

A SOCIAL BASIS FOR EDUCATION

Three Lectures
given by
Rudolf Steiner

Stuttgart
11th, 18th May and 1st June 1919

Published by Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications
Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row, Sussex, RH18 5JB

Shorthand report unrevised by the lecturer

Published in the original under the title
Drei Vorträge über Volkspädagogik GA 192

Authorised translation by permission of
the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung, Dornach, Switzerland

First published in English as
A Social Basis for Primary and Secondary Education

by Michael Hall School
Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row, Sussex
in 1958

Reprinted in 1994 as
A Social Basis for Education
by Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications
Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row, Sussex RH18 5JB

ISBN 0 9510331 8 2

Front cover:
A scene from Goethe's Faust
performed by 17/18 year-olds

CONTENTS

Foreword	1
First Lecture, 11th May 1919	3
Second Lecture, 18th May 1919	19
Third Lecture, 1st June 1919	37

FOREWORD

Dr Steiner's work in the Threefold Commonwealth, from the first 'Workmen's Lecture' in April 1919 up to the foundation of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart in September of the same year, reached an important climax in the giving of the lectures here published. We can only understand these lectures rightly by reminding ourselves of the stress laid on the spiritual aspect in this 'Threefold' work, and of the way in which the finer overtones to be found in it echo the conditions of that time. For a while in Central Europe the gates, we may say, stood open wide. Questions were being asked which went right to the root of things, and answers were sought which should truly probe the problems to their very depths. Everything seemed possible. For just as it appeared as though, from the spiritual aspect, the war had lasted not for four or five years but for a whole century, so now a vista was opened before men's eyes which seemed to stretch even far beyond the present century.

Such are the fundamental thoughts which Rudolf Steiner develops in these lectures; they are, of course, coloured by the events of the time in which they were given, but they reach far into the future. They are more comprehensive than anything which up to that time could be accomplished in the Waldorf schools and Rudolf Steiner schools. In the light of the content of these lectures on *A Social Basis for Education*, the Waldorf school education appears as only one of the many possible forms of social education which can be developed in the future.

I do not wish to enter into details, but I would stress one fundamental thought which runs through these lectures. This is the thought that we need to rediscover *how to learn*. For Rudolf Steiner the act of learning was not the imprinting of more or less important details into the head of the learner, but rather he looked upon learning as a process which involves the whole man, awakening forces in every source and spring of his being in such a way that once aroused they will never cease to flow. Learning will then become a constant living and growing of the spirit of man. Of the plant we may say that as long as it lives, it grows. Of man we may say that in his spirit he only grows and lives as long as he learns. In this connection I should like to mention two past experiences of mine which seem to bear a close connection with each other.

In April 1910 I had a talk with the famous Russian author Maxim Gorki, on the island of Capri in Italy. Gorki was living there at that time in a kind

of exile. At the end of the conversation I asked him if he would not like to send a greeting to young students of his land. He thought for a moment and then said: "You see, a Russian peasant is accustomed to hard work. With great industry and self-denial he wrestles with the earth for the production of her fruits. He has learnt to work. But the unfortunate thing is that the Russian intellectuals have not learnt to work. Over a glass of tea and cigarettes they spend night after night in endless discussions. They have not learnt how to learn. Give them this as my greeting: "Learn to work as the peasant works when he tills the ground; *learn how to learn.*"

I had half forgotten these words when on a later occasion they suddenly flashed into my consciousness almost like a streak of lightning, together with an image of the setting in which they had been said. This occasion was in the year 1919, at the time when these lectures on *A Social Basis for Education* were being given. Rudolf Steiner said the following words: "Through the catastrophe of the World War which now, outwardly at least, lies behind us, history has wished to teach us a lesson. There would have been innumerable things to learn. But the great misfortune of the present time is that men have lost the capacity to learn. So, with the ear of the spirit we may now hear resound through the world like a battle-cry this word: Learn how to learn!"

I am fully aware that in contrast to Gorki, learning in Rudolf Steiner's sense rests upon a very different basis; nevertheless the significant fact remains that two outstanding men of the twentieth century used the same words to express a great and inspiring thought in the history of social pedagogy.

What lay behind Gorki's words – presumably even against his will – has been caught up by the whirlpool which engulfed the history of Eastern Europe. But the words of Rudolf Steiner, founded as they are upon the spirit, are seeds which even still today are healthy and capable of growth. They wait expectantly for men who can provide them with the soil and ground that is needed for their development.

To those therefore who can bear within their hearts the words "Learn how to learn!" with thoughts rooted deeply in the spirit and reaching out to all mankind – to such people will it be given to read these lectures aright.

Herbert Hahn

* * *

FIRST LECTURE

11th May 1919

What I am going to say today is intended to deal with primary and secondary education, and to deal with it in such a way that what is of essential value can be useful for the present times, the grave times, in which we are now living. I believe you will have seen for yourselves that what could be given only as an outline in my book *The Threefold Commonwealth* has many deep contributing factors – indeed very many, if we take into consideration all that arises from the new shaping of the world. So that actually in everything that must be said on this subject, pre-eminently where fresh activity has to be aroused, only guide-lines can be given to begin with instead of anything of an exhaustive nature.

When we look at the times in which we are living – and we need to do so for we have to understand them – it must constantly strike us what a gulf there is between what must be called a declining culture and a culture that may be described as chaotic, but all the same on the up-grade. I expressly draw attention to the fact that today I am wanting to deal with a special aspect of my subject, and therefore ask you to take it in connection with the lectures as a whole once they are brought to completion.

I should like to start by drawing your attention to something that is clearly noticeable, namely, how the culture based on bourgeois social contact is in rapid decline, whereas we are witnessing the dawn of another culture based on what is largely not understood and represented by the proletariat. If all this is to be understood – it can be felt without being understood but will then lack clarity – we must grasp it in its symptoms. Symptoms are always a matter of detail; I ask you to remember this in what I am saying today. I shall naturally be forced by the subject itself to take details out of their context, but I shall take pains so to shape this symptomatology that it will not be able to work in the way of agitators or demagogues, but will really be shaped by the relevant circumstances. We may meet with much misunderstanding in this direction today but that we shall have to risk.

Now in the course of years I have often asked you to bear in mind that, on the ground of the world-outlook represented here, it is perfectly possible to be a real upholder and defender of the modern natural scientific approach to the world. You know how frequently I have referred to all that can be said in defence of this approach! At the same time, however, I have never failed to point out what a fearful counterpart it has. Quite recently I reminded you that this can be seen at once when anyone, as a result of what we call here the symptomatic method of study, points to some particularly telling example and goes to work quite empirically. Now in another connection I have had to sing the praises of a recent remarkable work by the outstanding biologist Oskar Hertwig, *Das werden der Organismen – Eine Wiederlegung der Darwinischen Zufallstheorie*. Then, to avoid misunderstanding after the publication of a second book of his, I have had to remark how this man followed up a really good book on natural science with a quite inferior work on social conditions. This is a fact fraught with meaning for the present time. It shows that even on the excellent foundation of the natural scientific approach to the world, what is pre-eminently necessary for an understanding of our present times cannot arise, namely, knowledge of the social impulses existing in our age. I want today to give you another example to bring home to you with greater emphasis how, on the one hand, bourgeois culture is on the decline and can be saved only in a certain way; how, on the other hand, there exists something that is on the ascent, something that must be carefully tended with understanding and judgement if it is to be a starting point for the culture of the future.

Now I have before me a book that is symptomatic and typical product of the declining bourgeoisie. It appeared immediately after the world war with a somewhat pretentious title *The Light Bearer*. This light bearer is admirably adapted to spread darkness over everything which today is most necessary for social culture and its spiritual foundation. A remarkable community of people have foregathered who in separate articles have written remarkable things about a so-called rebuilding of the social organism. Naturally I can quote only from certain passages from this rather voluminous work. To begin with we have a scientist named Jakob von Uexküll, really a good typical scientist who – and this is the important point – has not only a certain knowledge of natural science, is not merely well versed in it, but in his research work is recognised as an accomplished scientist of the day. He feels impelled however, like others bred in the scientific tradition to treat us to his views upon organising the world socially. He has learnt about the ‘cell-state’ as the organism is often called

in scientific circles. He has certainly learnt to develop his mind, with which he then observes the social life. I want to refer you just to a few instances from which you may be able to see how this man, not from his knowledge of natural science but as a result of his scientific method of thinking – really quite correct but wholly absurd for practical life – how he now looks at the structure of modern society: he turns to the social organism, to the natural scientific organism, the organism as it is in nature, and finds that “the harmony in a natural organism can at times be disturbed by processes of disease” – and referring to the social organism goes on to say:

“All harmony can be disturbed through disease. We call the most terrible disease of the human body cancer. Its characteristic is the unrestrained activity of the protoplasm which, without considering the preservation of the organs, goes on producing more and more protoplasmic cells. These press upon the bodily structure; they cannot, however, fulfil any function themselves for they are lacking in structure.

“We recognise the same disease in the human community at large when the people’s motto, ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,’ replaces the motto of the state: compulsion, diversity, subordination.”

Now here you have a typical scientific thinker. He looks upon it as a cancerous disease when the impulse towards liberty, equality and fraternity arises out of the people. In place of freedom he wants to put compulsion, in place of equality, diversity, in place of fraternity, subordination. This is what from the ‘cell-state’ he has learnt to adopt as his method of viewing things and which he then applies to the social organism. The rest of what he puts forward too is not without significance when considered from the symptomatological point of view. He goes so far as to find something in the social organism that corresponds in the natural organism to the circulation of the blood, not at all in the way that I have described it in various lectures but as he himself pictures it. He goes to the length of looking upon gold as blood circulating in the social organism, and says: “Gold possesses the faculty of circulating independently of commodities, finally reaching the collecting centres represented by the great banks (Gold heart)”. Thus this scientist seeks a heart for his social organism and finds it in the collecting centres of the great banks, “which can exercise an overwhelming influence on the movements of both gold and commodities”.

Now I particularly stress that I have no intention of making fun of

anything here. I want just to let you see how a man, who from this point of view has the courage to think things out to their logical conclusion, is actually obliged to think. If today many people deceive themselves about our having brought evolution, during the last three or four centuries, to the point of making this kind of thinking quite intelligible, then it is evident that these people are asleep in their souls, that they give themselves up to cultural narcotics which prevent their looking with wide awake souls at what is concealed in bourgeois culture. For this reason I have shown you a symptom that sheds light on this light bearer, sheds light on the elements, of present-day culture, in so far as out of the scientific method of thinking, this culture understands the social life. In a further example I want to show you how different a result we experience from what we meet within the spiritual sphere.

Among those belonging to the society just mentioned there is a man with a more spiritual bent, by name Friedrich Niebergall. Now this Friedrich Niebergall is quoted because his attitude towards certain things we consider of value is most sympathetic. But I should like to say here that what matters is the nature of the sympathetic attitude with which from such a side certain matters are approached. If we know this, and if we are not mere egoists but understand the great social impulses, perhaps we do not value this sympathetic attitude very highly; and it would be good if in these matters we were not to give ourselves up to illusion. We know, some of us at least could know, that what we carry on here and call spiritual science, or anthroposophy, we have for some time considered to be the true spiritual foundation of what today is on the ascent. Here, it is true, extremes meet; and I have always been forced to experience how some of those very people who participate in our anthroposophical endeavours turn to other movements they feel they feel to be closely akin, but which differ from our endeavours in that they belong to the worst phenomena of the bourgeois decline, whereas spiritual science has from the first been strongly opposed to all that is behind this. So we find confused together in a certain Johannes Müller a phenomenon showing just the characteristics of our decadent culture; and on the other hand (you know I do not say these things out of mere foolishness) you find mention of my name. It is true that all kinds of elegant things, most elegant things are said about what I try to accomplish. You must, however, realise how in all that is put forward in anthroposophy my every effort is directed towards taxing man's understanding and fighting in a pronounced way against anything in the way of nebulous mysticism or so-called mystic theosophy. This could be done only by approaching the highest spheres of knowledge with clear

insight, lucid ideas, which will be striven for when through natural science we have learnt not the natural scientific outlook of today but true thinking. After the gentleman in question has declared how fine much of anthroposophy is, he adds: "Round this basis of practical truth there then springs forth a confused medley of alleged knowledge concerning the life of the soul, of mankind and of the cosmos – as once was the case in the all-embracing gnostic systems offered out of the secret wisdom of the East to an age seeking in like manner inner depths and peace of soul". It is not possible to say anything less to the point than this. For the fact that the author describes this as confused nonsense, a confused medley, rests solely on his lacking the will to adopt the mathematical method of our spiritual science. This is generally the case with those wishing to gain conceptions from a knowledge that is on the decline. The result of disciplining inner experience by mathematical method appears to this author therefore to be a confused medley. But this confused medley that brings into matter mathematical clarity, perhaps indeed mathematical dryness, is what is essential, for it preserves what is meant to be pursued here from all fanatical mysticism, all nebulous theosophy. Without this so called confused medley there can be no real foundation for the future life of the spirit. It is true that by reason of our social conditions there had to be a struggle to make it possible for spiritual science to be carried on in the very modest dimensions it has reached today. We had to struggle with what very often appears as a result of most people – who now have time, and nothing but time, for the affairs of spiritual science – still having those old habits of thinking and perceiving which are on the decline. Hence we have to struggle so hard against what easily spreads in a circle such as ours, namely, sectarianism, which naturally is the very opposite of what is meant to be cultivated here, and against every kind of personal wrangling which, it goes without saying, leads to the systematic slandering that has flourished so exuberantly on the soil of this movement.

Now whoever studies the life of spirit today from symptoms such as these will soon come to the point of saying: "What is particularly needed in the sphere of spiritual endeavour is a return to original sources." The clamour for a new form of social life is always heard at a time when people harbour the most widespread anti-social impulses and anti-social instincts are particularly evident in people's private intercourse. They are to be seen in what men give – or do not give – to each other. They are to be seen in the characteristic way people ignore the thoughts of others, talk others down and finally pass them by. In our day the instinctive capacity really to understand the people we meet is extraordinarily rare. The following also is

a disappearing phenomenon – the possibility of people nowadays being convinced of anything unconnected with their social status, education or birth. Today people have the most beautiful thoughts but it is very difficult for them to be enthusiastic about anything. In thought they pass by all that is best and this is a deeply rooted characteristic of our age. As consequence of this fact – you know that recently I talked of logic based on fact as being important for the present time in contrast to mere logic of thought – as consequence of this a longing exists in men today to have recourse to authority and the pronouncements of feeling rather than by their own inner activity to work through to things. Those today who talk a great deal about freedom from authority are the very people who, at heart, believe in it most firmly and long to submit themselves to it. Thus we see, only it is generally unnoticed because most people are asleep, a rather questionable tendency among those who, without finding any way out of it, are involved in this cultural decline, namely the tendency to sink back into the bosom of the old Catholic Church. Were people to realise what lies in this tendency to return to the Catholic Church they would be much astonished. Under the present conditions, if this tendency were to increase, at no very distant date we should have to witness a mighty swing to the bosom of the Catholic Church by masses of the people. Whoever is able to observe the special features of our present culture knows that this is threatening us.

Now whence does all this arise? Here I must draw your attention to an essential phenomenon of our present social life. The special feature of what in the last few centuries has increased to ever wider dimensions, and will increase further in those lands which will preserve their civilisation throughout the present chaos – this special feature is the technical colouring of the culture, the particular technical shade taken on by the culture of recent times. Were I to speak exhaustively on this subject I should have to point in detail to all that now is referred to just in passing; and one day I shall do so. This technical culture has indeed one quite definite quality; this culture in its nature is through and through *altruistic*. In other words there is only one favourable way for technical accomplishments to be widespread, namely, when the men actively engaged in them in contrast to egoism, develop altruism. Technical culture makes it increasingly necessary – and those who are able to observe these things see the necessity on every fresh advance of technical culture – for work organised on a technical basis to be entirely free from egoism. In contrast to this there has developed at the same time what has had its origin in capitalism, which must not necessarily be linked to technical culture or remain so linked. Capitalism, when it is

private capitalism, cannot work other than egoistically for its very being consists in egoistic activity. Thus in recent times two streams meet in diametrical opposition to one another: modern technical life which calls upon men to be free from egoism, and, coming from the past, private capitalism which can prosper only by the assertion of egoistic impulse. This is what has made its way into our present situation and the only means of extricating ourselves is to have a life of spirit which has the courage to break away from the old traditions.

Now today there are many people concerned with the problems of future primary and secondary education, school education, and of professional training for human beings. Especially when we are studying the question of primary and secondary education we must say to these people: "Well and good, but with the best will in the world, can you interest people at large in primary and secondary education if you do nothing to change present conditions of education and matters of the spirit? Have you the material for the work? What actually are you able to do? With your principles – perhaps socialistic in a good sense – you may be able to found schools for a great mass of the people and to found institutions for their higher education. You may organise everything of this kind to which your good-will impels you. But have you the material really to organise for the benefit of the people what you want with goodwill to extend to them? You tell us that you found libraries, theatres, concert halls, exhibitions, lecture courses and polytechnics. But the question must arise: What books do you have in your libraries? What kind of science is dealt with in your lectures? You place on your library shelves those very books which belong to the bourgeois culture that is on the decline; you hand over the products of their bourgeois culture. You give the nature of education new forms, but into those new forms you cast what you have absorbed of the old." For instance you say: "For a long time we have been trying to give primary and secondary education a democratic form; up to now the various states have been against this for they want to educate men to be good civil servants. True you are opposed to this education of good civil servants; you allow the people to be educated by them, however, for up to now you have nothing else in mind but these civil servants whose books are on the shelves of your libraries, whose scientific method of thinking you propagate by means of your lectures and whose habits of thinking permeate your colleges." You see from this that in these serious times the matter must be taken far more profoundly than it generally is today.

Now let us look at certain details to have at least something clear before

us. We will begin with what we may call primary and secondary education. Under this heading I will include everything that can be given to the human being when he has outgrown the education to be acquired in his family, when to this must be added the education and instruction obtained at school. Those who know the nature of man are clear that school education should never be a factor in the evolution of the human being until approximately the change of teeth has taken place. This is just as much a scientific law as any other. Were people to be guided by the real nature of the human being instead of by mere dummies they would make a regulation that school instruction should not begin till after the change of teeth. But the important question is the principles upon which this school instruction of children is to be based. Here we must have in mind that whoever is able to bring their thoughts and efforts into harmony with the ascending cultural evolution can really do nothing today but recognise, as inherent in the principles holding good in school education and instruction, what lies in the nature of the human being himself. Knowledge of human nature from the change of teeth to puberty must underlie any principles in what we call primary and secondary education. From this, and from a great deal of the same nature, you will realise that, if we take this as our basis, the result will be the same education for everyone; for obviously the laws which hold good in human evolution between approximately the seventh and fifteenth years are the same for all human beings. The only question we need to answer concerning education and instruction is: To what point have we to bring human beings by the time they reach their fifteenth year? This alone may be called thinking in terms of primary and secondary education. At the same time this alone is thinking in a modern way about the nature of instruction. The consequence of this today will be that we shall no longer ignore the necessity of making an absolute break with the old school system, that we shall have in all earnest to set to work on organising what, during the years specified, is to be given to children in accordance with the evolution of the growing human being. Then a certain basis will have to be created – something that, when social goodwill exists, will not be a nebulous idea for the future but something practical which can be immediately acted upon. The basis for this will have to be created in the first place by a complete change in the whole nature of examination and instruction of the teacher himself. When today the teacher is examined, this is often done merely to verify whether he knows something that, if he is at all clever and doesn't know it, he can read up in a text book. In the examination of teachers this can be entirely omitted, but with it will go the greater part of such examinations in their present form. In those that

will take their place, the object will be to discover whether the man, who has to do with the education and instruction of the developing human being, can establish with him a personally active and profitable relation; whether he is able to penetrate with his whole mentality – to use a word much in fashion – into the soul of the growing human being, into his very nature. Then the teacher will not just teach reading, arithmetic or drawing; he will be fit to become a real moulder of the developing human being.

Thereupon, from all future examinations, which will take a very different form from their present one, it will be easy to discover if the school staff are really creative in this sense. For this means that the teacher will know: I must help this pupil in some particular way if he is to learn to think; another in another way if he is to unfold his world of feeling. For the world of feeling is intimately bound up with the world of memory, a thing few people know today, most modern professors being the worst possible psychologists. The teacher must know what to give to his pupil if the will is to unfold in such a way that the seeds, sown between his seventh and fifteenth years may bring about the strengthening of the will for the whole of his life. The cultivation of will is brought about when everything that has to do with practical physical exercises and artistic pursuits is adapted to the developing being. Whoever is a teacher of those who are in process of development will concentrate all his effort on enabling the human being to become man. In this way he will discover how to utilise all that is conventionally called human culture – speaking, reading and writing. All this can best be utilised in the years between seven and fifteen for the development of thinking. However strange it may seem, thinking is the most external thing in man, and it must be developed on whatever establishes us in the social organism. Consider how the human being on coming into the world through birth lacks any propensity towards reading and writing and how these belong to his life as a member of a community. Thus for the development of thinking we must, comparatively early, have good instruction in languages as used today by the civilised peoples with whom we have contact. This efficient teaching in languages would naturally not consist in teaching the grammatical anomalies as is done today in the grammar school; it must be started in the lower classes and continued. It will be important to unfold the feeling and the memory bound up with it. Whereas everything relating to arithmetic and geography – of which children can absorb an extraordinary amount when it is given them rightly – stands between what has to do with thinking and what has to do with feeling, everything taken into the memory has more to do with pure feeling,

for instance, the history that is taught, the myths and legends that are related. (I can only touch on these things.)

But it is also necessary in these first years to give particular attention to the cultivation of will. Here it is a matter of physical exercises and artistic training. Something entirely new will be needed for this in these early years. A beginning has been made in what we call eurythmy. Today we witness a great deal of physical culture that is decadent and belongs to the past; it pleases many people. In its place we shall put something that so far we have had occasion to show only to the employees of the Waldorf-Astoria factory through the sympathetic help of our good Herr Molt; we shall put what – if it is given to the growing human being instead of the present gymnastics – promotes culture in both body and soul. It can so develop the will that the effect remains throughout life, whereas cultivation of the will by any other means causes a weakening of it in the course of life. In this sphere particularly, however, we shall have to go to work with common-sense. In the way instruction is given, combinations will have to be made little dreamt of today; for instance drawing will go hand in hand with geography. It would be of the greatest importance for the growing pupil to have really intelligent lessons in drawing; during these lessons he would be led to draw the globe from various sides, to draw the mountains and rivers of the earth in their relationship to one another, then to turn to astronomy and to draw the planetary system. It goes without saying that this would have to be introduced at the right age, not for the seven year-olds but certainly before they reached fifteen, perhaps from the twelfth year onwards, when if done in the right way, it would work on growing youth very beneficially.

For cultivating the feeling and the memory it will then be necessary to develop a living perception of nature even in the youngest pupils. You know how often I have spoken of this and how I have summed up many different views by saying that today there are innumerable town-dwellers who, when taken into the country cannot distinguish between wheat and rye. What matters is not the name but that we should have a living relation to things. For anyone who can look into the nature of human beings it is overwhelming to see what they have lost, if at the right time – and the development of human faculties must take place at the right time – they have not learnt to distinguish between such things as, for example, a grain of wheat and a grain of rye. Naturally, what I am now saying has wide implications.

What in a didactic and pedagogical way I have just now been discussing concerning primary and secondary education will, in accordance with the logic of facts, have quite definite consequence, namely that nothing will

play a part in teaching that is not in one form or another retained for the whole of life. Today, as a rule, only what is included among the faculties plays its part rightly – what is done by learning to read is concentrated in the faculty of reading, what is done in learning to count is concentrated in the faculty of arithmetic. But just think how it is when we come to things having rather to do with feeling and memory. In this sphere children today learn a great deal only afterwards to forget it, only to discard it for the rest of life. In future, stress must be laid on this – that everything given to a child will remain with him for life.

We should then come to the question: What is to be done with the human being when having finished with the primary and secondary school he goes out into life? Here it is important that everything unsound in the old life of spirit should be overcome, that at least where education is concerned the terrible cleft made by class distinction should be abolished.

Now the Greeks, even the Romans, were able to devise for themselves an education that had its roots in their life, that was bound up with their way of life. In our time we have nothing which binds us in our most important years with our quite different mode of living. Many people, however, who later take up positions of authority, learn today what was learnt by the Greeks and Romans, and thus become divorced from life today; added to which this is spiritually the most uneconomical thing possible. Besides, we are today at a point in human evolution – if people only knew it – when it is unnecessary for preserving our relation to antiquity that we should be brought up in their ideas. What people in general need of the old has for a long time been incorporated in our culture, in such a way that we can absorb it without years of training in an atmosphere foreign to us. What we should imbibe of Greek and Roman culture can be improved upon, and this has also been the case; but that is a matter for scholars and has nothing to do with general social education. What is to be imbibed from antiquity for our general social education, however, has been brought to such a stage through the work of great minds in the past, and is so much in our midst, that if we rightly absorb what is there for us we have no need to learn Greek and Latin to deepen our knowledge of antiquity; it is not in the least essential and is no help at all for the important things in life. I recall how to avoid misunderstandings, I found it necessary to say that, though Herr Wilamovitz is most certainly a Greek scholar of outstanding merit, he has nevertheless translated the Greek plays in a way that is really atrocious; but, of course, these translations have been acclaimed by both the press and scholars. Today we must learn to let people participate in life; and if we organise

education so that people are able to participate in life, at the same time setting to work on education economically, you will find that we are really able to help human beings to a living culture. This too, will enable anyone with a bent towards handicraft to take advantage of the education for life that begins about the fourteenth year. A possibility must be created for those who early show a bent towards handicraft or craftsmanship to participate in what leads to a conception of life. In future, pupils who have not reached their twenty-first year should never be offered any knowledge that is the result of scientific research and comes from scientific specialisation. In our days only what has been thoroughly worked out ought to have a place in instruction; then we can go to work in an out-and-out economic way. We must, however, have a clear concept of what is meant by economy in didactic and pedagogical matters. Above all we should not be lazy if we want to work in a way that is economic from the pedagogical point of view. I have often drawn your attention to something personally experienced by me. A boy of ten who was rather undeveloped was once given over into my charge, and through pedagogical economy I was enabled to let him absorb in two years what he had lacked until his eleventh year, when he was still incapable of anything at all. This was possible only by taking into account both his bodily and soul nature in such a way that instruction could proceed in the most economical way conceivable. This was often done by my spending three hours myself in preparation, so as in a half-hour or even in a quarter to give to the boy instruction that would otherwise have taken hours – this being necessary for his physical condition. If this is considered from the social point of view, people might say that I was obliged in this instance to give all the care to a single boy that might have been given to three others who would not have had to be treated in this way. But imagine we had a social educational system that was reasonable, it would then be dealt with, for it makes no difference in this case whether we have to deal with one or fourteen boys. I should not complain about the number of pupils in the school, but this lack of complaint is connected with the principle of economy in instruction.

It must be realised, however, that up to his fourteenth year the pupil has no judgement; and if judgement is asked of him this has a destructive effect on the brain. The modern calculating machine which gives judgement the place of memorising and calculating is a gross educational error; it destroys the human brain, makes it decadent. Human judgement can be cultivated only from and after the fourteenth year when those things requiring judgement must be introduced into the curriculum. Then all that is related, for example, to the grasping of reality through logic can be begun. When in future the

carpenter or mechanic sits side-by-side in school or college with anyone studying to be a teacher, the result will certainly be a specialisation but at the same time one education for all; but included in this education will be everything necessary for life. If this were not included matters would become socially worse than they are at present. All instruction must give knowledge that is necessary for life. During the ages from fifteen to twenty everything to do with agriculture, trade, industry and commerce will have to be learnt. No-one should go through these years without acquiring some idea of what takes place in farming, commerce and industry. These subjects will be given a place as branches of knowledge infinitely more necessary than much of the rubbish which constitutes the present curriculum during these years. Then too during these years, all those subjects will be introduced which I would call world-affairs, historical and geographical subjects, everything concerned with nature knowledge – but all this in relation to the human being, so that man will learn to know man from his knowledge as a whole.

Now among human beings who receive instruction of this kind will be those who, driven by social conditions to become workers in a spiritual sense, can be educated in every possible sphere at schools specially organised for such students. The institutions where people today are given professional training are run with a terrible lack of economy. I know that many people will not admit it but there is this lack of economy; above all validity is ascribed to the most curious conceptions belonging to the world-outlook that is on the decline. Even in my time I have experienced this – people have begun to press where it is a question in the universities of historical and literary subjects, for fewer lectures and more ‘seminars’; today we still hear it said that lectures should be given as little space as possible on the programme but seminars encouraged. One knows these seminars. Faithful followers of a university tutor gather together and learn strictly in accordance with the ideas of this tutor to work scientifically. They do their work under his coaching and the results of the coaching are forever visible. It is altogether another matter if a man, in the years when he should be learning a profession, goes of his own free will to a course of intelligent lectures, and then has the opportunity of embarking upon his own free exposition – though certainly this would be connected with what the lectures contained. Practical application can certainly be included in the programme but this exaggerated emphasis on seminars must be stopped. That is just an undesirable product of the second half of the nineteenth century, when the emphasis was on the drilling of human beings rather than on leaving them to develop freely.

Now when we are discussing this stage in education it must be said that a certain educational groundwork ought to be the same for everyone, whether he is destined to be a doctor, a lawyer or a teacher; that is one aspect of the matter. In addition to this, everyone must receive what contributes to the general culture of man, whether he is to become a doctor, a machine maker, architect, chemist or engineer; he must be given the opportunity of receiving general culture, whether he is to work with his hands or his head. Today little thought is given to this, though certainly in some places of higher education many things are better than they were.

When I was at the Technical College in Vienna a professor was giving lectures on general history; after three perhaps five lectures he ceased – there was no longer anyone there. Then, at this college, there was a professor of history of literature. Thus there were the means to receive what was universally human besides specialised subjects. To these lectures on the history of literature, which included exercises in rhetoric and instruction on how to lecture, like those given, for example, by Uhland – to these lectures I always had to drag someone else, for they were held only if there was an audience of two. They could be kept going, therefore, only by a second being dragged in, and this was someone different practically every time. Except for this, the only attempt to provide students with the information they needed about conditions in life was by lectures on constitutional law or statistics.

As I said, these things have improved; what has not improved is the driving force that should exist in our whole social life. This will improve, however, when there is a possibility for all that constitutes the universally human not to be made intelligible only to those with a definite professional view but intelligible from a universally human aspect. I have often been surprised how my lectures on anthroposophy have been distorted by my audience; for if they had taken them in a positive way they could have said: "We won't bother about anthroposophy in these lectures, but what is said about natural science, which receives greater praise when coming from the ordinary natural philosopher – that is enough for us". For as you all know these lectures are always interspersed with general information about nature. But there are many people who are not interested in taking things from a positive angle, preferring to distort what they have no wish to accept. What they refuse to accept, by the very way in which the thoughts were formed, by the whole mode of treatment, as well as the necessary interspersing of natural science, could be taken as contributing to universal human knowledge, which the manual worker could receive just as well as

the scholar, and which was also generally intelligible as natural science. Just consider other endeavours towards a world-outlook. Do you imagine that in monistic gatherings, for instance, people can understand anything if they have not a scientific background? No; and if they have not, they merely gossip. What here we pursue in anthroposophy is something that can change all knowledge of nature, and even of history, so that everyone will be able to understand them.

Just think how intelligible to everyone what I have shown to be a great leap historically in the middle of the fifteenth century can be. That, I think, is intelligible to everyone. But it is the groundwork without which there can be no understanding at all of the whole social movement of our time. This social movement is not understood because people do not know how mankind has developed since the middle of the fifteenth century. When these things are mentioned people come forward and declare: Nature does not make leaps, so you are wrong to assume there was such a thing in the fifteenth century. This foolish proposition that nature never makes a leap is always being harped upon. Nature continually makes leaps: from the green leaf of a plant to the sepal, which has a different form, is a leap – another leap from sepal to petal. It is so too in the evolution of man's life. Whoever does not teach the history that rests on senseless conventional untruth, but on what has really happened, knows that in the fifteenth century men became different in the finer element of their constitution from what they were before, and that what is brought about today is the development of what they have grasped in the centre of their being. If there is a desire to understand the present social movement, laws of this kind in historical evolution will have to be recognised. You have only to call to mind the way in which matters here are dealt with and you will say: "To understand all this no special knowledge is necessary; there is no need to be a man of culture; everyone can understand it." This indeed will be what is demanded in the future – that no philosophies or world-conceptions should be propagated which can be understood only by reason of a form of education belonging to a certain class. Take up any philosophical work today, for example, by Eucken or Paulsen, or anyone else you want information about; take up one of those dreadful works on psychology by university professors – you will soon drop it again. For those who are not specifically trained in the particular subject do not understand the language used. This is something that can be set right only by universal education, when the whole nature of education and instruction will be absolutely changed in the way I have tried to indicate today.

SECOND LECTURE

18th May 1919

You see, therefore, that in this sphere too we can say: here we have a big settling-up – not a small one. What is necessary is the development of social impulses or, rather, social instincts, through instruction, through education, so that people do not pass by one another. Then they will understand each other so that a practical living relation is developed – for nowadays the teacher passes his pupil by, the pupil passes his teacher. This can happen only if we run our pen through what is old – which can be done. The facts of the case do not prevent this; it all goes back to human prejudice.

People cannot believe that things can be done in a new way; they are terrified that their life of spirit may lose what was of value in the old way. You have no idea how anxious they are on this score. Naturally they are unable to take all this in; for instance they cannot see all the possibilities created by having an instruction that is economical. I have often told you that provided this is done at the right age it is possible in three or four hours to take young pupils from the beginning of geometry – the straight line and angle – up to what used to be called the 'pons asinorum', the Pythagorean theorem. And on my attempting this you should have seen the joy of the youngsters when, after three or four hours work, the theorem of Pythagoras dawned upon them. Only think what a lot of rubbish has to be gone through today before young people arrive at this theorem. What matters is the enormous amount of mental work wasted, which has its effects in later life; it sends its rays into the whole of life, right into its most practical spheres. Today it is necessary for people to come to a decision in these matters – fundamentally to reorganise their way of thinking. Otherwise – well, otherwise we simply sink deeper into decline and never find the path upwards.

* * *

I do not propose today to link up with what I was saying here last Sunday in the manner usually intended when people speak of continuing a subject. On that occasion I tried, as far as this was possible in a mere outline, to show in a general pedagogical and introductory way how we are to conceive the organisation of a life of spirit, a life of instruction, independent of either the economic life or that of the State. I tried, too, to show how, once this independence is established, the various branches of instruction have to be applied in a new way, in order to give what must reveal itself to teacher and educator as some kind of anthropological and pedagogical form or, perhaps it is better to say, a kind of anthropologically pedagogical activity. On the same occasion I remarked that one essential in the future will be the training and particularly the examining of a prospective teacher or educator to discover whether his personality is fitted for the task.

I will reserve the direct continuation of these matters for a later occasion and try to pursue my main subject in quite another way. I shall try to put before you clearly how it is necessary for me to think out of the evolutionary forces of the age – and how today we should have to speak at teachers' conferences, for example, or at something of the sort, where people really desire to serve their times. At present it is a fact that, if we want to emerge from utter confusion and chaos, many things will have to be spoken of quite differently from how the present thinking habits prompt us to do.

Today even at teachers' conferences people talk – as can be proved by striking examples – on the old hackneyed lines, whereas it would be possible to introduce a really liberal education for the future, only if educators and teachers were able to rise to the level from which they could survey the very great tasks at present facing us, insofar as, out of the very nature of education and instruction, these tasks lend themselves to logical development. True, the manner in which I shall speak to you today will not be what I should like to hold up as a standard or even a pattern. But what I want to do is to indicate the angle from which we should speak to teachers so that they may themselves receive the impulse to get to work on an education having free play. It is just those who do teaching who must rise to the level of the great

and all-embracing tasks of the age; they must be first to gain insight into the nature of the forces concealed behind present world events; they must see which forces have to be recognised as coming from the past and therefore needing to be superseded, and which forces need to be specially cherished as having their roots in our present existence. These matters must be looked at today culturally and politically, in the best and most ideal sense, if we are to create a foundation for the impulses which will have to exist in those who are teachers. Above all, people must become aware that at every stage of instruction and guidance our education has suffered impoverishment and the reasons for this must be understood. The principle reason is that education has lost its direct connection with life. The educationalist today talks of many things which have to do with method, above all the tremendous benefits that education is to derive from State control. Apparently, in his almost automatic way, he will still be speaking of those benefits when in theory he will in part have accepted the concept of the necessary threefold social organism. There has never been an age when thinking has been so automatic as it is now, and this is particularly evident where ideas on education are in question. These ideas on education have suffered under something that up to now we have been unable to escape; we must, however, escape from it. There are indeed questions today that cannot find so easy a solution as the following: "Judging from past experience this or that will be possible." Then doubt will immediately take possession of the hearts and minds of men. Today there are innumerable questions which will have to be answered by: "Is it not imperative that something should happen if we are to extricate ourselves from confusion and chaos?" Here we have to do with questions of will, where the often apparently justified intellectual doubt regarding the validity of experience can settle nothing. For experience has value only when worked upon in a suitable way by the will. Today, though very little worked upon thus by the will, there is much in the way of experience. In the educational sphere itself a great deal is said against which, from the purely intellectual and scientific point of view, not much objection is to be made, and which from its own point of view is quite clever. But today it is important to understand the real issue – above all to understand how alien from real life our education has become.

I should here like again to refer to a personal incident. In Berlin about twenty-three years ago a society was formed concerned with college education. Its president was the astronomer Wilhelm Forster. I too belonged to this society. We had to hold a course of lectures, most of which were given on the assumption that all it was necessary to know were certain stereotyped

things about dealing with the various branches of science, about grouping these into faculties, and so on. I tried – though at the time I was little understood – to draw attention to the fact that a college should be a department of life in general, that whoever wants to speak about college education ought to start with the question: "From the stand-point of world history, in what situations are we in life at present in all its different spheres, and what impulses have we to observe in these various spheres of life in order to let these impulses stream into the college, thus linking it with the common life?" When we work out such things, not in the abstract but concretely, countless points of view are revealed which, for example, help to reduce the time to be expended on any particular subject; and new ways of dealing with the various subjects are discovered. The moment any proposal is made for this reduction simply out of the ideas with which education works today, everything falls to the ground; the educational centres in question become mere institutions for training people who have no real connection with the world.

Now what are the intrinsic reasons, the deep lying reasons, for all this? Whereas in recent times thinking on the lines of natural science has made such wonderful progress, this fine method of thinking, which on the one hand has come to look upon man as purely a being of nature, has – to speak truly – cut off all knowledge of the real man. We have spoken quite recently of the tremendous importance of this knowledge of man's being for the right kind of teacher – the knowledge that recognises the real nature of the living human being, not in the formal way in which he is so often represented today, but in accordance with his inner being, particularly in accordance with the evolution of that being. There is a symptom, to which I have often referred here, showing how dreadfully foreign man's real being is to the modern educational movement. When a thing of this kind is said it may perhaps be considered paradoxical; it must be said today, however, for it is of the utmost importance. The loss of any real knowledge of man has produced that dreary, barren effort that is a branch of what is called experimental psychology, against which, as such, I have no complaint. The so-called intelligence tests are a horrible travesty of what is really beneficial in the sphere of education. I have perhaps often described how, by certain physical contrivances, experiments are made with the avowed object of testing the memory, the understanding, of a human being, in order to register whether the particular person's memory and understanding are good or bad. In a purely mechanical manner, by giving part of a sentence and demanding its completion, or by some other device, it is sought to form an idea of the

abilities of a growing human being. This is a symptom of how the direct relationship between people – which alone is profitable – is a forgotten factor in our culture. It is a symptom of something cheerless which has been allowed to develop; but today it is admired as being remarkable progress – this testing of intelligence, this offspring of what are called in modern universities psychological laboratories. Until people see how necessary it is to return to a direct intuitive knowledge of man by studying the human being himself, particularly the growing human being, until we get rid of the unhappy gulf in this sphere between man and man, we shall never be able to understand how to lay the foundations for an education that is really alive and for a life of the spirit which is free. We shall have to purge all our educational establishments of this desire to experiment on the human being in order to satisfy the pedagogues. As groundwork for a reasonable psychology I consider experimental psychology of value; in the form in which it has crept into education and even into the courts, however, it is a perversion of the sound development of the evolving human being, between whom and his equally evolving fellow there is no yawning chasm. We have brought matters to such a pass that from what we strive after culturally, we have excluded everything human; we must retrace our steps and once again unfold what belongs to man. We have also to find the courage to make an energetic stand against much of what in recent times has aroused growing admiration as a great achievement; otherwise we shall never make any advance. This explains how those today, who leave college with the intention of teaching, and proceed to educate human beings, have the most misguided conceptions about the real nature of man, and do not acquire the true conceptions because, in place of them, the kind of superficiality has arisen which we can see in these intelligence tests. This will have to be recognised as a symptom of decline. We must seek within ourselves the capacity for judging the abilities of a human being, since he is a man and we ourselves are men. It must be understood that, because of this, every other method is unsound, for it destroys the fulness of what is immediately and vitally human – so necessary a factor in beneficial progress.

Now today these things are not seen at all. It is of primary importance that they should be seen if we are to progress. How often these things have been spoken of here! Sometimes they have even provoked a smile. But people have no notion that the reason for speaking of these things so frequently today is that they are an essential part of our life of spirit. There is nothing to be gained today by listening to what is said here as if it were a novelette; the important thing is to learn to distinguish between what is

merely perceived, observed, and what may contain within it the seed to action. The cumulative point of all the anthroposophical endeavour here is the building up of the idea of man, the passing on of the knowledge of man. It is this that we need. We need it because, from the very nature of the times, we have to overcome three forms of compulsion, the survivals of earlier days. First, the most ancient compulsion which masquerades today in various forms – the compulsion of the priesthood. We should make more progress in our study of the present situation were we today to recognise these disguises of certain obsolete facts and of the ideas and impulses unfortunately still living on in the thinking of the people in Europe, America and even in Asia – the modern disguises of the old *priestly compulsion*.

As our second compulsion we have something that develops later in man's historical evolution, also disguised in various ways today – the *political compulsion*.

And thirdly, coming comparatively late, there is the *economic compulsion*.

Out of these three compelling impulses men have to work their way; this is their task for the immediate present. They can get free today only if, to begin with, they clearly perceive the masks which in various ways disguise what is living in our midst, the masks which conceal the three compelling impulses among us.

Above all today the teacher must look to the level on which these things can be discussed, where, by means of the light gained from these things, we can illuminate contemporary evolution and thus become aware how one or other of these compulsions is lurking in some contemporary fact. Only when we find the courage to say: it is because teachers have isolated themselves, withdrawn into their schools, that such ill-judged ideas have been thought out as this testing of human efficiency by experiment – which is merely a symptom of much else... But everywhere today, where either general or special educational methods are spoken of, we see the result of this withdrawal behind the school walls where teachers have been banished by the State; we see this remoteness from real life. None of the principle branches of life, namely, the spiritual, the rights or political and the economic, can develop fully at the present time – I say expressly at the present time, and particularly in this part of Europe – if these three branches do not stand each on their own ground. For the extreme west, America, and the extreme east, it is rather different but, just because this is so, we ourselves must be aware of this. We shall have to think ultimately in concrete terms and not in abstract ones; otherwise, where space is

concerned, we shall arrive at some theoretical Utopia for mankind throughout the entire earth, which is nonsense, or a kind of millennium in historical evolution – also nonsense. Thinking concretely in this sphere means thinking for a definite place and a definite time. We shall have something more to say about this today.

The attention of the teacher must be directed towards the great world phenomena; he must be able to survey what is there in our present spiritual life, and what changes have to be made in this present life by bringing out of the growing human being something different from what has been cultivated in him of recent years. What has been cultivated latterly has, among those in educational circles who should have been active as teachers, led to terrible specialisation. On occasions such as speech days, gatherings of scientists and other meetings of experts, we have often heard the praises of this specialisation vociferously sung. Naturally it would be foolish on my part were I unable to see the necessity for this specialisation in scientific spheres; but it needs to be balanced or we just create a gulf between man and man, no longer meeting our fellow men with understanding, but as a specialist confronting him helplessly as another kind of specialist. This gives us nothing on which to base our belief in a specialist but the fact that he bears the stamp of some existing body of knowledge. We have been very near bringing this specialisation from the school into life. Whether the present vicissitudes will preserve us from the unhappy fate of having psychologists brought into the courts in addition to all the other experts, as many people wish, so that experiments can be made on criminals in the same way as they are made on our young people – this remains to be seen. I have less to say against the matter itself than against the way in which up to now it has been dealt with.

This is how things are under State control in the sphere of education, of school instruction.

Now after the short time in which people are talking of the inherent rights of man or, as they were then called, natural rights – no matter whether these were contestable or not – after this comparatively short time, came the age when people began to be shy of discussing these natural rights. It was taken for granted that whoever did so was a dilettante; in other words anyone was a dilettante who assumed the existence of something that established rights for man as an individual human being; the only professional way was to speak of historical rights, that is, of those rights which had developed in the course of history. People had not the courage to go into the question of the actual rights; and on that account they confined themselves to a study of

the so-called historical ones. This especially is something that a teacher must know. Teachers must have their attention drawn, particularly during their conferences, to how in the course of the nineteenth century the concept of natural rights has been lost, or lives on in rights today in disguise, and how a certain wavering, a certain inner doubt, has persisted in face of what is merely historical. Whoever is acquainted with the conditions knows that the principle impulse today goes in the direction of historical rights, that people are at pains – to use Goethe's words – not to speak of inherent rights. In my lectures here I have frequently focused attention on how we must openly and honestly come to a final settlement in this matter. Hence we should not shrink from giving a true account of what has to be abolished, for nothing new can ever be set up unless there is a clear concept of what has impaired man's habits of thinking and perceiving.

It may well be said that our mid-European culture is a particularly forcible example of how a really positive idea of the State has broken down. There was an attempt to build it up again in the nineteenth century. It foundered under the influence of the idea of purely historical rights, which made their impulses felt without this being noticed by those concerned. Whereas these people believed they were pursuing science in a way that was free from all prejudice, it really amounted to their pursuing it in the interest of the State or for some economic purpose. Not only into the carrying on of science but also into its content, and especially into all that has become practical science, there has flowed what has come from the influence of the State. Hence today we have practically no national economy because a free thinking, established on its own basis, has been unable to develop. Hence too, just where the most important laws of the economic life are concerned, there is today an utter lack of understanding when laws relating to genuine political economy are mentioned. We can see especially clearly into what confusion education has been thrown – education on a grand scale – for it has no connection with life, it has withdrawn from life into the school room. A really living study of anything can never arise if we show merely what is to be experienced outwardly, without showing the way in which it should be experienced. The one thing cultivated today, namely, the worship of merely outward experience, leads simply to confusion, especially when it is a conscientious worship. We need the capacity to cultivate the inner impulses which lead us to the right experiences.

You will remember that last Friday I called your attention, in the necessarily brief way for lectures such as these, to how, by studying the conditions of European economy at the end of the fourteenth and the

beginning of the fifteenth century, we were able to gain a clear idea of the forming of associations in future from impulses arising out of production and consumption. But to this point of observation, which underlies the whole of European life and proceeds from what is so clearly to be learnt in the general change-over to our modern age at the end of the fourteenth century, we come with the right point of view only by studying anthroposophy in its deepest aspects. The essential facts are not falsified by this, but we are directed to that point in evolution where is revealed in clear symptoms what lies rather beneath the superficial stream of evolution, and what is to be looked upon as the actual driving element. For this reason what is inherent in the scientific method has been hidden from modern pedagogy and scientific didactics; pedagogy and didactics were thrown back upon chance, and chance dictated in what sphere they were to be found. What we need is inner guide-lines to direct us to important truths, the guide-lines which can be found by studying Goethe's world conception, through which such an infinite amount may be learnt. This is not just to be built up nor looked for intellectually, it must be sought in an interweaving of man with the world. This is something lost to us, as may indeed be seen in our present wish to fathom the individual being of man in the superficial way this is done in the educational side-line we call experimental psychology.

What is pre-eminently necessary today is for a light to be kindled in those who are responsible for the education of children concerning the very root of our modern development. If we now stand at a point where the main direction of life has to be changed, it is absolutely necessary to see into what has happened in the course of evolution up to now. The first thing to go under was the elementary impulse towards a free economic life of the State; then in the last third of the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth, particularly in Central Europe, we trampled on our life of spirit, made it into something of secondary importance. How much, for instance, of the great impulse of Goetheanism has flowed into the kind of life of spirit we want today? Nothing, or practically nothing! People talk in a superficial way of Goethe. Of the immensities concealed in the very way Goethe perceived the world, nothing has sunk into the general consciousness. As I have frequently told you, the Goethe Society at Weimar showed themselves lacking in all sense of responsibility by placing at their head not a man who had understanding of Goethe, but a superannuated Prussian Minister of Finance!

Thus have we let ourselves sink into utter forgetfulness of our spiritual past. Nowhere in present-day consciousness do we find what, through Goethe, gave the German life of spirit its characteristic stamp. It is all

effaced, reduced to the level of a parasite. Editions of Goethe have followed one upon another, but nowhere do we meet with Goethe's spirit. Whoever sees through all this must say: "In the realm of economy this is bad, in that of politics it is bad, but it is worst of all in the spiritual realm." In this way we have begun by ruining our political consciousness; after that we have ruined all connection with our own life of spirit. I do not say this from pessimism, I say it because, out of insight into what has happened in the past, there must arise what is to happen in the future.

Then – well, then came what is called the world war. After the collapse of the political life (which in its collapsed condition was nevertheless kept going) after the collapse of the life of spirit comes the economic collapse, the magnitude and intensity of which is even today not realised, because it is believed that we are at the end or at any rate in the middle of it; whereas we are merely at the beginning. This economic collapse – it can be studied in everything that played a part in producing world-catastrophe. If we could go into the pertinent details of the question of the Baghdad railway before the world war, for example, you would see there the most unhappy consequences of linking the political with the economic life. If you follow the single stages of the Baghdad transactions, with which the unfortunate Helfferich is specially connected, you see economic capitalism on the one hand forming combination on combination, on the other hand the interference of the national-political machinations of chauvinists, machinations which differ according to whether they work in from the east or from the west. In Germany, my dear friends, we observe the loss of all sense of action as the life of the spirit has been lost; the sense of action has disappeared with the real life of the State, and what remains is merely the economic life. Everywhere from the west we see economic-political aspirations playing in, wearing the mask of chauvinism or nationalism, the mask of the economic-political; whereas from the east we have the spiritual-political masquerading in various forms. All this is united in a confusion of threads which then lose themselves in the absurdity, in the impossible situation, of the Baghdad question. This question of the Baghdad railway, this whole procedure, shows clearly the impossibility of any further development of the old imperialism, of any further development of the old political system.

Now what in the will to build this railway we see here as a great political problem of world importance, is seen again in incidents during the war. Things, however, have never been observed so that, guided on the right lines, people have come to the point where outer events can betray their

inner connections. So Kapp squealed, Bethmann Hollweg raised an outcry, while there was silence on the part of the spiritual leaders of Germany. That was indeed the situation. Kapp, who represented agriculture, squealed, not knowing which way to turn between war economy and the problems of the land. Bethmann Hollweg, who had no head for politics, raised an outcry, no longer having anything reasonable to say on the matter; and those Germans who were at the head of the spiritual life were silent because they had withdrawn into the school rooms of Germany and were no longer in touch with real life, having no notion of how in real life things should be managed.

I don't know how many of you remember all this. What I am giving you is no highly painted version but the situation in its actual colours. Kapp did squeal; Bethmann Hollweg really raised an outcry against the terrible way in which he, poor man, was attacked in the Reichstag; and those who were supposed to know something of the matter in question said either nothing or what, because it had no connection with life, amounted to nothing. The lines on which economy was developing could be shown up in all their absurdity only by a great, conspicuous world affair. Indeed, many people have never noticed the pass to which we have come also in what concerns the State. They had their Hohenzollerns, their Habsburgs, their Romanoff Czars. That because of their impracticability, already in a most decided form the elements of disintegration were present within the empires of Hohenzollerns, Habsburgs and Romanoffs, could be ignored, for it was possible for these empires to be held together in an unnatural frame, already in process of disintegration because, within the State, there was no longer any real impulse.

On the part of the socialists today we frequently hear it emphasised that the State must cease. No-one has done more to prevent a judicious administration of the State than those who represented the European dynasties in the nineteenth century. By deluding ourselves, and refusing to be conscious in various ways, it is possible to ignore the fact that we have trodden the life of spirit underfoot, as far as its achievements in the nineteenth century are concerned. This cannot be done to the economic life. When the State is starved people are offered the consolation of public holiday and royalty is feted with paper flowers. For example, it is no fabrication but an ascertainable fact that on the Hamburg bridges well-dressed women, souvenir mad, violently precipitated themselves on the cigarette ends William II had thrown away. Neither is it an idle tale that this same William II was not averse to such

flattery but that it tickled his vanity; he delighted in such displays.

Thus in the sphere of the economic life we have ultimately experienced the remarkable phenomenon which can be characterised only by saying that agriculture squealed, that there was an outcry on the part of the political life, and industry preened itself with satisfaction, workers included – to the extent to which they formed part of industry – until they arrived at the front, where they learned another tune and spread abroad other views on returning to their homes. It is obviously untrue when today it is said that collapse started in the home. Collapse started at the front because the men there could no longer endure the conditions. Such things must be known, especially by those who want to educate others. Henceforward they dare not sit in a corner without any understanding of life; they have to know what must happen. Far more important than keeping to any school time-table today would it be for the instructors of youth to hear discussions about this cultural and historical phenomenon, and to have revealed to them what shows itself so clearly in the sphere of the economic life under capitalism.

You know the saying ascribed to a certain society – a saying approved on one side, disputed on the other: "The end justifies the means." In the economic life under capitalism another impulse has shown itself during the world catastrophe, and that is: The end has desecrated the means. For everywhere among the declared ends and aims – this is revealed also in that very question of the Baghdad railway – the means were desecrated, or, again the means desecrated the ends.

These matters must be known today and must be studied unreservedly. My present observations have an educational purpose insofar as I believe that from the aspect from which I am speaking today – not perhaps in accordance with the way in which I speak – teachers must, above all, have each stage elucidated. We have to outgrow what previously has prevented teachers hearing of these great world events. Because of this we are experiencing today the comfortless fact of how entirely ignorant a great part of the population were politically. Today we meet people – in this instance I cannot politely say 'present company excepted', at least not in all cases – who do not know what has been going on for decades in the most external affairs, for instance, in the workers' movement; these people have no notion what form the struggles of the proletariat have taken during these decades. Now an educational system that turns out into the world men who pass one another by, and know nothing of each other, must surely be a factor leading to collapse. Are there not, in the middle class today, those who scarcely know more about the workers than the fact that they wear different clothes,

and details of that description; who know nothing of the struggles going on in trades unions, in associations, in political parties, and have never taken the trouble to look into what is taking place around them? Now why is this? It is because people have never learnt to take lessons from life, because they always learn some particular thing. They think: "Ah! I know that, I am a specialist in that sphere; you know something else and are a specialist in some other sphere." People have become accustomed to this without ever getting beyond what they have absorbed as knowledge at school, considering this as an end in itself, whereas the important thing is *learning to learn*. Learning to learn, so that, however old one is, one can remain, up to the very year of one's death, a student of life. Today even when people have taken their degree, as a rule they have exhausted their powers of learning by the time they are out of their twenties. They are unable to learn anything more from life; parrot-wise they reel off what they have absorbed up to then. At most they have, now and again, an *inkling* of what is going on. Those who are different are exceptional. It is important that we discover an educational method where people learn to learn, and go on learning from life their whole life long. There is nothing in life from which we cannot learn. We should have different ground beneath our feet today if people had learnt how to learn. Why nowadays are we socially so helpless? It is because facts are confronting us on a level to which men have not grown. They are unable to learn from these facts because they have always to confine themselves to externals. In future there will be no education that bears fruit if people will not trouble to rise to the great points of view in human culture.

Now whoever views the world today out of a certain anthroposophical background frequently discussed here, knows how to think concretely about all that is in it. He looks to the west, he looks to the east, and out of this concrete observation he can set himself problems. He looks towards the west into the Anglo-American world in which for many decades, perhaps even longer, there have played the great political impulses so damaging at present to central Europeans. Nevertheless these impulses are on a grand scale; and all the great impulses in the political life of the present time have originated from the Anglo-American peoples, for they have always known how to reckon with the historical forces. When during the war I tried to bring this to the notice of certain people, saying: "The forces coming from there can be withstood only by forces arising in the same way from historical impulses," I was ridiculed because there is no belief, among us here, in great historical impulses. Whoever knows how to study the west rightly, insofar as it is Anglo-American, finds there is a number of human instincts and

impulses coming from the historical life. All these are of a political-economic nature. There are important impulses in an elementary form within Anglo-Americanism, which all have a political-economic colouring; everyone there thinks so politically that this political thinking is extended into economics. But in all this there is one particular feature. You know that when we talk of economy we are demanding that, in the economy of the future, fraternity should hold sway; yet it was driven out of the imperialistic-political economic strivings of the west. Fraternity was left out, eliminated; hence what lived there assumed its strongly capitalistic trend.

Fraternity was developed in the east. Whoever studies the east in accordance with its nature, so entirely of soul and spirit, knows that out of the people there, there really springs a sense of brotherliness. Whereas what was characteristic of the west was a boom of the economic life destitute of brotherliness and tending therefore to capitalism, in the east there was brotherliness without economy, these two being held apart by us in Central Europe. We have the task – a thing the teacher must know – the task of synthesizing the brotherliness of the east with the non-brotherly but economic way of thinking belonging to the west. We shall be socialists in a world-embracing sense if we bring this about. Let us now bring the east into a right line of vision. You find there, from very ancient times, a highly spiritual life. That it should have died out can be maintained only by those who have no understanding for Rabindranath Tagore. Men there, in the east, live a spiritual-political life: and what of the opposite pole? It is to be found in the west. For this spiritual-political life of the east lacks something – it lacks freedom. It is a subjection that leads to the renunciation of the human self in Brahma or Nirvana. It is the reverse of all freedom. On the other hand, the west has made a conquest of freedom. Standing between east and west it is we who have to unite these in synthesis, which is possible only by keeping freedom and fraternity quite distinct in life, but at the same time preserving balance between them. We must not understand our task, however, in such a way that what is suitable for one is suitable for everyone; for abstract thinking of that kind is the ruin of all striving after reality. All thinking in accordance with reality comes to grief when people believe that one kind of abstract ideal can be set up over the whole earth, or that an ordering of society holding good today will do so to all eternity. This is not only nonsense, it is a sin against reality, for each part of space, each section of time, has its own task, and this must be realised. But then we must not refuse through laziness to gain knowledge of the true, concrete human relations; and we must recognise our task by learning to study facts in

accordance with their meaning. The primary and secondary education of recent days has led us very far from this kind of study; it has no wish to know anything of this concrete approach to phenomena, for at this point the region begins where men today feel uncertain of themselves. Instead of describing they would rather define. They would like today to take up images of the facts as mere symptoms of what is expressed in the deeper lying impulses.

I am speaking today in such a way that the content of all I say is meant to be drawn from the region out of which anything about education must issue. Those who can best enter into what is said from this region make the best educators and teachers; not those who are asked what they know of any particular subject – knowledge of that kind can be found in a text book and read up before a lesson. The important thing in future examinations must be to discover what those who aspire to be teachers are *as men*. A life of spirit of this kind applied to education, out of its very nature, creates the necessity of not being trained for cultural life one-sidedly but as spiritual workers standing fully within the three branches of the nature of man. I am not saying that anyone who has never worked with his hands is unable to see the truth rightly and never takes a right stand in the life of the spirit. The following should be the aim – for man to go in and out of the three spheres of the threefold social organism, that he should form real relations with all three, that he should work, actually work, in all three. We need have no fear that the possibilities of this will remain hidden. A feeling for this, however, must arise particularly in the heads of those who in future will be teachers of the young. Then another feeling will come to life, a tendency to go beyond specialisation to what we try here to bring about through anthroposophy. We must come to the point of never breaking the thread of our study of the universally human, of our insight of what man actually is; we must never be submerged in specialisation in spite of having our specialists. This, it is true, demands a much more active life than most people today find pleasant.

I have often experienced an extraordinarily discordant note at conferences of specialists or technical conferences. People foregather there with the express purpose of furthering their special subject. Now this frequently is done for hours, with great diligence and keenness. But I have repeatedly heard a very strange expression – the expression 'talking shop'. Time is requested when shop is no longer to be talked, when no-one is to speak any longer on his special subject. Then, for the most part, the silliest rubbish is talked, the most boring rubbish, but no shop. There is a certain amount of malicious gossip; many subjects are discussed, sometimes very interesting subjects – though that is looked at askance – in short, everyone

is relieved when the talking of shop is over. Doesn't it show how little connection people really have with what they actually do, and what they are supposed to do, for mankind, if they are so pleased to get away from it? Now I ask you: will leaders of men who want to escape their particular profession as soon as possible ever be able to face up to a population of manual workers who enjoy their work? When today in their complacent way, they talk about the wrongs existing among the manual workers, you must not question the manual workers, you must question the bourgeoisie who have created the wrongs – these are the real sinners. Those who as manual workers are tied to the desolation of capitalism cannot attain joy in their work, when above them stands a class who perpetually have the wish to escape from what should make for their happiness. These are the 'ethical' by-products of recent educational methods. It is something which must above all be realised and above all undergo change. There is much here that will have to become different in the customary thinking of those who teach.

What am I wanting to tell you in these remarks? I want to make clear to you how thorough-going today we have to be in our indications of what is to come about; how thoroughly necessary it is to leave the realm of the trivial, the terribly trivial content to which we have confined our thinking, and not only our thinking but also our life of feeling and will. How should the will prosper – and we need our will for the future – if it has to remain in the light of this petty habit of thinking, this most petty quality of our ordinary thinking and feeling?

How much is entirely lacking that we must have for the future? For one thing we must have a real people's psychology. We must know what there is in the growing human being. We have blotted out this knowledge and in its stead have acquired tests that experiment with human beings because of the inability to apprehend their characteristics intuitively. All kinds of apparatus are supposed to reveal what the human being has in the way of abilities. We do not trust in ourselves to discover these things. And why? Because we do not approach them with interest; because we go through the world with our soul asleep. Our soul must wake up and we must look into these things. Then we shall see that much of what today is looked upon as great progress is really absurd. This poor pedagogue of the primary and secondary school is sent out like a human tame rabbit unable to see what is really going on in the world. The rabbit then proceeds to educate human beings, who, because of this very education, pass by their fellow men without any feeling for what lives in their souls. Thus it is today, irrespective of the fact that among many of the middle class there is obviously no will

to enter into the great contemporary questions and impulses, and that those today who have any will are not of much use because they know absolutely nothing about what is necessary, having slept through the time during which the proletariat day by day, for decades, have been schooling themselves politically. It is indeed very seldom that, when it is a matter of discussing the great questions of the day, we find proletarians making the excuse of not being able to afford the time to look into them; they make the time. But if you enquire of any bourgeois group, they have so much to do that they cannot afford the time to study contemporary matters – they all have far too much to do. That, however, is not the real reason; as a matter of fact they have no notion at all what it is they are supposed to study. They do not know how to go to work because this was never included in their education.

Now these are not just so many pessimistic remarks, nor are they intended as a sermon; they are a pure statement of fact. What is more, we have experienced that, when men have been forced to it by life, they have educated themselves in this matter. In cases where people should have been able to educate themselves out of their own impulse, it has all come to nothing, nothing at all has happened. It is on this account that we find ourselves in our present wretched condition, on this account that we hear about anything tried-out today not only expressions of ill-will, which are frequent enough, but all the unintelligent nonsense arising from ignorance of life, because no school has ever thought of teaching their pupils how to learn. Knowledge in individual cases always trickles to people through the protecting walls of comfort, but this does not have the same result as when the human being has free access to the phenomena of life with unimpeded senses.

The sad events of the present time might show us an infinite amount in that very sphere where people go on talking in the old way, and where it appears as if the clockwork of the brain had been wound up and was obliged to go on ticking. Conferences on external matters are produced today still in the same way as they proceeded before the war catastrophe. A great proportion of the people have learnt practically nothing from these terrible events, because they have never learnt how to learn. Now they will have to learn from dire necessity what fear has not taught them. In the past I have referred here to an utterance, quoted in what I wrote on the social question, of a most unassuming but cultured observer of life, Herman Grimm. In the nineties of the last century this man said: "When we contemplate the life around us today and consider whither it is heading, whither it is rushing headlong, particularly in these ceaseless preparations for war, it is as if the

chief desire was to fix the day for general suicide – so utterly hopeless does this life appear." People are wanting, rather, to live in dreams, in illusion, those, above all, who think themselves practical. But today necessity is calling us to wake up; and those who do not wake will not be able to take part in what is essential, essential for every single human being. Many do not even know how to put their hand to the plough in this matter.

This is what I wanted to say as a kind of exposition of what should be discussed today at teachers' meetings. It is what should be developed particularly by those who have the task of educating youth, those who should be looking towards what the future is to bring. When we continue these studies we shall go more into the details of education, details of primary and secondary education.

* * *

THIRD LECTURE

1st June 1919

It is of outstanding importance today for us to recognise clearly the deep connections within the ordering of human society. In course of time people have become satisfied in many respects with what I would call superficial conceptions, conceptions based on what lies on the surface of existence. These conceptions lead them to consider one thing right, or let us say they lead to a certain thing being considered right by one man and wrong by another; but with these views of what is right and wrong we do not get anywhere. Nothing comes of them because, though thoughts may be formed about what lies on the surface, they do not produce any rational result when transformed into reality. Reality is not willing to put up so complacently as human heads with superficial opinions. These are a cancerous growth peculiar to the present age; and a further cancerous growth is men's refusal to gain sufficient self-knowledge to enable them, when the occasion arises, to say: "All these things are done to further our personal interest and we should not make them masquerade as a social aim; when we want to do something for ourselves we should not say that it is part of some social activity." We meet with a great deal of this kind. In diverse ways there has been an increase in what has existed for many years, namely, what people here have wished to do has continually been converted into the personal interest of some particular circle; it then being said that it is a consequence, an outcome, of what was wished for from this quarter. I am just calling attention to the necessity for people nowadays to be willing to see more deeply into matters, thus ridding themselves of superficial conceptions.

Now nowhere is this necessity so urgent as in the sphere of education, and nowhere is the goodwill for it more lacking. For if we really think socially it is necessary in the educational sphere to focus our attention upon even the most elementary things; you may perhaps have gathered this from the two previous lectures of this series. But today especially I should like you to know that this is realised as something meant to run through my whole lecture. Just look at what is experienced today by human beings, by small children, at all stages of school life. When a small

child enters a school, in what goes on there everything is taken into account except the needs and the impulses of the developing human being; and with the advance from class to class this evil goes on increasing. Already at an age when such things should not be tolerated, the following, for example, may happen. The young pupil arrives at school for the first lesson of the morning. For this first lesson there is perhaps put down, for the convenience of the college of teachers, let us say mathematics, arithmetic, then Latin, then there may follow religious instruction. After that there perhaps comes music or singing, perhaps not that but geography. You cannot do anything more destructive to the human heart and mind than arranging in this way for young people's powers of concentration to be so thoroughly undermined. What we must begin upon when reforming the sphere of education socially is pre-eminently the time-table, that arch-enemy of everything to do with genuine education; the time-table that continues throughout all stages in a school is what must be our first object of attack. If we think at all of restoring our education to health, we have to take care that in future the growing human being shall concentrate on one subject as long as it is necessary for his particular state of development. Thus by careful study we must discover at what age it is necessary to give the growing pupil mathematical concepts, for example, the concepts of physics. Here we must not choose that worst of all methods – the giving of three or four weekly lessons on these subjects; we must on the contrary put aside a whole period for the pupil, which means that for a certain period of his life he has to concentrate on one thing without interruption. Out of a knowledge of man that is genuinely psychological, from the educational point of view, we must be clear, for example, at what age pupils should receive instruction in arithmetic. At what age arithmetic must be the first consideration, and the entire day devoted to focusing attention on the subject. Naturally I don't mean that the youngster should do nothing but mathematics from morning to evening; I mean it in the sense of what I found necessary when I was given a psychopathic child of eleven to educate. In this case I tried to set to work in an economic way; I arranged with all those responsible for the education of the child that I myself should have the say in respect of the time during which I wanted his soul to concentrate especially on a certain subject, and that I should be the one to draw up the plan for all the child did. Thus a definite time was to be given to the piano, a definite time to singing, and so on. It is not a question of filling the soul with teaching matter, but of so

organising the whole development that the soul itself can concentrate upon one thing at a certain age, and that, before going on to any other subject, it is possible to reach a definite end in some individual branch of human culture. Let us say therefore: we have to consider how much arithmetic is to be given a human being at any definite period of life, so that at the end of that period the young developing child can have the feeling that it has made a big step forward in the subject. Then only should a move be made to another subject.

Thus you see that what now constitutes the groundwork of our education, up to the highest stages of college life, bears within it the most harmful element of our whole education. There can hardly be anything more contrary to good sense than for the student on entering college to experience what I did in my day, that is, having to listen in the following way:

from	7 to 8	in the morning	–	philosophy
"	8 to 9	" " " "	–	history
"	9 to 10	" " " "	–	history of literature
"	10 to 11	" " " "	–	constitutional law.

Now in all this there is no intention, as there ought to be, of avoiding confusion in the mind of the developing human being; the only consideration is the convenience of the school authorities. This can be seen by the most unprejudiced of us.

Here we have a great and obvious task. It is a task, however, that, granted the present habits of thinking, will not meet in general with much desire to set to work on it. This is what is meant when we say that now is the time for reorganisation on a big scale. Most people are prone to believe that this reorganisation is helped on by high-sounding words, but it is helped only when courage is forthcoming for big changes, and when we do not shrink from facing up to the opposition these changes arouse.

There is something else which today is very generally considered indispensable, something of particularly great significance for the lower classes in a school – the so-called government inspection of schools. There can be nothing more disastrous in a suitable development of the life of spirit than this official or semi-official inspection. What is needed in school affairs for the life of spirit – whoever looks deeply into things can see this – what is necessary for really thriving progress, calls for continuous watchfulness coming from the living nature of the instruction itself. This cannot and should never be gauged by any school inspection from outside. As long as

he remains at his post, anyone to whom, with all necessary precautions, the administering of the life of spirit has been entrusted, should never have his methods, or anything of that kind, interfered with. This is something many people do not yet grasp, and lack of understanding for it is at the same time lack of understanding for one of the basic conditions of all life that can bring maturity to the human spirit. From this you see in what a thorough-going way we have to lay hands on what people today take as a matter of course – what they even ask to have in a more pronounced form. For there is scarcely one social party programme which does not dwell on the official or semi-official inspection of schools. This is not finding fault with any person or with any party, but simply pointing to what has resulted from the wrong direction gradually taken in the life of spirit.

We can make a special study, my dear friends, of this perverted life of spirit if we look at the higher classes in a school. How has our higher education actually developed? This indeed could be observed in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ultimately all those within the German life of spirit who enabled it to come to any definite significance in the world, had already arrived at maturity before this more recent system had destroyed the foundations of real spiritual development. Goethe indeed sufficiently abused the impediments even he met with during his school career. We should just picture what a different account Goethe would have given in his *Poetry and Truth* of Professor Ludwig and others, if in his eighteenth or nineteenth year the restrictions of the present higher educational centres had been imposed upon him. We must reflect on such things today. What actually is it that has been gradually abolished? Now when the grammar school, which today in accordance with modern demands is looked upon as a bugbear, was the only centre of preparation for higher education, when it still bore the stamp of the old monastic school – for its time not at all to be despised – it retained what we might describe by saying that the student absorbed something which gave him a general world-outlook. In the syllabus of these schools there figured what is called philosophy. It is true that this was cultivated only during the last two years; for the most part what belonged to the second year was taken in the first and vice versa, but at least something was there – the last remnants of what flourished in the old colleges, namely, that the first years spent by a student at college afforded a possibility of gaining some kind of world-outlook, and qualified him to enter upon study for a special calling. For in reality no-one can be fitted for a special calling who has not, through preparatory instruction, become capable of an

intelligent, perceptive opinion about human affairs in general. Today it is considered superfluous to give people in a true form concepts that are logical or psychological. No-one, however, can profitably study any branch whatever of the higher life of spirit, who has not previously experienced these logical and psychological conceptions, and thus qualified for this study. The more recent cultural life of spirit has abolished all these things. It has no longer any wish to look at man at all; this new culture seeks to train the life of spirit out of impulses quite foreign to that life.

Now this has led to all that is found in our common cultivation of the spirit, which no longer bears the stamp of a united culture. It has split us asunder and so far has been unable to master what must be mastered. Anyone having experience in this sphere knows what wide praise has been given to the specialisation of recent times. It has constantly been pointed out how our cultural life has been so much extended that a man can have a thorough and profitable grasp only of one special branch of knowledge. Something has been indicated here which, from one aspect, might be called self-evident, but out of inner laziness people have accepted it with alacrity. Men need today just to confine themselves within the limits of some special subject to be hailed as qualified men of culture. Naturally, anyone having culture at heart cannot hope and cannot wish that specialisation should give place to a general dilettantism. This aim must be for all education, all school life, to be so organised for the human being that at a lower level of his consciousness it is always possible for him to connect his speciality by threads of intelligence with the general culture. This can happen in no other way than by giving every college a foundation of the general culture of mankind. The pedants today will here protest and ask what is to become of professional training. We should just prove how economically we can proceed with professional training, when dealing with specialities, if we can work upon human beings with an all-round culture – if we can work upon men who really have something human in them. Through the perverse conditions of our modern culture we have reached the point where a man in his special subject can be a most highly developed being and, at the same time, colossally stupid where the great problems of mankind are concerned, understanding absolutely nothing about them. We have in our midst nowadays this curious phenomenon – that someone who has only passed through the primary school, and perhaps has not done this very satisfactorily, and has been dragged rather than brought up, has more sensible things to say about general human conditions than the man who

has passed through higher education and excels in his own sphere. Today we must fight this phenomenon if we have any idea of sending into the depths those impulses which alone can bring improvement, impulses which do not lead merely to the superficial measures sought by those unwilling to take the path demanded by reality if anything is to happen. Naturally today we have let the evil go so far that we no longer have the personalities fit to build the foundations for a college of this kind, and are in the terrible situation of possessing no teachers for general human culture. For, my dear friends, it has come to this, that our colleges lie half asleep on the outermost fringes of culture. The following can be experienced – that in our colleges, during the hour appointed for some particular science, a professor gives his lecture from a notebook and the student listens. He – the student – will then buy himself a copy of some kind in order to read it up for his exam. This is quite a usual procedure. But what is it in reality? In reality the young man when he sits there listening is completely wasting his time, for actually he gets the information needed by reading the copy he has bought. Merely by that he would have done everything in the matter that had any reality. This means that the professor taking his place at the reading-desk and reading from his notes is an entirely unnecessary factor, absolutely superfluous. Now it will be easy to say: “Here is a fellow longing for the suppression of all professors.” But no, that is not the case. I most certainly do not long for the suppression of professors; I am only calling attention to how professors nowadays give their lectures with no regard to the fact that printing has been invented, and that what they give out in their lectures penetrates a student’s brain-box better when read in a printed book. All the same, I point out that the best one can gain from a well-written book is hardly worth a tenth part of what comes from the immediate personality of the teacher in such a way that a connection arises between the soul of the teacher and the soul of the one who is taught. This can happen, however, only in a life of spirit with a basis of its own and in its own administration, in which the individuality can fully develop and traditions do not hold sway for hundreds of years – as in universities and other centres of higher education – and where the individual man is able to be himself in the most individual sense. Then from this instruction from word of mouth will come something of which we can say that we have broken with everything coming to men even through the arts of printing and illustration, but just by doing so we gain the possibility of developing quite new teaching capacities, which today are dormant in mankind. All this belongs, indeed pre-eminently belongs, to our present social questions.

For only if we have the heart and mind for it shall we be able to enter into what is necessary for our present age.

Now let us look at what for the general social situation arises from the perverted nature of our higher education. Yesterday in a public lecture I had to draw attention to how, strictly speaking, neither in the national economy of the bourgeoisie nor in that of the proletariat have we any reflection of the real social conditions, because we simply have not had the ability to arrive at a true social science. What then has arisen under the bourgeoisie in place of social science? Something of which people are very proud and never tired of praising, namely, modern sociology. Now this modern sociology is the most nonsensical product of culture that could possibly have arisen; for it sins against all the most elementary requirements for a social science. This sociology seeks to be great by taking no account of anything that could lead to social will, social impulse, merely noting historically and statistically the so-called sociological facts, to prove, or so it appears, that the human being is a kind of social animal living within a community. It has furnished strong evidence of this, unconsciously it is true, furnished it by not advancing anything but the most insipid sociological views which are the common property of everyone – mere trivialities. Nowhere is there the will to discover social laws and how they must effect the social will of man. Hence, in this sphere, the source of all life of the spirit is crippled. We must calmly admit that all levels of society today that are not proletarian lack anything in the way of social will. Social will is non-existent just because, where it is meant to be cultivated, namely in centres for higher education, sociology has replaced social science – an ineffective sociology in place of a social science which pulsates in the will and stimulates the human being. These matters have their roots deep in the cultural life; it is there that they have to be sought if they are ever to be found. Let us reflect how different our situation would be in life if what we have previously discussed here were to be carried out. Instead of our gaze being turned back to the most ancient epochs of culture, which took their shape from quite different communal conditions, from the age of fourteen or fifteen upwards, when the sentient soul with its delicate vibrations is coming to life, the human being must be led directly to all that touches us most vitally in the life of the time. He should have to learn what has to do with agriculture, what goes on in trade, and he should learn about the various business connections. All this ought to be absorbed by the human being. Imagine how differently he would then face life, what an independent being he would be, how he would refuse to have forced upon him what today is prized as the highest cultural achievement,

but which is nothing but the most depressing phenomenon of decadence.

It is only on the soil of a self-governing life of spirit that, for example, art can flourish. Genuine art, my dear friends, is an affair of the people; genuine art is essentially social in character. Whoever studies buildings of the Greek, Roman or Gothic styles in the way this is often done today, knows little of what really comes into question. He alone realises what lies in the Greek, Roman and Gothic architectural styles who knows how, when these prevailed, the whole social structure was to be found in the architectural forms, the direction of the lines, in what they portrayed, and how this art went on vibrating in the human souls. What a man did day by day, down to the very movements of his fingers, was a continuation of what he saw when looking at these things, in which he was able to absorb the real, the true nature of the architecture. We need today to bring about the marriage between life and art which, however, can flourish only in the soil of a free life of spirit. How it is to be deplored, my dear friends, that the school rooms for our children are veritably a barbaric environment for their young hearts and minds. Imagine every school room, not decorated in the way often thought artistic today, but shaped by an artist in such a way that each single form is in harmony with what his eye should fall upon when the child is learning his tables. Thoughts that are to be socially effective cannot work socially unless, while they are being formed, there flows into the soul as a side-stream of the spiritual life what comes from a really living environment. For this, however, art needs to take a quite different course during children's growing years from what is now accorded it. Anyone today, especially anyone who feels within him the artistic impulse, has no possibility of really drawing near to life. If he feels the impulse to become a painter, for example, he is urged on by life to produce as soon as possible a realistic picture, as of a ham, for he imagines it to be of importance to create something that satisfies himself. Obviously this is important; but the first question is whether the impulse towards inner satisfaction has found its way out into life in such a way that our greatest inner satisfaction comes from asking life: "What is it that one has to create?" and from the conscientious feeling that one is in duty bound to repay life for what one has taken from it. Today, art is not served by painters providing people with landscapes they do not understand; on the contrary, art is thrown to the dogs. In this way we have an unnecessary luxury-art, side-by-side in life with an environment showing traces of barbarism. Just imagine that conditions were such (I endeavoured to deal with this in my book on the social question) that production costs were to accrue only until

the article was complete, when this would go free of excess profit on the market. Think how by this every individual egoistic interest would be eliminated, how there would of itself spring up instinctively, intuitively, in all those who are creative, the tendency to create for men at large, how they would seek the possibility of creating for all mankind instead of creating, as is done today, what is unneeded, just for the benefit of the capitalist. The task is, above all, to socialise in such a way that the life of spirit is not trodden underfoot in the process.

On this point those with any authority have not yet the most elementary impulse to discover what is right. Nowadays they are scandalised by Bolsheviks and others. But the Bolsheviks are not responsible for their own existence. Who is? Those in authority! For they have felt no impulse to found a real people's culture. There would be no Bolshevism had the authorities done their duty; apart from the fact that Bolshevism is not what people in authoritative circles paint it, in order to make it into an object of horror and to justify their armaments. But this is merely a digression.

Today it would be necessary, particularly for those in leading circles, in all honesty to face oneself. But indeed there is very little inclination in this direction today.

That which is a necessary factor for the bettering of the soul has in truth not yet been torn from the soul through man's evolution; it might still be there; it could be even in the German people, indeed to a special degree. But the German people have long since left off developing the germinal forces of individual thoughts, individual feelings, individual impulses. In the lowest classes at school, impulses are inoculated which make of the naturally great-hearted German people a governmental automaton, a machine blindly following the dictates of their government. There is a connection between all that confronts us in such a terrible way today and this mistaken education, this education which does not make for the independence and freedom of man, because in itself it is neither free nor independent. This education feels more at ease the closer it is bound to the State, and its well-being increases when in innumerable conferences the resolution is adopted: "We have every confidence in the government" – which now, in Versailles, is doing its best to destroy us. These resolutions are adopted at innumerable assemblies. "We stand firmly behind our government." Whereas in truth in the government there is hardly a man who has the right to be there – the first requirement being to admit openly and freely that everything happening there is merely the continuation of the harm done in the provinces of Germany in that unhappy year of 1914. Into these things flow the faults

of our education system; and these faults have deprived people of their ability rightly to estimate the events in life.

As I have already said, just as a reasonable school system, thinking more of concentration than of a wretched time-table, would give the human being an independent power of understanding and reason, so a real permeation by social art of our community through education would give us a true culture of the will. For no-one can have will who has not had it drawn out by a genuinely artistic education. To realise this secret of the connection between art and life – especially with the will element in man – is one of the very first requirements of future psychological education; and in future all education must be psychological. To judge from how things are at present, when all psychology has been driven out of ordinary folk, the founders of our future psychology will have to be the artists, who still retain a little of it, whereas otherwise it has vanished from our culture. Even in scientific education no particle of it is left. But a psychological approach to life would be possible if the individual really worked for everyone, and everyone worked for the individual; for then productive power would be so organised that time would be left for an education of this kind. Much of the humbug talked today would be unnecessary if we had the will to talk seriously and candidly, and if we achieved the only thing that can serve the life of spirit, namely, the mutual interplay of manual labour and the work of the spirit, which must in future be our aim. Then, all over the earth, if everyone (it would not be possible for everyone but we can get some way towards the ideal) would take a share in manual labour, no-one would need to work at it daily for more than three or four hours. At least we get this result when reckoning approximately. Daily manual labour over and above three or four hours is not a necessity in human evolution – today this can be said dispassionately as a quite objective fact – it is a result of our having countless idlers in our midst and also people who live on private incomes. We must face these things as they really are. For the improvement of these conditions does not depend on making some little change here or there, but upon organising our education, our primary and secondary education, so that through education, through the very nature of our schools, human beings learn how to use their judgement.

Affairs today are such that our system of education rears young human plants with no power at all to judge what is going on around them. Hence all the information, coming for example from Versailles, is so nonsensical, because no-one can judge what is the relative importance of things, nor from what motives an opinion is formed by people about what is necessary for

them on the grounds of their particular nature. When therefore these things are spoken of they meet with no understanding; were it possible for only a particle of what is inherent in the threefold social organism to enter human understanding, it would be seen how what threatens us from the west is a drowning of all political and spiritual life by the economic life, and how what presses upon us from the east, including Russia, is men's cry for the life of spirit to be freed from that of economics. Two poles confront each other, west and east, and we in the middle have the task of looking to the west and avoiding its errors, of looking to the east and ourselves cultivating what must otherwise be imposed upon us, not in the course of centuries but in a few decades, because if men will not impose tasks on themselves others will impose them. Ours is the task here in Central Europe of cultivating what can be cultivated only out of the threefold social organism. Today, were eastern culture to predominate, the earth would be inundated by a vague mysticism, inundated by a theosophy with no reality. Were predominance to arise in the west, we should be dominated, tyrannised over by a purely material life. Then the task should be ours to ward off from mankind two terrible sources of harm by a rational threefold State, giving independence to the economic life and to the life of the spirit, and making it impossible for the State to drive these things so far that we ourselves are crushed between east and west.

Now an objective picture of the west reveals today above all how alive we must be to all that comes from the Latin peoples. Nothing could be more dangerous for us than to delude ourselves about how profoundly it is rooted in the French to work for our destruction. If we prevent France from doing this then what threatens us from the side of the English can easily be overcome. For this, however, the powers of discrimination and judgement are needed. Above all, it is necessary to understand that with a few exceptions, all those from Germany – I don't know how this is to be expressed without wounding someone – who today in Versailles are negotiating the fate of Germany, are nothing more than instruments for these negotiations. These things today must indeed be faced as plain facts, faced by our inner judgement without the slightest concession. If we understand this today we receive the first impulse particularly needed for primary and secondary education; we see what has been brought to the surface in man by his present education which now is forming man's destiny.

Naturally it is easier today to form the most trivial judgement about what is meant here than, aroused in this way, to look at the different human spheres for what is right. When some time ago I spoke in our Dornach building of the threefold social organism, a short while afterwards a strange

plan emerged; perhaps I may quote it as a grotesque example of the way in which people today have been educated. Well, we have our building, where a number of people are occupied, others are connected with it who have nothing to do but just live in the neighbourhood. And in this building the threefold social organism was described. Now in certain heads there sprang up the idea, self-evident today, that a beginning would have to be made somewhere, and it was wished to begin with a social experiment, these people having in mind, in the most depressing sectarian way, a little area where depressed seedlings of egoism could be made to sprout, so that they could then boast that socialisation had somewhere made a start. Thus a beginning was to be made by those grouped round the Dornach building to form a social State when the threefold social organism could enter upon the scene. Plans were drawn up for this. The only thing to be done was to say to these good people: "Whatever is this intended to be? If you are taking this seriously, the first thing is to make your economic life independent. For that, you would naturally have to procure cows, milk them, and do all that is obviously imposed by the economic oasis. Then because men from outside must be connected with this economic oasis, it's quite possible for them to become fine parasites of yours, for any establishment shut off in this sectarian way breeds parasites." In such an economically shut off domain it is only possible to create a social centre for egoism; when it is exclusive it lives at the cost of others. It is simply the direst form of capitalism. As for the life of rights – well, if you set up a Court of Justice and you sentence someone who has been up to mischief, I should just like to know what the Swiss state would say to your threefold Commonwealth. Then, for the life of spirit – since we have had an Anthroposophical Movement, it is precisely for the life of spirit that in face of resistance we have been striving on all sides towards independence. We shall have this as long as we exist, but you do not see that this is already taken in hand. There is so little understanding for this that it may be thought not to have been attempted. It is not a question today of saying: "A beginning must be made somewhere." A beginning of that sort is for the most part only a depressing capitalist individualisation. To found such a colony it is necessary to begin on a capitalist footing, and this is very far from what is meant from a really socialistic point of view. This is no criticism of any individual effort, for I am the last person to be unaware of the difficulties met with by the individual when embarking on the great tasks of the present time. There is something else, however, that I would impress upon your hearts: don't bury your heads in the sand when you want to individualise anything on a capitalistic basis, but acknowledge that

modern conditions still oblige you to individualise for your own advantage in a capitalistic way. Admit the truth, I beg, for truth will be the basis upon which all social life must be founded. Truth should not be forsworn in anything that is said. We should never, even in the forming of our sentences, confront mankind with what is untrue.

Throughout the land today you hear the cry for schooling free of charge. What does this really imply? But the cry throughout the land should be: "How can we get a form of socialism in which everyone is enabled to contribute in the right way towards educational affairs?" Free schooling is nothing less than a social lie, for behind this is hidden either the fact that surplus value finds its way into the pockets of a little set of people who then found a school and thus gain mastery over others; or sand is thrown in the eyes of the public so that they should not realise that among the coins they take from their purse there must be some that go to the upkeep of schools. In all that we say, in the very shaping of our sentences, we must conscientiously strive after truth.

The task is great, but the greatness of the task must be vividly before us. What is set before anthroposophy as an ideal, what has been in this small movement for some decades, naturally, my dear friends, cannot be realised by everyone. One man has to consider his calling, another his wife, the wife her husband, while another has the education of his children to think of. This must be admitted unreservedly by each of us so that he may realise how far he is from what is really in question. For the anthroposophical ideal is of such a nature that it necessitates the absorption of the whole man. Today this is impossible for many. But they should not delude themselves with the nebulous idea that they have done enough; they should acknowledge the truth about themselves. On the other hand they should be permeated by the thought that the cultivation of our life of spirit is a matter today of the first importance. No-one can form a right conception of what is necessary for the life of the spirit, including the social life, who has not the courage to admit that radical change must go as far as reforming our obnoxious time-tables; it must deal with many trifles; for it has been an accumulation of trifles which has brought about the terrible havoc existing in our present culture.

* * *

