organs flow into the forms which they retain throughout life.” The powerful urge to imitation arises from the circumstance that the child is first of all “wholly sense organ.” “The sense faculties, later concentrated in special organs, are still poured out over the whole body.” Sense perceptions are much

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keener than in the adult, who does not usually connect them with actual soul-experiences; whereas, with the child, they are closely bound to his whole feeling and willing. Before the change of teeth the child has no separate life of soul and spirit, such as the adult has; he is still a unity of body, soul and spirit. "We see how impossible it is for a child to keep still when he notices anything; he must move his limbs. Everything that the child notices is active and penetrates into the depth of his organism, while whatever is experienced through the senses by the adult is caught up into his thought processes and is there transformed into knowledge; it does not enter into the organism within the sphere of will."

So it is characteristic of this first period of a child's life that he surrenders himself to his surroundings both human and natural, and Dr. Steiner always emphasised that it is only what can be imitated through this bodily religion, or natural religious surrender, that can make any impression upon the child. The child with its physical body develops the religious mood of the believer; consequently, whoever teaches him comes into the position of priest, and the work of

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teaching becomes a kind of priestly office, a kind of ritual. "From what has been said we realise that it is the duty of the teacher to set such an example that its echoes in after life can result in nothing but good. What a heavy responsibility rests with parents and teachers in face of the fact that everything to which the child reacts enters into his blood circulation, into his digestion and so forth, and becomes there the foundation for his later condition of health; that by a wonderful metamorphosis everything which enters into the soul and spiritual life of the child becomes his physical and organic constitution, and the foundation of health or disease in later life!"

As has already been said, nothing can be done with a small child by admonition; but "all the greater is the influence of his joy in his surroundings, the cheerful attitude of his teachers, and their real and unaffected love." This love, which fills the physical surroundings with something like physical warmth, may indeed be said to "hatch out" the form of the physical organs.

Dr. Steiner speaks in a very interesting way on the question: "What is the effect of a teacher's temperament, as such, on the children?" "If the choleric temperament of

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the teacher expresses itself too vehemently it gives the child a shock which can have results later on the physical organisation itself. It sinks into the subconscious and appears in the years from forty-five to fifty as digestive trouble, and the doctor has to correct in a now elderly person the mistakes of early education. And the other temperaments in the teacher can be equally devastating as regards the development of the child, e.g., in disorganising the nervous system, creating illnesses of the breathing and blood-circulation, or repressing the natural joy in life, and the vigour of the will." A serious warning to the teacher for continuous self-education throughout the whole of his life!

Finally Dr. Steiner's idea of the right management of the Kindergarten must be reported here. He complains that mechanical instead of organic methods have been adopted in the Kindergarten, and that even here the evils of pure intellectualism have led to the introduction of abstract games suitable only for grown-up people. The arranging of little sticks and such occupations spells unhappiness for the little child in his later life. "The objects used in the Kindergarten must be taken directly from

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life and must not be the products of an intellectual civilisation." In the Kindergarten it ultimately comes to this: "that the child shall become accustomed to the few people who guide him, that these shall behave so naturally that he will also naturally be stimulated to imitate them." Therefore no special arrangements, no artificial apparatus! The teacher of a Kindergarten should keep watch on herself; "the child will imitate of his own accord."

The Child from the Time of the Change of Teeth to Adolescence.

With the change of teeth the etheric body casts away its outer sheath, and it becomes possible to influence it by education from without. The plastic formative forces which have shaped the body of the child up to the very form of his brain, are now freed and, undergoing a metamorphosis, appear as soul-spiritual faculties. While in the first period the child has imitated what happened in his surroundings, he now begins to dream vaguely about them. He makes pictures about them; he is quite absorbed in a picture life. Therefore the instructions at this stage should be through picture; this is true for every subject, even for

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arithmetic and languages. Thus as far as method is concerned, emphasis must be laid upon the use of examples, pictures, images, fairy-tales; on the orderly guiding of the imagination; on *completeness* of presentation; on characteristic form. One can only gradually lead a child to grasp the connection between cause and effect; "it is not abstract ideas that work in the right way upon the growing etheric body, but what can be pictured." And Dr Steiner lays great emphasis upon what can be pictured with the inner eye "The seeing with the inner eye is the right education for these years." Lessons that rest too exclusively upon sense-observation mean a materialistic way of thought.

At this period all perception must be spiritualised. We must not, for instance, be satisfied with presenting a plant, a seed, a flower to the child simply as it can be perceived by the senses. Everything should become a parable of the spiritual. Another point that needs special attention is that "a child until the change of teeth expresses his soul-life most strongly through the movements of his limbs; after the change of teeth he lives more in the rhythms of his breathing

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and blood-circulation. In this period the child desires to have everything imparted to him in artistic form. From the beginning he should be allowed to busy himself with colours: painting should lead to drawing; drawing to writing; writing to reading. The child makes true progress when the teacher tells stories, paints with words, and introduces rhythm.”

“The child instinctively responds to everything presented in rhyme, rhythm, and measure.”

Hence the great attention paid to recitation, music and Eurhythmics in the Waldorf School

“Between the change of teeth and puberty the child is an artist even if only in a childish way. Just as in the first period, until the change of teeth he is in a natural way a *homo religiosus*, a religious creature—just as we need the priestly element in teaching for the first life-epoch of childhood, so do we need the artistic for the second life-epoch—artistic in the wider sense which means that an artistic element should enter into the arrangement of all the subject-matter taught.”

Thus Dr. Steiner thinks that it is not the clever people who make an impression on the child from seven to twelve years, but the lively, lovable artistic people, who go

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through life with freedom, yet with good sense. The teacher must always make use of the rhythmic system (of breathing and blood-circulation) for the reason that these do not tire. "What is of the greatest importance for education is to realise that we shall never help the child by giving him moral maxims, for these are for him simply empty sounds, we shall help him only if we ourselves stand for him as unquestionable authority. It is the teacher himself whom the child—not saying it in so many words, but in the revelation of his heart—would call the true, the beautiful, and the good." "Just as for the first years of childhood Imitation and Example are the magic words for education, so for the years of this second period the magic words are Discipline and Authority. Reverence and authority are forces through which the etheric body grows in the right way. And if it were impossible during these years to look up to another person with unbounded reverence, one would suffer for the loss throughout the whole of one's later life."

Within this second period two further stages of development are to be differentiated.

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The School Child until the Ninth Year.

The child's will continues to work as in the time before the change of teeth, expressing itself in the gestures and movements of his limbs. He imitates and through imitation makes his own everything that is revealed in the gestures and behaviour which express his teacher's inner life. This faculty of imitation, which, in the time up to the change of teeth has formed the soul-spiritual life of the child, ebbs away only by slow degrees; in the early school years it is still exceedingly active, and from the first year in the Waldorf School it is called upon in the learning of two foreign languages (French and English). Songs, games, singing games and poems are learnt which bring the rhythm, melody and sound of the foreign speech into the ear. Then the children proceed to short conversations in the foreign tongue. Grammar is, of course, kept in the background.

The intentional postponement of the teaching of the elements of writing, reading, and arithmetic deserves special mention. Dr. Steiner was convinced that the six- and seven-year-old child must be spared the learning of

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formal writing. The Waldorf School does not contest the results which a method of learning to read and write, developed and refined to a high degree, can achieve during the course of the first school years; but it conscientiously sacrifices these results because learning to read early leads into abstractions far removed from real life, makes the child prematurely old, and lays the foundation for all sorts of illnesses which will inevitably appear in later years. Writing comes before reading and is developed from drawing; this was, as we know, the course of mankind's evolution. "In the course of his development man progresses from the artistic to the intellectual, from hand-work to head-work, from painting and drawing to reading and writing."

The four elementary rules of arithmetic are learnt "according to the artistic experience of progressing from the whole to the part, as for example, in addition by beginning with the sum, in multiplication with the product. It is the case in life that the whole is comprehended before the part. The way in which the child learns to count forms the brain of the adult. And whether we have a sympathetic outlook in our later years depends very much upon this early instruction in arithmetic."

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The Child from the Ninth to the Eleventh Year.

As the child in the foregoing stages of development was so inwardly bound up with his human and natural surroundings that he was not fully himself, so now in his ninth year his separation from the world around him, with which he formerly lived so much as a matter of course, is completed. Now each child stands instinctively before a kind of life riddle. He becomes aware that he is an individual, and as such he is separated from the external world. Until now he has flitted through it without a thought. Now he feels his isolation, not in a conscious way, but through all sorts of doubt and unrest.

“His soul-life becomes more of an inner one, and more independent; all the powers of consciousness stir within him. The child feels the need to know the world and his teachers from another side; he must now consciously honour where before he childishly loved. It is this age that makes the greatest demands on the wisdom and tact of the teacher.”

The School Child from the Twelfth Year until Puberty.

“Towards the twelfth year the child develops an understanding for cause and effect; he

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becomes sensible of the logic of historical events, and can take in physical concepts. The teacher can gradually begin to work with this new faculty, for it announces the awakening of the astral. The younger child moves in unconscious grace through his muscular system, which is nourished by the rhythmic flow of the blood stream. Now, however, the child enters much more strongly into his bony system than was formerly the case; the young being begins to realise his skeleton; his life advances, as it were, from his muscles through his sinews to his bones; his movements lose grace and rhythm and become angular, awkward, arbitrary. He has reached the awkward age, and does not know what to do with his limbs. But everything which, in life and knowledge, is subject to mechanical law can be introduced to the child with profit and without harm, now that his soul-spiritual being is more closely connected with the mechanics of his bony system."

The School Child until the Time of Puberty.

With puberty the astral body is born, and man is ready to make independent judgments on all that he has learnt. Steiner declares that

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man can hardly have a greater wrong done him than to have his independent judgment aroused too early. He should first have stored up such material for making comparisons as will later be the foundation of independent judgment. "There is no sound thinking which is not preceded by a healthy sense of truth supported by a natural belief in authority. Precocious judgments hinder the child from taking in his experiences in the right way and letting them work within him. What understanding has to say about a matter should not be said until all the other soul-forces have spoken. That which has been evolved in pictures, all that which in inner pictures has become the inner, musical, plastic possession of the soul is now grasped by the intellect." In this way nothing is forced upon the child intellectually from without. But he takes up into his intellect what has first grown in him in ways other than those of his intellect. Whatever he has grasped in picture form now springs into conscious life from the sources of his own inner being. Man looks into himself when he advances to the intellectual. It is a laying hold of the being of man himself, through himself. The faculty of logical thinking and independent

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judgment has now fully developed, the faculty of successfully studying deep human problems. The heart of the young being is filled with warm love for the world and for mankind. Social feeling, the inclination to form intimate friendships and friendly alliances, becomes stronger. Just as formerly whatever the teacher called fine or ugly, good or bad, was the law by which he acted, so now he advances to the recognition of duty and approaches the stage of freedom, where duty means "to love what man commands himself."

Here I conclude the first and introductory part of my essay. I shall now give details as to the school-life in the Waldorf School, calling attention to special features of the educational measures in use there, and giving my readers the benefit of those valuable experiences which came to me through head and heart during the year in which I was in touch with the School and in close intimacy with its teachers

3. THE WALDORF SCHOOL AS A SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

There are about fifty teachers on the staff of the Waldorf School. Most of these Dr. Steiner

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personally called to the task, or was, at any rate, responsible for their appointment, and from all parts of Germany, from Austria and the Baltic provinces, they left the security and good prospects of the most varied occupations to follow his call. Theologians and philologists, mathematicians and natural scientists, a doctor of medicine, gymnastic instructors, engineers and artists (painters, musicians, Eurhythmy teachers, artistic craftsmen and the like), one and all came together at the Waldorf School to practise the pedagogy given them by Dr. Steiner for the well-being of humanity, to educate and teach the young—with the aim of overcoming the materialism of the age and of building up a new manhood, anchored in the divine and eternal and fitted for every good work. Thus, in spite of all the difficulties which were encountered at the beginning, the staff base their work upon a foundation sure of good results, namely, upon full agreement in their outlook upon the world and life and in their psychological and educational views. The whole of the professional work of the teachers is filled with and upborne by the same spirit, a lofty and holy spirit, such as could scarcely be

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found in the same degree in any other schools in the land. To hear teachers and pupils in the Waldorf School reverently and devoutly repeating in chorus at the morning ceremony the morning verse written by Dr. Steiner and the Lord's Prayer; to hear the teachers give their pupils poems and sayings of great beauty and wisdom, with a warmth of feeling and strength of rhythm such as to bring them at the beginning of the day's work into touch with the divine and the spiritual, always made a fresh, deep and lasting impression on me.

Without prejudice of any sort I must put on record the fact that the College of Teachers with its high moral standard and intellectual attainments gives the Waldorf School its peculiar stamp and quality. A staff of teachers in such a close bond of union, working in the same spirit and filled with the same warmth of enthusiasm, cannot but bring their feeling of unity to daily expression. Each one serves the other in love; each one radiates forces, to receive forces into himself in turn. The literary scholars and humanists among them are introduced by the mathematicians and scientists, artists and technical experts to the domains of mathematics, geometry, natural history,

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chemistry, physics and so forth; and conversely the humanists help the scientists. Thus they grow together into an exemplary community of life and work, such as deserves the highest recognition. I have often expressed the opinion that the teachers in the State schools are all too hermetically sealed from one another in their daily professional work. Of late there has been a decided improvement in this respect (especially under the influence of the new curriculum). Perhaps the example of the Waldorf School teachers may stimulate and encourage this movement.

On the other hand, their very union allows each individual teacher the greatest freedom. The Waldorf School has no Board of Governors empowered to inspect its work. Nor does the time-table subject the individual to any kind of narrowing restrictions. Unity among the teachers is ensured by the teachers' Conferences, at which all-important questions are discussed in detail, and which the teachers attend at the School—sometimes several times a week and until late at night.

To quote Dr. Caroline von Heydebrand: "We teachers cannot successfully carry out the regulations of even the best worked-out

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scheme unless we ourselves attain to such a knowledge of human nature as will unite in love the souls of teachers and taught. Then regulations will be transformed into insight and duties into deeds of love." Such a bond of love does in truth unite children and teachers in the Waldorf School. The children are warmly attached to their teachers, both men and women, who, without recourse to corporal punishment, train the soul and spirit of the boys and girls entrusted to them by love, goodness, wisdom and example, more even than by their enlightened methods of instruction. The teacher coming from a State school is struck by the fact that greater freedom of movement is allowed among the children of the Waldorf School than is generally the case, even when we bear in mind that the discipline in all schools is becoming milder, and that, especially in the early classes, there is more sunshine and youthful zest. The right behaviour of the children in the Waldorf School is not regulated and one-sidedly enforced by an external discipline, but is founded in the inner life, so as to grow spontaneously from within. Dr. Steiner speaks of "the disturbances that have to be smoothed away and are unavoidable

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in any school." Perhaps in the Waldorf School, in the first years after its foundation, these were more in evidence than usual. But all who have anything to do with this School to-day will agree that the boys and girls are courteous friendly, trusting and frank; and that those inspectors made no mistake who, on taking leave of the school after a visit of inspection, remarked among other things that such happy, peaceful and harmonious children's faces are not found everywhere. My personal impression is that the Waldorf children are much better than they are reported to be by many people, whereas many classes of the State schools are worse than one would think, judging from their outward behaviour. The friendly spirit in the Waldorf School is beautifully revealed in the monthly festival, when all the pupils up to the twelfth form gather with their teachers in the gymnasium, and follow with great interest the musical and Eurhythmy performances. The presence of the parents, who come in large numbers to all School gatherings, such as concerts, plays and so on, outside the usual school-work, gives the festival a homely character. It also points clearly to the fact that parents, pupils and teachers are closely

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associated with one another. Finally, it should be pointed out that, in conformity with the natural family life, boys and girls are taught together. The Waldorf School has established co-education from the first form up to the twelfth and last class, and has contrived to make the differentiation of the sexes in soul and spirit serve the cause of education.

4. THE MAIN LESSON.

The Waldorf School has discarded the customary time-table of the State schools, which regulates the work hour by hour, leading teachers and pupils during the course of the day into a multitude of subjects in quick succession. Instead of a change of subject every hour or half-hour, one subject for a longer period of time is the practice. As this is not done in any other school, so far as I know, and is therefore an educational novelty, we shall examine it more closely.

In the Waldorf School the "main lesson" is distinguished from the special lessons. Among the main lessons are reckoned the native Language and Literature, Arithmetic and Geometry, History, Geography, Natural History,

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Physics and Drawing. The special subjects are Foreign Languages, Music, Eurhythmy, Gymnastics, Hand-work and Handicrafts. The main lessons are given by the class teacher (who takes the same pupils from the first to the eighth class), the same subject being treated for three or four weeks, day after day, during the first two hours of school. When a certain stage has been reached in the subject, another is taken in the same way, and becomes in its turn the subject of instruction during the first two hours. The aim of such an arrangement is clear: teachers and pupils enter intensively into the subject, concentrating for a length of time on the same range of ideas; this saves them from a dissipation of energy in thought and attention. I confess that I have gradually laid aside all my distrust of such an arrangement of the subjects, especially now that I know that subjects requiring special practice, such as arithmetic, appear often in the time-table. One is especially struck by the fact that the Waldorf School, which, as is well-known, pays the greatest regard to the health of its children, is by no means as anxious as the State school about the demand it makes upon its pupils. The daily main lesson, lasting

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two hours, requires serious work and steady concentration on one and the same subject. The teaching staff of the State schools find that breaking the threads at the changing over of lesson and subject is only too often a painful experience, and complain of it as a loss of energy. In any case, here we have found a pedagogic problem which should be studied seriously. The child's need for change is satisfied in the Waldorf School by the special subjects which follow the main lesson, and more especially by the fact that painting and recitation form an essential part of the main lesson itself. And if, for example, the pupils have been through a two-hour lesson in history, the Eurhythmy or music lesson following acts as relaxation and refreshment to an extraordinary degree. Thus the instruction is planned on a sound system of rhythmic interchange, governing not merely the course of individual lessons, but the sequence of subjects treated in the periods of main instruction and the grading of work in the curriculum as a whole. As to the duration and sequence of the lessons taken, the class teacher himself decides, from his knowledge of the development of his children in body, soul and spirit. Subjects brought to

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the children at the wrong time harm their development, being received merely intellectually, and not with the full force of feeling and will. And so the whole teaching work is kept free from abstract schemes and routine. It is determined purely by the needs of the child. Hence the freedom of the teacher in regard to the time-table and curriculum, a freedom which can only be justified where a College of Teachers is thus united in aim and efforts.

5. CORRELATION

Special attention is paid in the Waldorf School to the idea of correlation, in the sense of bringing order and connection into the multiplicity of subjects, and creating points of union where the whole inner life of the child is, as it were, focused and drawn together. This is attained above all by the principle of allowing pupils to continue with the same class teachers, and, as far as possible, with the same teachers of special subjects, throughout the first eight classes. It is still further assisted by that unity on questions of principle to which we have already referred, as well as by the regular conferences which the staff hold

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together. Unity of thought is also furthered by the repetition that is practised at every opportunity; for this spins threads from one subject to another, illuminating the old from new points of view and bringing it into new connections. It should be noticed, however, that this "unity" that is striven for lies not only or primarily in what is grasped with the reason and the intellect, in system and abstraction; nor does it lie in the pursuance of common æsthetic or utilitarian ends; rather is it a unity of *attitude*—of attitude towards man, and his relation with the earth beneath him, the men about him, the God above him. Examples of this might be taken from the most varied subjects and multiplied *ad infinitum*, but three shall suffice.

The purpose of the natural history lesson, for instance, is not merely to learn about the animal world, or to discover how man turns animals and animal products to his own use. The animal kingdom is investigated in order to have a better understanding of man, who is "himself a compendium of the whole animal world." "When each animal is grasped as a human organism developed only in one direction, the giraffe as the neck, the lion as the

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breast, the elephant as the upper lip, and this down to the amphibians and the lower insects, even to the prehistoric animals, at last the conclusion is reached that the whole animal kingdom is composed of specialised forms of the different parts of man, and man in his physical organisation is a synthesis of the whole animal world."

Or "consider the cow, in which the digestive system is extraordinarily developed as compared with that of man. The cow is a walking stomach on four legs. Its other organs are there merely to prevent the creature from becoming ill. The animals are organisms developed in a single system only, and have just enough of the other systems to enable them to live. In man all are united in harmony. In this sense, Goethe's conception was an accurate one. For him, man was a being healed of the one-sidedness of the animal world." In this way the pupils come to realise that the animal world is united in a firm order and harmony in man; indeed, that man is a synthesis of all the natural kingdoms, a microcosm.¹

¹ See, further, Rudolf Steiner's *Essentials of Education*, 1924.

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Again, the teacher of physics in his two-hour morning lesson is not content merely with explaining the laws of the contraction of bodies through cold and their expansion through heat, or with showing how the application of these laws is to be found in nature or in industry (though these are, of course, dealt with); but he draws the parallel of deep and high notes of music with dark and light colours, and ends by pointing out the influence of these physical perceptions upon the soul of man.

A talk on the regular pentagon, which I have been kindly permitted to describe, will illustrate best what I mean, though it is only possible to give it here very shortly. In connection with the Ariel scene in Goethe's *Faust*, a survey of Faust's life up to that point was given. The cause of all his errors was Mephistopheles. When Faust has gone to sleep, at the command of Mephistopheles, rats gnaw through the pentagram. From this moment evil gains entry into the soul of Faust and destroys there the forces which Goethe, in *Wilhelm Meister*, calls the three reverences: the reverence for what is beneath us, around us and above us. In the further elaboration of this thought, it was explained how the feet

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are symbolically represented in the two lower corners of the pentagram, the hands in the middle corners and the head in the apex. Then reference was made to Parsifal, and the maxims given him by Herzeleide—"Cross no dark ford! Greet everyone! If a noble lady proffer thee ring and hand, then love her well! Take with thankfulness the instructions of an old man!"—were brought into connection with the three reverences. In conclusion came a comparison between the circle and the triangle, which is the basic form of all four-sided figures and polygons: "the circle is motion, the triangle is position": an indication of the forms of movement and of roundness—the circle—on the one hand, and on the other of the fixed, the strong, the angular—the triangle: a discussion of the heavenly bodies—the constellations and the fixed stars, the planets in movement: the triangle and architecture—the minerals, the fixed stars, and the skeleton form in man: the circle and plastic forms—plants, planets and the movements of man: all leading to the conclusion: "In man lives geometry, and he acts, though often unconsciously, according to its laws."

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6. MEASURES FOR SECURING THE HEALTH OF THE PUPILS, AND ATTENTION PAID TO THEIR INDIVIDUALITY.

The task of the School is not confined to the soul and spiritual development of the children. The Steiner education does not suggest that good teaching brings only the spiritual forces to development to fit the children for their tasks in life, nor does it imply a wearisome, dry, one-sided, abstract instruction, which results only in indifference, want of observation, passivity, ignorance and a lack of practical ability on the material side of life. It represents rather the standpoint that vivid, stimulating teaching has a most healthy influence on the child's bodily organisation, and that through mistaken instruction the normal bodily functions of the child are disturbed and hindered and the foundations laid of many kinds of illnesses. Indeed, the School has the greatest concern for healing and the health of its individual children. Delicate or difficult children are objects of special consideration, and receive continuous, curative teaching from the School doctor, the class teacher and the Eurhythmy instructor.

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The School doctor holds an unusually important place in the School. It is only necessary to refer to the articles by Dr. Kolisko on "Education and Healing" where he says: "In the educational method given to us by Dr. Steiner it is firmly established that the School doctor must act in a much closer relation to the School teacher than is usually considered necessary. For here the doctor cannot be considered as concerned merely with the treatment of the body, and the teacher with the training of the soul; the two depend closely upon one another. Hence it becomes clear that the relation between doctor and teacher must in many respects be different from what is customary. At present psychology, anatomy and physiology are generally studied separately, and the result is a series of unanswered riddles; whereas the question is really one of the connection between the two spheres of the soul and the body. According to the principles of the Waldorf School a medical activity could not possibly be practised without a deep inner connection with the activity of the whole staff. Hence the necessity arises for the frequent discussions between single members of the teaching staff and the doctor. And it is not, perhaps, by mere

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chance that in order to act here as doctor, I must also teach, and be a member of the teaching staff." It is necessary "that the School doctor should himself take part in the teaching of the child, in order to gain an exact idea of how the child paints, draws and does his physical exercises, Eurhythmy, etc."

I recommend this essay most warmly. It gives valuable information on the anthroposophical knowledge of human nature. In the same article we read: "The teacher in charge of the curative Eurhythmy lessons comes daily to the doctor's room for discussion, to take the new children assigned to her, to know what special Eurhythmy movements the children under consideration are to be given and to report her own observations and results. On special days of the week the Gymnastic instructor comes to the doctor to learn what special exercises shall be given to those children who need the orthopædic treatment, given every morning, half an hour before school begins, in the gymnasium."

That the Waldorf School, though entirely dependent upon the generosity of its friends, has also established a canteen for the children and has made arrangements for them to have

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all possible medical care, calls for special mention.

I myself was particularly in sympathy with the practice of the class teacher in giving verses full of meaning and wisdom both to individual children and to whole classes, these verses being repeated every day by the children after the morning prayer, spoken most distinctly, with the rhythm strongly emphasised, and often supported by Eurhythmy exercises.

In this school special attention is paid to the different temperaments. I will quote here from an account, kindly given to me by a teacher of the Waldorf School, of the way a knowledge of the temperaments may be used in education.

“The temperament—that is, the distinctive colouring of a character, recognisable in those feelings and traits of disposition that are of a lasting nature—plays a more important part in the period between the change of teeth and puberty than afterwards, when the human being is in the position to educate himself and to harmonise the one-sidedness of his being by his own conscious will. For this reason the temperaments of the children of elementary-school age are so carefully con-

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sidered in the education and teaching of the Waldorf School. The teacher enters deeply into all the soul-spiritual and bodily modes of expression of the individual children, and thus gradually gains a living picture of their varying natures, which he can use as a foundation for his educational work. Important in this connection are those expressions of the child's life which originate less from his conscious thought-life than from his artistic and will activity—for example, the expression of his being in painting and drawing and in the gestures and movements of his body, as, for instance, in Eurhythmics, in gymnastics, at play and also in manual work.

“Children of similar dispositions are grouped together in the class-room. They educate and improve each other. If we place a melancholic or phlegmatic child among choleric children, the former becomes too passive, the latter too violent; but if we place all the choleric children together, they hold one another in check. The phlegmatic children sitting side by side begin to feel bored with one another and long for more liveliness; and so on

“Under this system of education the temperaments are not treated in such a manner as to

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lead to their destruction; on the contrary, the object is to develop their valuable aspects and harmonise the inequalities. For instance, the melancholic children are called upon where the thoughtful interpretation and presentation of logically connected ideas is required. The choleric child lives fully and healthily in the reciting of dramatic and lively poems, accompanying them with gestures. The sanguine child is appealed to when concrete objects are shown by means of pictures, maps, etc. The phlegmatic child is fonder of repeating the same thing again and again: and so on.

“Thus, not only is the good side of every temperament developed individually and brought to healthy expression; but in the class as a society the children are led to allow the different kinds of temperament to work upon and influence them. In nature study, for instance, the horse is described first by a choleric and then by a phlegmatic child, and it is evident that only the combination of the two can yield a true and adequate description. The children learn to appreciate differently endowed natures and to perceive them as the completion of their own.

“For the teacher the class becomes an

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organic whole, something like a musical instrument with many strings, upon which he learns to play. By considering and combining the varied natures of his children, he can organise and master large classes also. Thus, even in the case of a large number of pupils, a far-reaching individual treatment of the children is made possible."

A further opportunity of studying the child's disposition is offered by painting, for through this activity every child "reveals much of his disposition by the way in which he prefers certain colours and combinations of colour, and forms the coloured surfaces into certain definite shapes. For example, choleric children love vermilion and bright yellow and express their temperament happily and healthily if they are allowed to play about with these colours for a time; melancholic children love pale lilac and a rather deeper blue and grow more cheerful and accessible if they are allowed to express their more sober natures with these colours. The sanguine child's painting is characterised by the repetition, with rhythmic modifications of some particular motive, while phlegmatic children express themselves in large patches of a single colour. Painting also

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discovers morbid conditions, such as digestive disturbances. For the young child, creating—not consciously with his head, but entirely from the artistic powers of his organism—reveals his being to the teacher in this way, even to the condition of health or disease of his physical body.” Space forbids us to say more here about painting.

For unusually weak or even pathological cases an auxiliary class has been organised. Dr. Schubert’s Report “On the Work done by the Auxiliary Class of the Free Waldorf School” gives information as to how the School deals with the difficult problem of the treatment of these children. He concludes as follows: “A spiritual stream of great strength flows from teacher to child and back again. The being of the teacher acts on that of the child. The teacher must be fully aware that all his feelings pass from him and react on the whole life of the child. All his thoughts work on the child’s feelings; and all his convictions, those things in which he places his own unshakable trust, work healingly on the child’s ego. Just because these children have so weak an ego, because the human ego in its descent has not fallen completely to their share, has not been fully

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born within them, the teacher must strive unceasingly, day after day, to come himself into full possession of the human ego, so that it may shine through his whole inward being; he will then be able to serve those who were born in darkness by shedding on them this inner light.”

CONCLUSION: A GLANCE AT SOME INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION AND AT SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS IN THE WALDORF SCHOOL.

1. Within the narrow limits of this essay it is not possible to go deeply into many subjects. I will therefore content myself with a few remarks upon one or two.

By the side of lessons in Protestant and Catholic teachings given by priests of these denominations, a “free religious lesson” is given to those children whose parents desire it. In such lessons, Anthroposophy as a world outlook is not taught, but instruction in the Christian religion is so given as to correspond to the ideals of anthroposophical thought and anthroposophical education. Besides the direct teaching of religion in the narrower sense, all other subjects taught must awaken in the

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children the consciousness that "the spiritual penetrates everything that exists in the world; otherwise even religious instruction would only serve materialism." Through my contact with the Waldorf School I have only been strengthened in my conviction that the modern transition from Eastern to Western ways of thought in the treatment of the biblical story has gone much too far in our State schools. In dealing with Bible history we ought to keep as much of the Eastern local colour and atmosphere of the age as possible; only so will an old culture speak to the hearts of children. In the teaching of religion a one-sided intellectualism has gained the upper hand far too much and religious teaching has become too painfully a school of logic. The application of the theories of evolution is therefore not at all to my liking. The axiom that the children must not be given anything in the sphere of religion beyond their understanding should not be strained too far.

2. EURHYTHMY.—Eurhythmy signifies something quite new in the education of the young. I must refer the reader to the various essays on this subject, for it is impossible to treat with it in a few words.

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3. The MUSICAL instruction which plays an important part in the Waldorf School curriculum is in the hands of three highly-gifted people. The ideal of the State schools here becomes an accomplished fact

4. NEEDLEWORK is taken by both boys and girls, and is treated essentially from the artistic standpoint and with the aim of awakening and developing the individuality.

With this I come to the end of my treatise. All of us who work in the State schools have freedom in details; but in subjects, principles and general regulations are bound by the State regulations. But now I think I may say that my connection with the Waldorf School has produced valuable fruit, for I recognise that as a result of it I have actually come a step nearer to the spirit of the new State regulations. When a sixty-year-old teacher, not an Anthroposophist, and not a member of the staff of the Waldorf School, a man who is much more experienced with regard to pedagogy and method than the Waldorf School staff, makes this confession, he is surely expressing his conviction that the further development of the Waldorf School deserves to be followed with the most

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sympathetic interest by the State School Organisations.

I close with a word of Pestalozzi's: "There are not, and cannot be, two good methods of teaching; there is only one, and that is the one which is based entirely upon the eternal laws of nature. I know that this one truly good method is neither in my hand nor in any other man's, but I seek with all the strength that lies within me to approach this one truly good method."

With this conviction I have attempted to present my picture of the Waldorf School.

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