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Music for Young Children

Rita Jacobs

Translated by Roland Everett

SLOKA
The Hyderabad Waldorf School



HAWTHORN PRESS



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Contents

Foreword by the translator	7
Introduction	9
About the origin of music and of the human being	12
What is pentatonic music?	32
The different musical notes and sounds: The tones	51
About musical instruments	56
Is my child musical?	63
About the living forces of music	67
Explanation of musical terms	72
Where to buy musical instruments	75
Appendix: Anthology of pentatonic songs collected by Roland and Rhona Everett	79
Index of songs	100

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Foreword

Music is a language that knows no national boundaries and yet, despite this international and all-human character, different nations have developed their own style and contributed in their own way to this vast subject. Therefore a few of the musical treasures of English nursery rhymes and folk songs are included in this book (see Appendix), and although the Hebridean songs are not all strictly in the pentatonic style (see chapter *What is Pentatonic Music?*), they nevertheless have an unspoilt pentatonic mood.

As Rita Jacobs encouraged the layman to create little tunes suitable for young children, please forgive me for including some of my own attempts in the Appendix. Rita Jacobs also interpreted Rudolf Steiner's remark – 'Of course, one can bring to children all kinds of things (music)' – to mean that, for instance, if young children listen to music made in the family home by older brothers and sisters – music which may well be beyond their present stage of development – they will suffer no harm. It is heartening to find an attitude which is neither rigid nor dogmatic.

Some English nursery tunes are included in the Appendix even if they do not strictly obey Rita Jacobs' suggestions. Despite their generally light and sanguine nature, underlying truths and wisdom may be detected in them. For example, *Humpty-Dumpty's Great Fall* (page 84) in its own way indicates the dramatic moment when, at birth, the embryo bursts the maternal sheath; regarding *In and Out the Windows* (page 87), do we not all fly out of the window each night in sleep to return again when we wake up in the morning? *Lavender's Blue* (page 86) can be seen to give us a picture of the threefold human being: the King being the human individuality, the Self or the Ego; the Queen being the human soul; and in 'Call up my men', the active limbs of the physical body. Human spirit, soul and body, as seen through the eyes of a little child!

May this book stimulate music-making with children, creating music rather than switching it on and off.

Roland Everett

Introduction

In their development, our children – especially when they are very young – are dependent on our sensitive awareness and understanding of what to them are the realities of life. But often our apparently superior cleverness seems to be a hindrance to our healthy perception of the little child and our feelings appear governed by personal and superficial motives. Consequently, our intentions to cultivate musicality in educating our children all too often fall prey to our own tastes – our own likes and dislikes.

How can parents, or those in charge of young children who wish to foster music according to each child's stage of development, find helpful guidance?

This is possible first of all through an honest objective observation of the child. Such observation requires a certain maturity in the observer: if we easily give in to the child's wishes and apparent needs we fall into the fatal error, which happens so often nowadays, of always allowing the child to choose. We are then failing to recognise that the child's powers of judgement are as yet undeveloped and that, consequently, young children are unable to form their own opinions. The fallibility of such a permissive attitude would become obvious if we were to

allow children to eat whatever and however much they might wish; for their very existence, children depend on our loving guidance. If we wish to do justice to the needs of young children, our upbringing of them clearly demands an inner maturity.

This maturity, or deeper self-knowledge, is not a question of age, nor can it be gained entirely from books, but there are many helpful guidelines available in Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy with its extensive literature.

With these and similar thoughts in mind, and based upon my close relationship with music, together with experience in dealing with children and with the many questions of people in charge of them, the impulse to write this little book was born. If it should contribute towards a greater understanding of the nature of the young child and of music itself, and lead in any way to greater confidence in dealing with both, its aim would certainly be fulfilled.

For a better understanding of its contents, the layman is advised to gain some knowledge of the fundamentals of music and to learn simple musical notation, at least in the treble clef. To achieve this it is necessary to learn only a few musical notes, which is easier than one may think – it is much easier than learning to handle a pocket calculator, and few would consider this an insuperable difficulty.

About the Origin of Music and of the Human Being

Neither the origin of music, nor the origin of man's soul and spiritual nature, can be found in the sense-perceptible realm, in the 'here and now'. Yet music, this special gift to mankind, is the sounding expression here upon earth of mankind's spiritual development and soul.

Scientific research of musical history leads us back to approximately 3500 BC. It shows that the music of that time was nourished by the deepest wisdom emanating from the divine worlds, but its audible results would sound very primitive to our modern ears, at least when compared with contemporary standards. During the height of Chinese culture around 3000 BC, certain intervals (1) and definite tones belonged to each particular month of the year and governed all musical activities. The same applied to the pentatonic (2) mode which, apart from the temple rites in which music played a dominant rôle, was certainly also known in ordinary life, although this is not specifically mentioned in musical history. At this time, the human being's total dedication to the spiritual was considered to be of fundamental importance. It is interesting to note that even today the Chinese language has no word corresponding to our word 'I'.

Although this book is addressed to the layman in music, it is not possible to avoid using a few musical terms. These are numbered throughout the text and explained in the chapter, *Explanation of Musical Terms*, page 72 below.



Five-tone music (the pentatonic music of Chinese high culture) is based on the interval of the fifth and, by its own nature and without needing any further elaboration, is entirely melodious and harmonious in character. It lacks the semi-tone intervals and the more rigid structure of our diatonic scales.

During the height of Greek culture (from c.800 BC), twenty-four rhythmical (3) forms were used, initially for the spoken word and not yet for music. In those times music was subservient to spoken language, but these rhythmical variables of speech gradually found their way into musical instrumentation. The interval of the fourth (4) determined the Greek scale-forms which – if experienced and played from above downwards – each had a central tone, called the ‘mese’ or ‘repercussa’, in relation to the beginning and ending notes.

‘All good melodies have their middle note (mese) and all good composers use it frequently. If they should neglect it, they soon enough return to it more than to any other note.’

Aristoteles in his *Problems*

In the Gregorian (5) style of the Middle Ages this form of scale was still used. The first examples of polyphonic (6) music were the parallel octaves (7) of the Greeks which were extended to include parallel fifths and fourths during the course of centuries, to form the first harmonic (8) structures.

It is interesting to note that at the time of Christ's life on earth the innate experience of the direction in music – from above downwards – became reversed, leading to upwards from below. Even though the principle of the middle tone (mese) remained in use during the Gregorian period, a greater orientation towards the 'ground-note' (or tonic) became more and more apparent in the music literature handed down to us. The sevenfoldness of the scales of the so-called 'Church modes' (9) determined the music of those days. Its melodic, harmonic and rhythmical forms became richer and more varied, but a separation between church and secular music did not become noticeable until the time of the medieval 'minnesingers'. During the fourteenth century, a leaning towards the use of the interval of the third (10) gradually developed, although in the early stages this interval was still experienced as a dissonance. Only in the sixteenth century was the third fully accepted as a harmonious interval.

more polarised and powerful. In the music of the Romantic period, the experience of personal grief and pain was most forcefully expressed. Wagner's *Parsifal* was composed at that time, manifesting the awakening of the 'I' out of forces of consciousness. In impressionistic music, the conglomeration of different chords dispersed again, leading to Schoenberg's intellectual twelve-tone music. Music continues to proceed along new ways.

These very short and aphoristic indications may serve as a glimpse into the evolution of mankind, revealed through the senses in the medium of music. Just as music became incarnated during the course of millenia, at first using only a few musical notes, so the soul-spirit of the child gradually becomes incarnated in the growing body. If we try to follow this development, we will begin to realise why the musical element plays such an important part in the child's developing soul life. On a miniature scale, the child undergoes similar stages of development to mankind throughout the millenia.

If we take seriously what has been accomplished by humanity in the field of music, and if we take the child's development seriously, we must realise that it is by no means a matter of indifference *what kind of music* we offer to young children. At the same time – and surely not for the last time – we wish to stress

that the layman in music can definitely act correctly as an educator.

In the same way that music cannot be seen as the product of chance, neither can a newborn baby ever be considered merely as the result of chance. It is inconceivable that a newborn human being should have come into existence 'only here on earth', that is solely through the fertilisation of the maternal ovum. Again and again we are very deeply touched when we see the charm and magic of a little child. We clearly feel that the world of this child is not the same as our world. But what kind of a world is it in which these little citizens of the earth are so clearly at home, while submitting themselves so trustingly to our care?

Again and again we can experience how we can reach these children, living in their own different world, if we offer them suitable music either sung or played on an instrument which needs to be in keeping with the child's still tender physical condition. We can then have the happy experience of witnessing how these little ones, on hearing our musical sounds, suddenly respond with an almost fully-physical listening. This seems to show us that music must have come from the same original home as the human being's soul and spirit. Since soul and spirit can only gradually find their way into the physical body, and because the memory of the spiritual home so recently left behind is still so alive,

such music can be deeply meaningful for the young child. Here we are not thinking of the kind of music which encompasses the wealth and sophistication of adult tastes. Above all, we are not alluding to the mechanical sounds of electro-acoustic machines which for many adults have become indispensable for the stimulation of their nerves and senses. The tender physical organisation of the child – if it is to develop healthily – is by no means robust enough to cope with such stress. Parents must be aware of what they do to their babies when leaving canned music switched on in the home, or when they even put them in front of the television screen in order to secure some peace and comfort for themselves! When some young children react to excessive mechanical noises by crying, by aggressive behaviour or inability to play peacefully, it may lead to them being shouted at or spanked, but if such misguided parents realised what they were doing, they might wake up in horror from their easy-going comfort.

So what kind of music is suitable for the young child? Even about a hundred years ago there would have been no need to write about it. The most natural kind of music was *singing*. During the last few decades this natural and beautiful human capacity has become stunted and well-nigh lost. Artificially produced noises are swamping people's hearing and people in turn have become more and

more silent. The art of conversation has become impoverished and the once natural gift of singing is slowly being eroded, or almost forgotten.

Well-meaning parents once told me that, because they could not sing in tune, every night they played evening songs on their tape-recorder, sung by a famous singer, so that their child should go to sleep peacefully. Perfection of performance offered by technical means often hides the real truth: in this case the truth is that for little children it is not the perfection of performance that matters, but that the child's guardians should make the effort to sing and that their singing should be the outcome of their love for the child. However inadequate such singing may be in the ears of the world, for the child it will be a most beautiful and intimate experience which it will want to imitate. Adults should summon up the courage to bare themselves to the child, irrespective of their musical gifts. When with others, adults should show enough tact and tolerance to appreciate someone's musical efforts even if the results are far from perfect. Much harm is inflicted by the barbarous practice of some educators who still today segregate the singers from the 'growlers' and who mock children who can't sing in tune.

For very young children it is enough if we just sing to them. If one wishes to go further, one can introduce simple instruments, such as children's harps, the

children's flute, handresonators, etc. One can alternate playing and singing or combine both. A sound-producing toy usually is meant to stimulate the child's faculty of hearing. However, when buying such a toy, the loudness, beauty or ugliness of its sounds must be carefully judged. Loud sound-producing toys are unsuitable for the very young in the same way that loud talking or loud music would be, or the sound of a machine. In every case, the sounds of musical toys should be produced by hand and *not* electrically.

At about the stage when the baby begins to grasp objects, quite contrary reactions to music can be seen. When a mother sings her regular 'Good-night' song, the child may listen intently and, stimulated by the grown-up's voice, may try to join in, singing its first tones. On the other hand, the little one may suddenly make the maximum amount of noise, banging any object at hand with tremendous zest and vigour. As the child's former need for sleeping decreases, its awareness of what is happening in its surroundings increases, together with a new and energetic urge to 'grasp' the world (here meant quite literally). This is the time when acquaintance with music becomes more differentiated: tones and melodies belong to the world of listening and dreaming, but the energetic grasping of 'rhythm instruments' (be they a bunch of keys or cooking spoons)

belongs to the side of life to which a child will surrender itself with great enjoyment, and with the active participation of its limbs. (If an adult's nerves cannot stand the 'joie-de-vivre' of the very young, a 'distraction-manoeuvre' will still have a prompt effect!)

The middle way between listening and acting, between giving and taking, between the inner and outer life, still has to develop out of these musical polarities. The child has by no means yet reached the musical major and minor experience and is still far from being able to experience musical harmonies. Nevertheless, simple musical means can be found to foster the first musical feelings in their seedlike state of development. True, even a little child has feelings, but these still echo the surrounding world and are more of the nature of imitation. They are always dependent on the child's surroundings and, because of this, the way we behave to each other in the presence of a child is always important. If we set an example of love and uprightness, we provide the child with a greater feeling of security and a better foundation for soul development than through opposite ways of behaviour.

This inner balance manifests itself musically in the interval of the fifth, and songs consisting of only two or three notes in fifths will satisfy the musical needs

of the very young child. Here are three examples:

Lyre song

Possibly with a Children's Harp or Kantele

Words and tune : R. Jacobs



Ly - re, Ly - re Ly - re play for my li - ttle child to day.



See my fin - ger tips pluck - ing the strings, Ly - re, Ly - re Ly - re play



for my li - ttle child to day.

Bim-bam-bell

Possibly with Glockenspiel, single sound bars and drum

Words and tune : R. Jacobs



Bim-bam-bell, I love my pu-ssy well; she loves to drink the milk so sweet from a



sau- cer ly- ing by her feet, Bim- bam - bell, I love my pu-ssy well.

Rickety rockety

Words and music: R. Jacobs



Ri-ck-ety ro-ck-ety my old wain rum-bles up the hill a - gain



Who is in it, who rides home? Well, it is my dar-ling John!

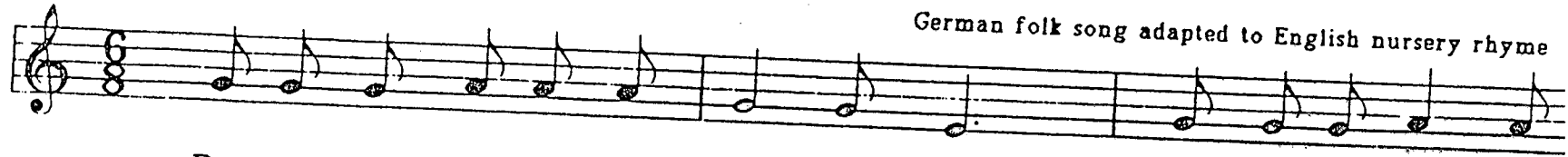


Even an adult, if allowing himself/herself to get involved in these two- or three-tone songs, may be captured by their innocent charm. Adults should try and compose similar simple songs: this is not as difficult as it may at first appear and it can be enormous fun! Repeat a little verse again and again until a simple melody suggests itself; when you have 'caught' it, hold on to it and condense it so that it does not flutter away from the memory. Once it is safely written down, it can be sung to the child to whom such a little creation will be a special gift, even if it is only subconsciously received. As in the case of the earlier test of courage (singing without a beautiful or trained voice), here again it is not just the result that matters, but the *deed*.

At the age of two or three, the child will try to join in the singing and clap its little hands while doing so. Now is the time for 'activity songs', illustrating simple menial tasks. An example is the nursery rhyme *Pat a cake*.

Pat a cake

German folk song adapted to English nursery rhyme



Pat a cake, pat a cake, ba ker's man. Bake us a cake as



fast as you can. Pat it and prick it and mark it with 'T'.



Put it in the o-ven for To-mmy and me.

First little games involving part of the body are suitable now. Here is an example:

Little Feet

Words : T Lenz

Tune : R Jacobs



Li - ttle feet on my legs, Tumm-y round, pink and sound,



Arms so long and hands so small, be - long to li - ttle Ka - tie all.

Children now love to name and touch their feet, arms and tummy (which to them represents the entire trunk) and to engage in finger games, such as *This is the Big Thumb*.

This is the Big Thumb

Finger game

Words : German nursery rhyme
Song : R. Jacobs



This is the big thumb, He pulls a big plum,
[Holding the thumb] [Holding 2nd finger]



He picks it up - , He's tak - ing it home, And the
[Holding 3rd finger] [Holding 4th finger]



litt - le one litt - le one, go - bbles so fast -



go-bbles it down !

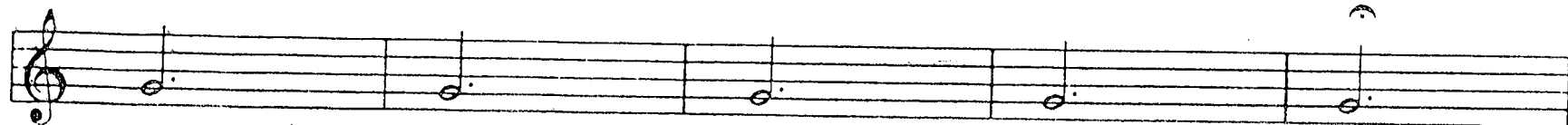
However, the last example should not be used before the fifth year, when the child can discriminate between the different single fingers. Simple instruments, such as a small cheerful drum, hanging metal pipes making bell-like tones, or a cymbal with its mysterious sound can now be introduced. For example:

Church bells are ringing

Words and Tune : R. Everett



Church bells are ring - ing, church bells are sing - ing;



One, Two, Three, Four Five!

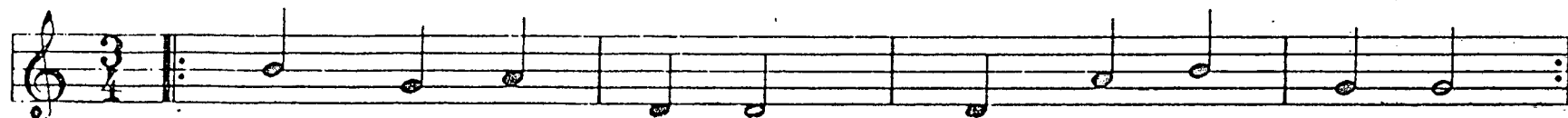


go-bbles it down !

However, the last example should not be used before the fifth year, when the child can discriminate between the different single fingers. Simple instruments, such as a small cheerful drum, hanging metal pipes making bell-like tones, or a cymbal with its mysterious sound can now be introduced. For example:

Church bells are ringing

Words and Tune : R. Everett



Church bells are ring - ing, church bells are sing - ing;



One, Two, Three, Four Five!

It is better to wait a little longer before introducing a flute because, in the third year, the child's fingers and breath have not yet sufficiently developed. Some young children, when hearing a flute for the first time, have been known to burst into tears, and such a reaction should be taken seriously, as should all responses towards musical instruments. If a child is given a lyre or a 'Kantele', the instrument should not be thrown together with other toys in a toy box (perhaps with the exception of a drum). The way that musical instruments are handled should encourage the child to maintain a feeling of reverence for the preciousness of such treasures. Short and regular times during the day should be set aside for playing a musical instrument.

An extension of the songs based on the fifth could now be introduced, taking care to choose the mode or scale appropriate for the child in this new phase of development. Around the third year we can observe how children like to accompany their actions with appropriate words and also with singing. One of the suitable tunes for this stage is the already quoted nursery rhyme, *Pat a cake*. It is part of the scale which is called the *pentatonic scale*.

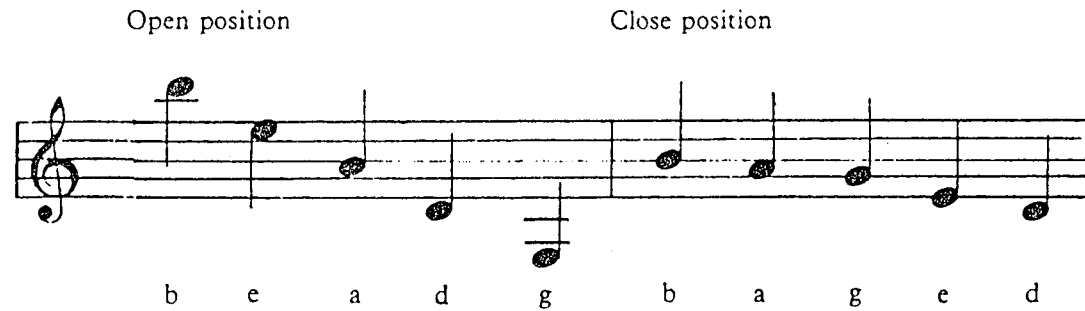


What is Pentatonic Music?

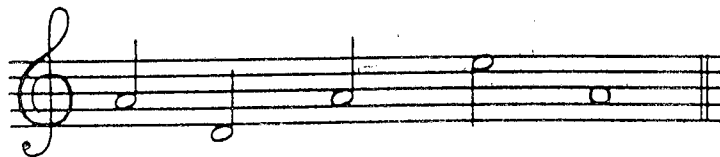
It has already been said that pentatonic music was known and used in ancient China around 3500 BC. If, as laymen, we wish to find it, all we have to do is to play only on the black keys of a keyboard instrument – this can also be done by two people playing a duet with four hands. Hearing these innocent and harmonious tunes, we can quickly feel the healing quality of pentatonic music, which corresponds to the peace of a healthy child up to the eighth or ninth year.

If we try to recognise the different qualities of the intervals, we may experience them in the following way: There is the ‘completeness-in-itself’ of the prime (only one note), the flowing nature of the second, the inwardness of the third, the pithy warmth of the fourth, the all-embracing and yet opening-out quality of the fifth, the devotional nature of the sixth, the struggle and strife of the seventh and the Alpha and Omega quality of the octave. We find that the message of each of these intervals individually and also as a totality is deeply meaningful. Here we have mentioned only one of their many possible characteristics. The way in which these intervals with all their differentiations are put together in music, gives a melody its own magic.

We can rearrange the pentatonic notes, comprising b, e, a, d, g into an 'open position', or b, a, g, e, d into a 'close position' arriving at:



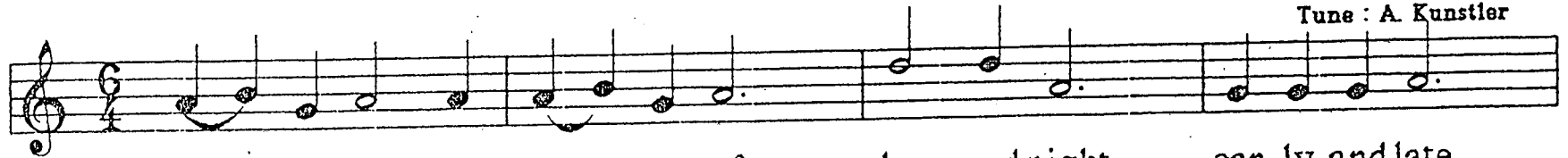
Pentatonic melodies can be played or sung in three different ways. Nearest to a young child are the more centrally spaced notes – or notes grouped around the middle note, the 'mese'. (During the Egyptian cultural epoch – from approximately 2900 to 800 BC – the central 'a' was the tone of the sun.) Here are two examples of songs with notes around the central a:



Guardian Angel

Words : Morgenstern

Tune : A. Kunstler

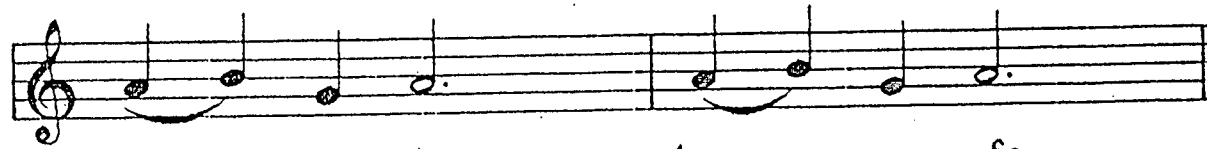


Guardi - an an - gel kee - p me safe day and night ear - ly and late,



Till my soul to hea - ven re - turns

[Instrument]



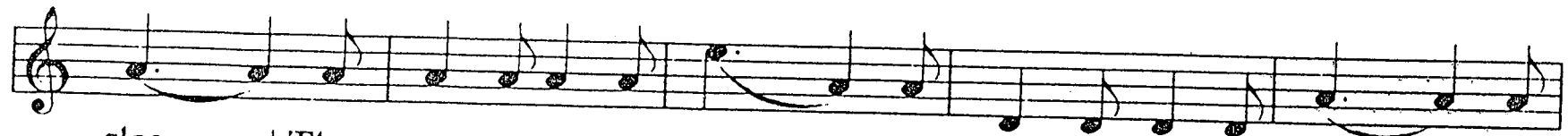
a - n - gel mine kee - p me safe

Star song

Words and tune : R. Jacobs



The ang - els whis - per soft - ly, 'Now ba - by go to



slee - p 'They carr - y ba - by gent - ly to where the stars do peep. The



stars are soft - ly sing - ing, they sing the whole night through They



sing their songs so sweet - ly, they sing them all to you.

The second kind of pentatonic melody begins with the ground-tone g and sounds like a pseudo-major scale:



Many children's songs are composed in this style, as for instance *Pussy-Willow* *Catkins*:

The
Revival

Pussy - Willow Catkins

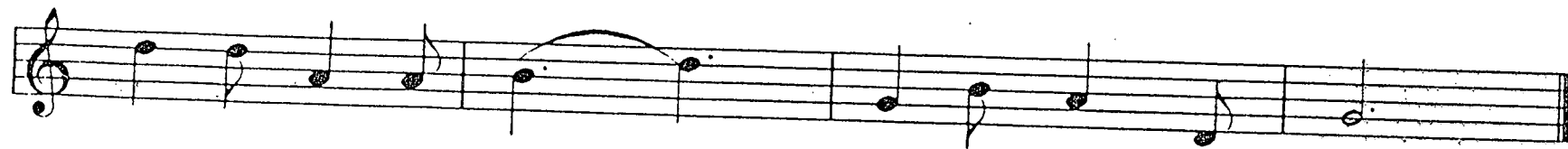
Words : Ch. Morgenstern
Translated by : Rhona Everett
Tune : R. Jacobs



Puss - y - Will - ow cat - kins , Silk - y , soft and shin - ing ,



Love - ly to be seen ! Oh , you vel - vet cat - kins ,



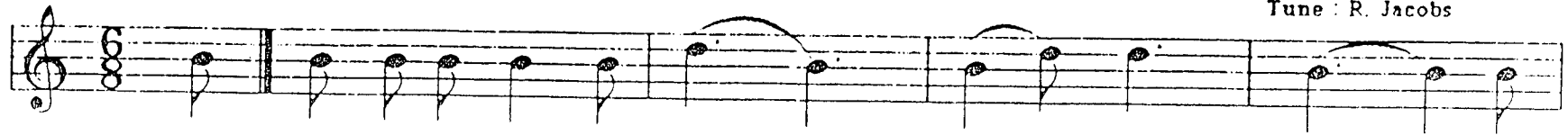
Fur - ry , fair - y play - things , Tell me where you've been .

2. Gladly will we tell you. Bursting through the branches, Now we do appear.
Through the cold of winter, deep asleep and dreaming, We were sleeping here.
3. In the willow branches, Sleeping there and dreaming, In your wooden bed,
Was it not too hard there? Were you not preferring softest down instead?
4. Born anew in Springtime, Soft as silk emerging, Through the wood we peep
You must understand us, Not as we appear now, Were we fast asleep.
5. Only as a thought, a thought of God the Father, Were we waiting there,
Invisibly a-sleeping, Till He bade us waken, In the Springtime fair.
6. Pussy-willow catkins, Silky, soft and shining, Lovely to be seen!
Oh, you velvet catkins, Now I know my dear ones, How with God you've been.

The Song of the Church Bell

Words : Ch Morgenstern

Tune : R. Jacobs



There once was a churchbell ring - ing , ringing , Ding - Dong ! There



al - so was a snow flake , floating so soft ly a - long ; it float-ed down so



gent - ly , like a feather from an gel's wing - it came from the world of the stars , it's



home was in silver y stars. There once was a churchbell ring - ing , ringing Ding -



Dong !' There al - so was a snow flake , gliding so gently a long . - When



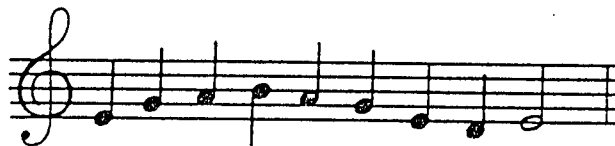
thousands of snowflakes had float - ed to earth as in a dream , The earth was shining



white , as with ang - els' feath - ers a - gleam .

This major-like pentatonic mode, however, should be introduced to children only around the seventh year. For only then does the soul development step down, as it were, to embrace the ground-tone, representing a new consciousness of their individual ego, which will offer new possibilities only around the ninth year.

The third kind of pentatonic scale is experienced as a 'pseudo-minor' mood, beginning with the low e as the ground-tone.



Rising up from the e, this scale moves via the minor third – with its strongly inward-directed mood – to the next tone g. This kind of pentatonic music is frequently heard in the folk music of the Balkans, but it is certainly *not* suitable for a very young child. Before the eighth or ninth year the child has neither found his or her ground-tone, nor has the soul-nature developed far enough to experience in the right way the strongly inward quality of the pentatonic minor.

In order to be able to experience the different qualities of a light-filled major and a warmth-filled, more inwardly oriented minor, the child's middle system, that of the emerging life of feeling, must develop out of the forces of the awakening ego and must no longer come from imitating the surrounding world. Up till now the child's feelings have developed out of a joyous will for activity, a will wishing to discover the world, arising from the metabolic pole of the human organism. This stream is now joined by the stream of sense perceptions, centralised in the head as the opposite pole, which is becoming more conscious.

Because the child's ego forces become active in the soul realm around the ninth year, certain musical elements – as for example the experience of the major and minor third – cannot offer the right musical nourishment for the child before that time. It is therefore better to postpone until after the eighth year songs containing a minor mood, such as the third song from Belà Bartok's book *For Children*:

1 5 5 4

p. dolce

3 3 2 3

2 5 1 3

This system contains the first two staves of music. The upper staff is in treble clef with a 2/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with notes G4, A4, B4, and C5, each with a slur and a fingering number above it: 1 for G, 5 for A, 5 for B, and 4 for C. The lower staff is in bass clef with a 2/4 time signature. It features a bass line with notes G2, A2, B2, and C3, each with a slur and a fingering number below it: 2 for G, 5 for A, 1 for B, and 3 for C. The dynamic marking *p. dolce* is placed above the first measure of the lower staff. The system concludes with a fermata over the final notes.

2 2

1

This system contains the next two staves of music. The upper staff continues the melodic line with notes D5, E5, and F5, with slurs and fingering numbers 2 and 2 above the first two notes, and 1 above the third. The lower staff continues the bass line with notes G2, A2, B2, and C3, with slurs and fingering numbers 2, 5, 1, and 3 below the notes. The system concludes with a fermata over the final notes.

3 2 2

dim. - - - - *pp smorzando*

1 5 2 3 2 1 2 3 5

(45')

This system contains the final two staves of music. The upper staff continues the melodic line with notes G4, A4, B4, and C5, with slurs and fingering numbers 3, 2, and 2 above the first three notes. The lower staff continues the bass line with notes G2, A2, B2, and C3, with slurs and fingering numbers 1, 5, 2, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, and 5 below the notes. The dynamic marking *dim.* is placed above the first measure, followed by a dashed line and the marking *pp smorzando* above the second measure. The system concludes with a fermata over the final notes and the marking (45').

The following song, *Swinging and Swaying of Birch Tree Branches*, should not be sung with children until towards their eighth year because of the octave jump in the 4/4 rhythm and the accentuation of the fourth, quite apart from the song's minor section ('Giants on mountains are gazing in wonder'):

△
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△
△

Swinging and Swaying of Birch Tree Branches

Lyre prelude

Text: M Garff

Song: J. Russ



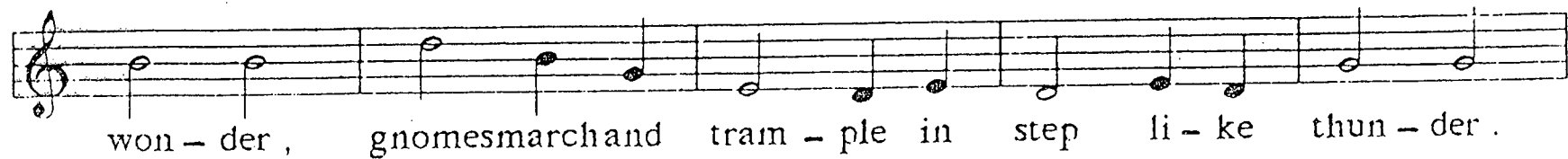
Swing - ing and
Play - ing of



sway - ing of birch tree bran - ches sil - ent the rabb - its are
flutes and of vi - o - lin dan - ces Nix - ies are list' - ning in

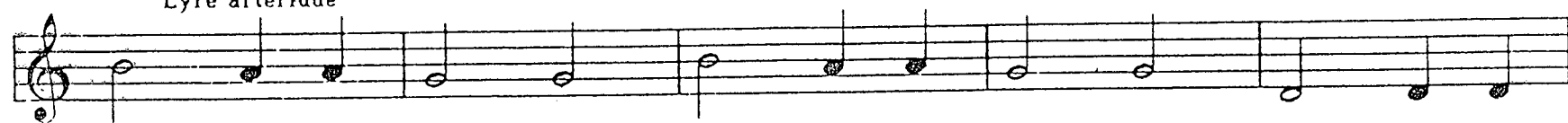


list' - ning en - chant - ed Gi - ants on moun - tains are gaz - ing in
clear, crys - tal wa - ters



won - der , gnomes march and tram - ple in step li - ke thun - der .

Lyre afterlude



Another song, suitable for the eighth and ninth year, is *The Sun is Hiding Behind the Clouds*.

The Sun is Hiding

Words and tune : Christine Steinweg

The sun is hid-ing be - hind the clouds, and lets not a
s - ing - le ray shine down, The clou - ds they come from the big, deep
sea, bring rain and wind for you and me, O sun, dear
sun, do shi - ne!

The musical score consists of four staves of music in 3/4 time, written on a treble clef. The melody is simple and suitable for children's voices. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

2. Yet if there were no rain at all, how could there be weather fair or foul?
All flowers and trees, all beasts in the wood,
From thirst they certainly die they would,
O fall, dear rain, do fall—!

3. And if the dear sun would not shine, no light on earth would live things find,
So dark it would be, so gloomy and cold,
Please shine, dear sun for young and for old,
Please shine, dear sun, for us all—!

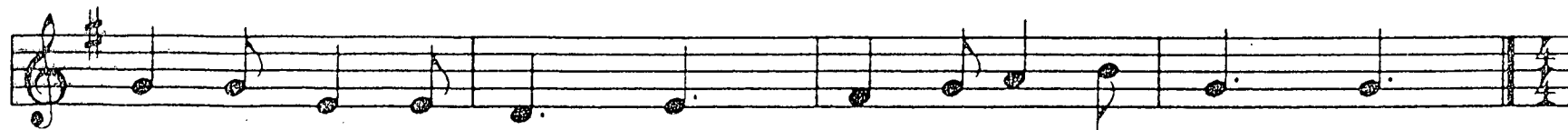
A song with a major and minor section, also suitable for children aged eight or nine, is *Once I saw a Hare*:

Once I Saw a Hare

Words : Anon.
Tune : R. Jacobs

Once I saw a hare jump-ing o-ver a light green mea-dow,
and this was in day time
Once I heard a King call,
sea-ted high on se-ven steps, and this was in night time.
See me when I'm wa-king, when I am laugh-ing or cry-ing,
and it will be dav

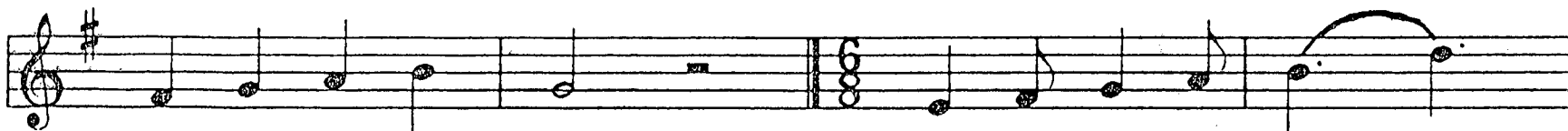
The musical score is written on six staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are placed below the notes. There are repeat signs at the end of the second and fifth staves. The lyrics are: "Once I saw a hare jump-ing o-ver a light green mea-dow, and this was in day time", "Once I heard a King call, sea-ted high on se-ven steps, and this was in night time.", "See me when I'm wa-king, when I am laugh-ing or cry-ing,", and "and it will be dav".



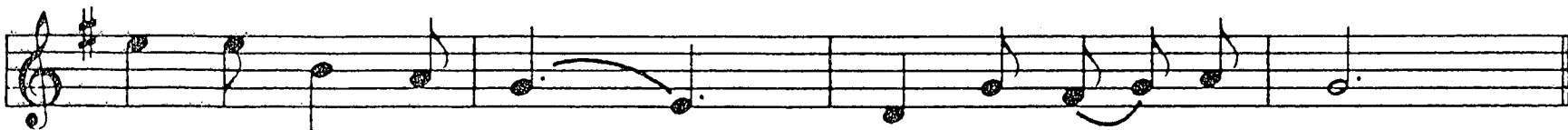
in God's light re - new - ing , and it will be night time .



If you ask the day - time , it will ans - wer clear - ly ,



"Thou art but a child." When you know the night time ,



it will whis - per soft - ly , where you find your home .



When boys or girls become ready to experience the difference between major and minor, they will also have found their individual ground-tone. Around the ninth year children have outgrown the unearthliness of pentatonic music, woven out of fifths. With the sequence of tones from c to b, in the so-called diatonic scale, they now have conquered for themselves the prime (ground-tone) and the fourth – the c and f.

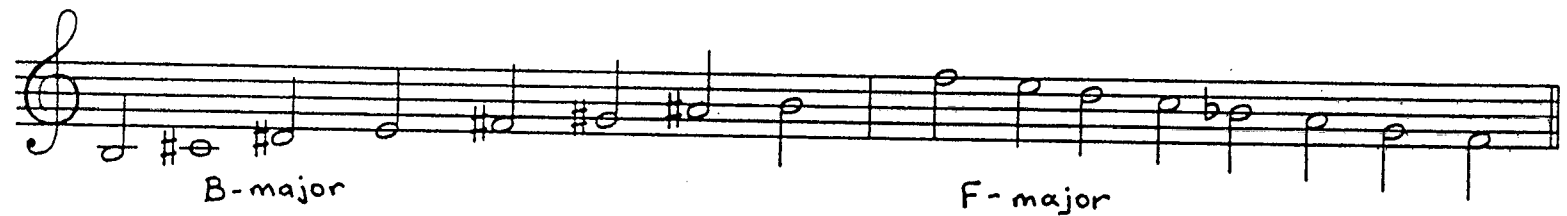
The Different Musical Notes and Sounds: The Tones

If we look at the diatonic scale – c, d, e, f, g, a, b, (C) – b is the last note before the octave, the seventh tone of our present scale. If we wish to come to an understanding of the right music for the young child, remembering that the child has come down from the heights, we should begin with b as our starting point, the most light-filled and brightest tone of this sequence – and then descend in fifths.



In this way we come to the real qualities of the single tones whose differentiated light and warmth qualities become clearly perceptible. Already when comparing B major with F major we see that it is not coincidental that B major has many sharps (sharps always adding 'light' to notes) and that F major is the only key in

the diatonic scales with only one accidental, namely B flat, leading it down by a half-tone into the realm of warmth.



Already in such a simple example we can discover the 'open secret' of the notes' inherent qualities. They point to further and deeper aspects which have to be considered when we look at the relationship of the human being to music.

Therefore it is important which note we choose to begin with when we sing a song with a child. Our task is not only to teach the child a melody or a certain rhythm, but also to try to awaken in the child a feeling for the quality of the tones as such, without, however, making them at all conscious of it. Tones or notes are not merely an accidental mixture of frequencies (pitch) and decibels (volume), but in themselves they already incorporate different possibilities of musical effects, irrespective of their melodic or rhythmic content.

If now – in accordance with their inherent light-quality – we telescope the series of fifths together (b, e, a, d, in descending order) we come to the so-called archetypal pentatonic scales.

It is the coming together of the most light-filled tones, as already mentioned, which forms the pseudo-major pentatonic scale, moving around the middle note g.

C, representing the ground-note (tonic) in the diatonic scale, guarantees a firm and solid basis and is akin to the ego force in thinking. F, possessing a quality of warmth rather than light, in essence contains the fire of will life. However, these qualities in themselves remain in the sphere of the inaudible.

In the diatonic scale, the oppressive narrowness of a single half-tone determines the relationship of the third to the fourth, and of the seventh to the octave (hence the regular gaps in the black keys of the keyboard instruments – Translator's note). At the same time, half-tones determine the major or minor tonality of music.

Pentatonic scales are still completely free from narrow half-tones which fix music to a specific diatonic key. With their light-filled essence and freedom from a fixed tonality, they still reflect the soul development of mankind's earlier cultural epochs, when human beings were open to the spiritual and divine world. From this point of view, the quality of the pentatonic music still corresponds to the nature of the young child up to the ninth year. Until that age normal and healthy children will naturally open themselves with trusting love to the adults in charge of them. Their environment is the determining factor of their developing soul forces. Around the ninth year a discrimination between the child's inner and outer world begins to make itself felt. With it comes the discovery of self-consciousness, bringing with it a separation and individualisation. This separation becomes more pronounced and dramatic during the time of puberty, frequently bringing with it dangers which, under certain circumstances,

can lead to serious illnesses unless the previous childhood years have strengthened forces of trust and confidence in adult guidance. These processes of the soul manifest themselves right into the physical changes taking place in the growing child.*

The gradual incarnation of the child's soul also manifests itself in the changing voice. As adults we marvel at the way young children can 'chirp' and even sing effortlessly in the highest register of the human voice. For the sake of their children mothers should try to practise their own singing voice in order to be able to sing children's songs in the appropriate pitch together with their children. Those who are not accustomed to singing should draw courage from the fact that the more inwardly relaxed a mother may feel, the more the compass of her voice will widen. Mothers should practise singing a little every day and not give up too easily, but if they should feel hoarseness or cramping of their vocal chords they should stop immediately. Light household tasks may even distract a little from a too-conscious approach to singing and in this way may lead to greater success.

* *The Middle Period of Childhood*, by Hans Müller Wiedemann, Fischer Pocketbook No. 5539, and *The Ninth Year of Life* by Herman Koepke, Philosophic Anthroposophic Publishing Company, Dornach.

About Musical Instruments

There are some musical instruments specially designed and made for children. We owe special thanks to the *Choroi Movement* which specialises in various instruments, all of which are eminently suitable for young children.*

During the baby's first months one instrument which corresponds above all to the tenderness and need for protection of the very young is the seven-stringed children's harp. When its pentatonic notes d, e, g, a, b, d, e, are played in upward succession this can induce the right mood and calmness for the child to fall asleep.

Songs can be accompanied in unison with the harp or occasionally they may be enriched by added fifths or by short interludes, but the singer must avoid improvisations expressing his or her own musical tastes. Judged by contemporary tastes, the music of earlier cultural epochs was very simple; Polyphonic music only came into being during the Greek cultural period, approximately around

* See also Rita Jacobs, *Music Therapy – A Contribution based on Anthroposophical Insight*, published by Soziale Hygiene im Verein für ein erweitertes Heilwesen

800 BC. It has already been mentioned that each child undergoes on a small scale what humanity has undergone on a large scale through the millenia. The particular tonal quality of the children's harp illustrates the kind of music that is suitable for the young child.

When babies reach the 'grasping stage' they will love louder and more percussive instruments. Here the materials used are of particular importance. Wooden clappers are very suitable, and also little tinkling bells, if possible only a single one at a time. Once children have learned to aim straight in grasping objects with their hands, the adult will realise that the time has come to give the child a little drum, which should have a diameter of only about twenty-five centimetres. It is important to pay as much attention to the materials used as when purchasing any other musical instrument. In this case, the drum should be covered with proper drum skin and not with plastic material; the sticks should have felt heads and bamboo handles – a wooden drumstick head would be too hard, producing too aggressive a sound. Skilful amateurs can even make their own drums.

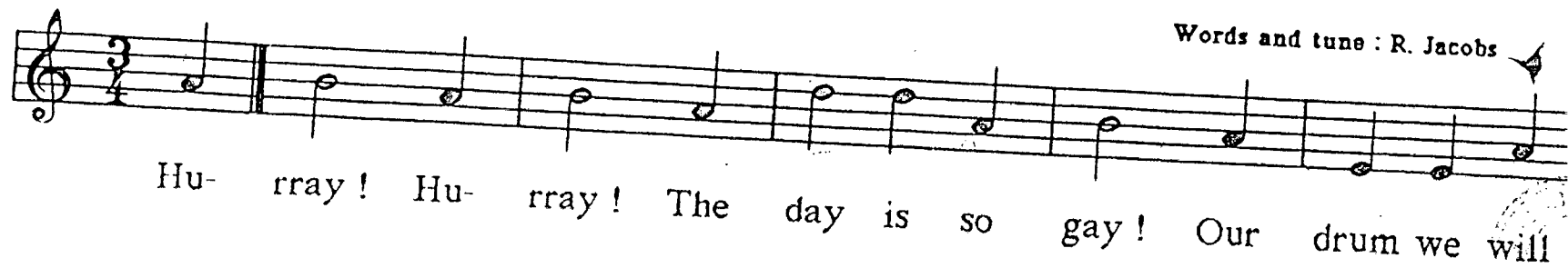
Apart from a drum or a tambourine, children should also be given a melody instrument. We suggest 'hand-spiels' (wooden hand resonators) on which may

be placed tone-bars which can be bought singly. To begin with two resonators tuned to a fifth are sufficient for children aged about three and over. An 'e' could be added and – depending on financial circumstances – the whole set of pentatonic tones could be used.

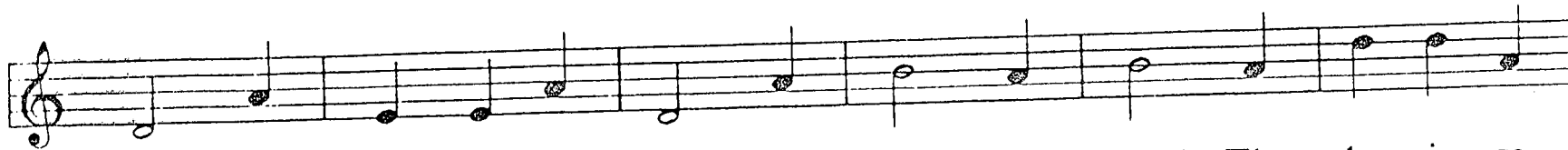
A suitable instrument to calm down a child would be a cymbal about twenty centimetres in diameter with a felt-head stick. When hit on the edge while being moved vibrating through the air, the cymbal has a diffused yet concentrated sound. Its particular tone quality is specially suitable for restless children and its sound makes a good contrast to that of the drum, as for example in the *Day and Night Song*.

Day and Night Song

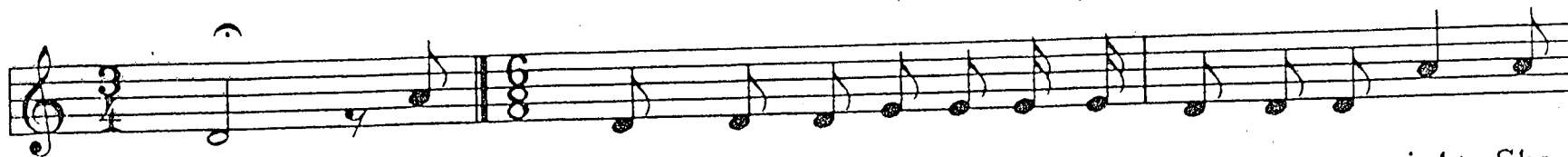
Words and tune : R. Jacobs



Hu- rray! Hu- rray! The day is so gay! Our drum we will



beat, and march with our feet. Hu- rray! Hu- rray! The day is so



gay! The moon walks so soft-ly o'er the hea-ven at night. She



takes on her journ-ey the stars as her guide, and flow-ers and beasts and our



neigh-bour and you, we all go to rest and in sleep are re-newed.

When about five or six years old, some children begin to enjoy playing a little flute and here we must mention the instrument makers of the Choroï Movement, who have designed charming little flutes for young children. They have only a single hole and can be bought in various pitches which, together with other one-hole flutes, can form a pentatonic scale. Such a one-tone flute is particularly suitable for children who naturally take to a wind instrument. It is possible to blow two different notes on these one-hole pipes, one with the hole closed and the other with it open. Playing (and listening) to the ensuing interval can be the beginning of a further ear training in which children can practise recognising melodies and also controlling both breath and finger movements. When the child is ready to move on from Kindergarten to school proper, the time is right for a Choroï pentatonic flute. In order to appreciate how valuable such flutes are for young children, one only needs to compare their sounds with those of ordinary soprano recorders. The warm, rounded-off tones of Choroï flutes, always sounding tender, correspond most beautifully to the nature of the young child. In comparison, the tone of an ordinary soprano recorder can sound shrill and piercing, lacking the Choroï's protective 'sound-cocoon'. The soprano recorder can impinge on the auditory nerves of both players and listeners, and

for modern children who have had to accustom themselves to traffic noises in cities or the harsh vibrations of machines, such a soprano recorder no longer offers the right 'sound-nourishment'. For this reason Choroï flutes have generally been introduced in the lower classes of Steiner Schools, along with the 'Kantele', a plucking instrument.

During their years of growing, children's voices become deeper, and in the case of boys this takes quite a dramatic turn during puberty. When working with music between the tenth to twelfth years, we should allow children to 'grow downward' into the lower register of music by giving them instruments of a lower pitch. All too frequently one meets the bad habit in schools of eleven- and twelve-year-olds playing on small soprano recorders, their upper arms firmly pressed against their sides. If teachers wish to use recorders in class lessons, they should offer pupils the opportunity of playing on lower-pitched recorders, especially when they are eleven or twelve years old, as there are also treble (alto), tenor, and even bass recorders. This also makes it possible to play polyphonic music in class lessons.

The Kantele – depending on its design – has far more strings than the children's harp. Although it is possible to tune Kanteles pentatonically, these

instruments are mainly designed for the time after the ninth year, during which the child is ready for diatonic music; all diatonic notes are found on the Kantele, and quite a few more. Using this gentle-sounding plucking instrument, additional string instruments and singing can greatly enrich the pupil's musical experience. Kanteles are very popular among pupils, despite the fact that quite a few children may have difficulties in finding their way among so many strings. If children are not gifted for this instrument, it is better not to plague them with it unless they themselves insist on learning it. Altogether, after the ninth year, the motivation to play a musical instrument should be encouraged time and time again, but adults should beware of forcing children into the strait-jacket of instrumental lessons, unless the children themselves ask for it.

Is My Child Musical?

A warning must be sounded right at the start: the fact that someone plays one or even more musical instruments in itself does not, unfortunately, *guarantee* that such a person is musical! True musicality means to have the capacity of opening oneself totally and with fullest concentration to musical experiences. A love of music, on the other hand, lives in practically every normal human being. During the very first days of life, as previously mentioned, music reveals the common spiritual home of human beings and of music itself. Every night, when our bodies lie in bed, we are united in soul and spirit with the realm of the music of the spheres. The 'musician' in us is nourished in this way and, on awakening, returns to the body again, refreshed and strengthened. Children, who are much closer to the spiritual world than adults, are far more naturally at home in music than their elders. With care we can nourish – from outside as it were – this natural affinity to music in children. Practising music in step-by-step exercises, we can deepen and condense their musical capacities in accordance with their age, as has been described. We must of course be prepared sometimes to face lack of abilities and skill, but we also come across innate gifts in children. When

trying to transform the spiritual background of music into earthly deeds and skills, we are also faced with questions of the child's constitution and general condition.

The already-mentioned first instruments are so easy to play that as a rule it is not necessary to arrange for special instrumental lessons outside the classroom. If an outstanding musical gift is obvious in a child – and this is usually apparent at a very early age – a responsible educator faces the question of how to nurture this gift. Such specially gifted children develop musically in quite a different way from what has been so far described. For their sake one would wish them to have parents and teachers without personal ambitions and, above all, teachers with great intelligence and ability. In guiding musically-gifted children, one may even have a presentiment of a developing genius: if this is used to satisfy personal or financial ambitions the adult can cripple the child's soul life.

It is not possible to give a fixed 'recipe' since such gifts need very individual treatment according to the child's temperament and constitution. Such a child is likely to express strong preferences concerning his or her instrument: if such a strong desire has not been expressed before the ninth year, parents should beware of sending their child to instrumental lessons of their own choice.

reflecting their own taste, but at this stage parents or teachers may tactfully try to foster a child's love for a particular instrument. The best way of doing this is to take a child to a concert in which the instrument which the parents believe to be the right one for their child plays a solo part.

If a child shows a glowing love for a particular instrument, the educator must realise that he or she, too, will have to help in supporting the enthusiasm for the instrument. Inevitably there will be times when the child may lose interest and may even feel too lazy to practise, experiencing resentment and antipathy towards the chosen instrument, and it then becomes important that parents offer real support by encouraging the child, by listening to his or her playing and in general helping the child to overcome such a critical period.

Again and again parents, and teachers, come with the question of the right instrument for a particular child. Basically, the answer will be that the instrument a child is longing to play will be the right one, unless such a desire merely reflect a current fashion. If it comes from the child's heart, one should, if at all possible, do one's utmost to fulfil this wish. In cases where a child shows love for more than one instrument, the educators may have to select fundamental criteria, such as the child's temperament and constitution.

To an attentive observer, indications for the right instrument will reveal themselves when in the company of the child. These may be the type of fingers, constitution of the chest, a strong inclination either towards intellectuality or to an imaginative approach, a weakness in concentrating or a somewhat pedantic attitude. If – possibly with the support of the music teacher – the right choice of instrument has been made, working and living with the instrument and its sound can already be a therapeutic balance for a child's tendency towards one-sidedness.

About the Living Forces of Music

In 1924 Rudolf Steiner said to the teachers of the first Waldorf School:

‘Every child is a musical instrument and experiences inwardly the well-being induced by sound, for sounding is brought about by the special circulation of the breath. This (latter) is inward music.’

These few words alone indicate the central importance that music can play in the field of pedagogy. Music will actually create new conditions in the child’s physical make-up. Naturally, this happens entirely unconsciously in a child, whereas the adult can create physical changes through consciously experiencing musical processes, in which case music with its various elements can bring about a therapy, a help towards healing illnesses.

Rudolf Steiner also said to pedagogues in 1923:

‘When the child enters school, one will find in him or her a greater appreciation of the melodic rather than of the harmonic element in music. Naturally, this must not be taken pedantically. In the field of art pedantry must never be allowed to play a part. Of course, one can introduce all kinds of things to the child.’

When dealing with music in the case of the young child, Rudolf Steiner, too, warns against a pedantic attitude. So, what is meant by the words ‘Of course, one can introduce all kinds of things to the child’? Does it mean that we can safely use electronic music, record players, tape recorders, and so on? If one interprets these words a little more carefully, they could simply mean that it is of no serious consequence if young children hear music played by their older brothers and sisters, even though this music may well be above their present age and level of understanding. It is interesting to compare this quoted remark with another one Steiner made in 1923, when he called the invention of the new and popular gramophone record ‘a misfortune for the whole of mankind’.

We are told never to be pedantic, but we ought to observe carefully how young children react to music played in the home, even if it is above their present level

of understanding. We should look out for any disturbing signs. With this interpretation it is quite possible to take Rudolf Steiner's words with a good measure of tolerance.

Some parents take their young children to concerts or opera performances, and one cannot help wondering whether a sound sleep, tucked up in bed at home, would not be better for the children. Often it is quite obvious that young children feel totally overwhelmed by too-powerful musical impressions. It really is essential to lead the child to music in a manner appropriate to age and stage. Rudolf Steiner said about this matter:

'By leading our music teaching out of the element of singing gradually into the realm of instrumental music in the right way, we are able to place the human will into the world in such a way that pupils do not merely receive an artistic training in their music lessons, but that their human faculties are enhanced in a specifically fruitful manner, particularly with regard to the will and soul element. For this to happen it is necessary to begin with the song element, but as soon as possible (during the child's school age) we lead over to an active appreciation of instrumental music, so that children learn to discriminate between the purely musical element – rhythm, beat and

melody – and all other aspects, such as imitative music, painterly aspects in music, and so on, in order finally to be able to perceive and grasp the purely musical essence in music.’

If music given to the child is absorbed from the environment to become an individual and conscious experience in the life of feeling, leading to inner enrichment, the child’s strength of will, indeed the whole quality of will, is also transformed during this process. The will to act is stimulated through music already in the young child who reacts more and more to the rhythms heard, for instance by clapping hands or by spontaneously turning round in circles. The quality of will, however, also undergoes stages of development. Only controlled will, energetically directed and not merely in response to outer stimulation – will which is the result of free inner decisions – enables the human being to give as well as to take, to be silent as well as to speak, to engage in will activities or to remain consciously inactive. Deep inner feelings may lie at the basis of it all, but a strong will must grow out of them, otherwise the deeds will not be premeditated, wise and orderly. Chaos and destructiveness would result instead of order and clarity. We have seen chaos, dissolution and destruction all too frequently in our earth, to such an alarming extent that we cannot help wondering: For how much

longer will it remain possible to cultivate our earth-garden properly?

So let us try to educate our children to nurture all living things. To do so, they need to develop prudent contemplation, a rich inner feeling and a healthy will. All this can grow out of the matrix of music's limitless possibilities. In this sense, this little book wishes to make a modest contribution towards a truly human way of living.



Explanation of Musical Terms

- 1: **Intervals:** The distance from one tone to the next.
- 2: **Pentatonic scale:** A scale, comprising five tones only.
- 3: **Rhythm:** The nature of the movement of successive tones as they find expression in fast or slow, but also in measure and beat.
- 4: **The Fourth:** The distance from any tone to the fourth tone above or below within the diatonic scale.
- 5: **Gregorian Music:** Called after Pope Gregory (Pope from 590-604), the collector and composer of liturgical songs.
- 6: **Polyphony:** More than one melodic line being played simultaneously (i.e. in part-music). A round can also be considered polyphonic music, since the melody is sung or played after definite time intervals.
- 7: **Parallel Octaves:** A melody in unison, played either an octave above or below.
- 8: **The first harmonic structure:** The first, fourth and fifth interval of the scale, i.e. the prime, fourth and fifth, later on formed the framework of harmonic system as: Tonic, Subdominant and Dominant.



9: **Church Modes:** The eight diatonic tones from the first to the octave (from c to c, d to d, e to e, etc.), were the scales used for liturgical songs until the arrival of the major and minor scales. They are based on antique musical forms and appear as such in the older Byzantine Church Music, though not beginning with c, but with d to d, e to e, f to f, g to g, etc. Church Modes received their names from ancient Greek provinces, such as the Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian Mode, etc. Added to these there were the so-called secondary notes, a fourth below, i.e. from a to a, b to b, c to c and d to d. Accidentals in the modern sense did not yet exist at that time.

10: **The Third:** The distance from one note to the third note of a diatonic scale, played either above or below the first note.

11: **Accidentals:** The augmentation of a half tone is prefixed by a sharp (#) and the diminution of a half tone by a flat (b).

12: **Diatonic notes:** The white keys on the piano keyboard.

13: **Barline:** Most of the music of the past four or five centuries falls into a regular scheme of beats (groups of two, three, four, etc.). For easier reading in notation, the measures are marked off from each other by vertical bar lines.

14: **Triads:** Chords composed of thirds, e.g. : c-e-g (Tonic) f-a-c (Sub-

dominant) and g-b-d (Dominant).

15: **Arpeggio:** Broken chord, the notes of a chord being played one after another.

