

FALL 1976

Dear Colleagues:

The supplement which accompanies this issue, On the Teaching of History, by Henry Barnes of the Rudolf Steiner School, is a significant and distinguished offering to Waldorf teachers everywhere. We are indebted to Mr. Barnes for making it available to the Newsletter.

To the four of the fourteen member schools who have made this issue possible, the thanks of all of us, and special appreciation goes to the individuals and other schools who have sent in material.

Perhaps the next issue can be more representative still.

With holiday greetings,

Anne Charles

Mrs. E.A. Charles
Editor

PRE-SCHOOL

When studying at the Kindergarten in Vienna, I was impressed by the lack of a "throw-away" philosophy - no paper cups, napkins, or plates were used. In the Boca Raton kindergarten now we use cloth napkins on which each child has embroidered his initials, small juice glasses on which the child's name is indelibly marked, and small individual terry cloth towels on which a tab with the child's name has been sewn.

From time to time the children wash the napkins and towels in a tub of water, using a scrub board and Fels Naptha soap. They delight in doing this. Everything is hung to dry on a wooden rack - easy in the sunny South!

- Patricia Moreell
Boca Raton

* * *

From the conference of pre-school teachers at the Rudolf Steiner School in October come a few of the rhymes and circle games that teachers shared with one another.

I build my house up to the top
And on the roof, a chimney pot.

*

I can turn myself and turn myself
And curl up when I will.
I can stand on tiptoe, reaching high,
Or hold myself quite still.
I can be as small as a tiny seed
Or grow as tall as a tall, tall tree.
I can be as wide as the wide, wide world
Or I can just be me!

*

Fee fi fo fum
Measure my arm
Measure my nose
Measure myself from
My head to my toes.

- Marjorie Grochola
Garden City

* * *

The following circle game is set to the old Shaker circle dance tune, "Simple Gifts." Production difficulties preclude printing the music; however, it is a well-known tune and should not be too hard to find in an American folk book.

1. Hold hands, go round in circle, step in lively rhythm
2. Stoop down low to the floor, still holding hands
3. Pat floor with palms in rhythm
4. Arms on shoulders all around, facing center
5. Stand up and go around in circle again, stepping lively, bow and bend
6. Arms up in "Ah" gesture and turn around in place. Then start all over.

Also recommended for older children: Christmas canon Rise Up, O Flame (Praetorius).

- Carol Thomas
New Morning School

* * *

Beeswax in the Kindergarten

Small squares of beeswax (1-1½") can be warmed and shaped quickly by little hands. The children may take as many pieces as they wish (or are available), while I set a scene on a table top or floor board. I use pine cones and rocks, shells, crystals, and so on, which suggest forest, rock formations, and terrain. I use blocks and drape colored cloth over them to suggest mountains or a cave. Colored yarns outline ponds and rivers.

I tell the children what everything is, and create a mood for the setting. Perhaps I add the first character. From then on it's up to them - they create their own characters and stories without my intervention. Eventually, later on in the year, they set up the scene and create the entire story by themselves.

- Andrea Gamardella
New Morning School

* * *

SECOND GRADE Michaelmas Play

The following little verse play came into being specifically for second graders. The parts may be acted out by individual children while the chorus recites in unison.

In a kingdom in far away land
Lived a king and his people grand.
One fair daughter had the king
Whom he loved above all things.
This king was kind to great and small
And his people loved him one and all.

But alas, one fear gripped all the folk
And none was free from its heavy yoke.
Close to the kingdom dwelt a dragon fierce
Whose fiery breath and claws would pierce
Even the bravest knight who came his way
And tried with courage this beast to slay.

Therefore, to save this kingdom fair
Each day two sheep were thrown out there
To calm the dragon's hunger pangs
And keep the kingdom from his fangs.
But alas, alack, soon all the sheep
Were in the dragon's stomach deep!

So the folk found another way
To fend off the dragon day by day.
Each day a lot was drawn by all
And the chosen one set outside the wall.
No man nor woman nor child could be spared
For each equally this dragon fate shared.

One day the lot fell to the princess fair,
The princess so gentle with the golden hair.
The king cried out: "Send not my child
Off to the dragon fiery and wild!"
But the folk said: "Others, too, their children have lost
And all like you have wept at the cost."

"Bless me, O Father, and do not weep
God above from harm will me keep."
Thus the princess said farewell
And went to the lake where the beast did dwell.
The waters surged and heaved about,
The dragon's fire began to spout.

The princess looked upwards to the sun
And begged: "Ah, send to me someone
Who this fearful beast can slay
And save me and my folk; this I pray."
Then from out the clouds it seemed
A white horse sprang which glistened and gleamed,
And on the horse sitting straight and bold
A knight with sword of brightest gold.

"Fear not, maiden, your prayer is heard
Michael am I, guardian of the highest Word.
O dread dragon, with this sword of light
I can conquer you in a single fight.
Your scaly hide it can easily pierce
And drain the life from those fangs so fierce.
But also to you a last chance I may give
To change your ways, and so to live
That the Highest is served through your power
And a servant you become from this hour."

"Ah, Michael, conqueror from on high
If I may but live, then I shall try
To serve the princess as best I can
And with her every woman and man.
I'll plough the fields and plant the wheat
So that she and all her folk may eat."

Thus Michael held the dragon dread
And tied the princess's sash 'round his head,
Then stood by as the princess led
The dragon out of his watery bed.
The folk were frightened this sight to see
And began at once all to flee.
But from Michael upon his white steed
Words came forth which all must heed:

"I, Michael, light guardian of this day
This dark dragon could easily slay;
But rather let him with you dwell
For he has promised to serve you well.
I take my leave now from this land
But if ever you need my mighty hand
Turn your gaze up to the Sun
And pray for help, and it will be done."

- Dr. Virginia Sease
Highland Hall

* * *

MOTHER GOOSE EN FRANCAIS

These rhymes are used in the pre-school and first grade
for choral speaking - and for fun!

HOMPTÉ-DOMPTÉ

Hompté-Dompté, assis sur un mur
Hompté-Dompté tomba très dur
Ni les chevaux, ni les soldats du roi
N'ont pu recoller ce grand maladroit.

LA FILLETTE À LA BOUCLETTE

Il y a une fillette
Qui a une bouclette
Au front, entre les deux yeux.
Quand elle est sage
Elle est très, très sage
Mais quand elle est méchante - oh la la!

BÉ, BÉ BREBIS NOIRE

Bé, Bé, brebis noire
As-tu de la laine?
Oui, monsieur, oui, monsieur,
Trois poches pleines:
Une pour mon maître,
Une pour ma belle,
Et une pour le petit garçon
Qui vit dans la ruelle.

(In order, of course, Humpty-Dumpty, There Was a Little
Girl, and Baa Baa Black Sheep.)

- Christiane Marissael
Garden City

METRIC SYSTEM

We would like to find out what other schools are doing in preparation for the conversion to the metric system.

In my fifth grade, we made our own meter sticks. They were cut from birch by our woodworking teacher. We marked decimeters, centimeters, and millimeters on the stick, using tape as a guideline. The children were sent about the school in groups to measure many different things in treasure-hunt fashion.

- Barbara Hartshorn
Kimberton Farms

We are equipping each lower school classroom with meter sticks and inexpensive Celsius thermometers. All rulers are metric. Crafts and woodworking teachers are following suit. A metric kit, including a scale on which the children can weigh themselves, is available for classroom use during a main lesson in math.

In arithmetic classes many teachers use only the metric system in problems involving measure; daily temperature readings in Celsius can be recorded in tables or graphs.

- Anne Charles
Garden City

* * *

THE PAINS AND STRUGGLES OF STARTING A HIGH SCHOOL

The only justification that we can have in writing about the high school is the knowledge that a number of schools are going through the same growing pains just now.

We are in the very early stages and are learning every day. Class sizes this year are 19 students in the 9th grade, 18 students in the 10th grade, and 25 students in the 11th.

School got off to a very good start. At the end of the sixth week of school, the entire high school went backpacking for two nights and three days. We drove up together on the bus, set up base camps on three different sides of a beautiful alpine lake, about five miles in from the parking lot. The classes had some contact on hikes, but they basically stayed in class units. It was a very successful trip, even with two hours of main lessons around the fires.

We are working this year to improve our sports program and to work with a student social committee to organize social activities for the year. The timetable problems are always a

nagging headache because one can never fit in all that one wishes, and the choosing of priorities is never an easy matter. The high school committee is presently considering the question of accreditation, how to bring more artistic impulse into the education, and how to develop our facilities.

Our faculty is striving to work together harmoniously. Right now we know that we will be seeking a history-English teacher for next year, preferably with a background in American history. We would welcome any communication regarding the faculty position, or information in general relating to the high school experience.

- Betty Kane
Faculty Chairman, H.S.
Sacramento

* * *

RECOMMENDED READING

Readers or Poetry

Grade 1: Bird of Time, Yolan; Crowell, pub. For children to own. Read pictures rather than text at grad 1 level.

Grade 3: The Trees Stand Shining, Hettie Jones, ed. Dial. Hardbound and paper.

Grade 4: Piping Down the Valleys Wild, Nancy Iarich, ed. Delacorte.
The Good Master, Seredy. Viking.

Grade 5: Tom Sawyer, Twain. Many publishers. Hard but interesting.

Grade 5-6: Island of the Blue Dolphins, O'Dell. Houghton.
Secret of the Andes, Clark. Viking.

Grade 7-8: Inheritance of Poetry. Houghton

Books to be read to children:

Grade 4-5: Wonderful Adventures of Nils, Lagerlof. Doubleday
Excellent in description of geographical landforms.

Teacher Preparation:

Making Things - The Handbook of Creative Discovery, Wiseman. Little, Brown.

- Barbara Hartshorn
Kimberton

Grade 1: Where Does the Butterfly Go When It Rains?

Garelik. Hale, pub.
The Classic Fairy Tales, I. and O. Opie (faculty use)

Grade 3: All the Silver Pennies, Thompson.
Pageant of Old Scandinavia, Leach. Books for Libraries
Ark of Noah, Joyce L. Wilson

Grade 4: Dream of King Alfdan, Isabel Wyatt
Little Humpbacked Horse (bound with Czar of the Water,
trans. by A.T. White, Garrard, pub)

High School: Weather Machine, Nigel Calder

- Hilary Winston
Sacramento

* * *

SUGGESTED PLAYS

Two plays, somewhat successfully produced by high school classes last winter, may be of interest to other high school and upper elementary school teachers.

A Tooth for Paul Revere, from Stephen Vincent Benet's Stories of America, adapted by F. Andrew Leafie,
Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

This is a humorous play which deals with the outbreak of the Revolution. It can be done by grade school students as well as high school classes.

American Primitive (John and Abigail), by William Gibson,
Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

Events of the Revolution as recorded in diaries, letters, journals, and speeches of John and Abigail Adams, interspersed with "rhymes" by Gibson which can be done chorally, although they were originally spoken by individual speakers. It is a challenging production for high school students, with two large parts which can be divided. The play can be cut fairly easily; we did about one hour's work of a full evening's performance.

- Andrew Leaf
Garden City

* * *

POSTSCRIPT

To the spring poem contributed by Gisela O'Neil of Spring Valley, N.Y., and published in the Spring 1976 issue, a third verse has been sent in by Alstan L. Hegg of Vancouver, B.C.

We shall rise, shall rise
Hear the children sing
And their tones so sweetly say
We shall rise like flowers and butterflies
Some glorious Easter Day.
Refrain....

* * *

TEACHING POSITIONS OPEN

An experienced Waldorf class teacher (woman), with the pioneering spirit, is much needed for the first grade in September, 1977, at the Summerfield School, 4577 Hall Road, Santa Rosa, Cal.

This school was started by a group of parents in September, 1974, and now has 54 children in the kindergarten, first, and second grades, with no experienced class teacher as yet. The two present class teachers are both men. Anyone interested will receive more detailed information on request; Edward Edelstein, at present a graduate student at the Waldorf Institute, Garden City, can supply much first-hand information.

- Irene Ellis
Summerfield

An experienced Waldorf teacher is invited to come to the mountain community of Mt. Shasta, Cal. to assist in the founding of a new Waldorf school. Six residents of Mt. Shasta are presently studying the Foundation Year course, or teacher training in Sacramento and Highland Hall; a number of other families are engaged in study either on their own or in groups. We hope to begin a school by September, 1977; at the moment we are looking for a suitable location. Please get in touch with me if you are interested.

- Mary Allen
600 Chestnut
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067

also

Please see last paragraph of high school report from Sacramento, page 7.

* * *

NOTICE

Paul Rubens, student in the Waldorf Institute, Garden City, requests that any no-longer-needed anthroposophical literature be donated to a projected library of the Anthroposophical Society headquarters, now in the planning stage, and a Waldorf school to come in Adelaide, Australia. Books, journals, newsletters, and so on would be welcome. Postage will be refunded to donors, if they request it. Please send all items to Mr. Rubens c/o Waldorf Institute, Cambridge Avenue, Garden City, N.Y. 11530.