

times. One has only to read the commentaries of Meyer and Stein to see why the Wolfram version has relevance for our times: Parsifal, Gawain and Feirefiz represent the thinking, feeling and willing aspects of each one of us.

It is this relevance that must appeal to the students. Mine come along the freeways in their own cars, through concrete jungles, past the glaring advertisements, to the accompaniment of the car radio, pull up in the school parking lot, and climb the tree-clad hill to the box-like prefabricated buildings, enter room 11, and then enter the forest of Broceliand, ride imaginary horses to the accompanying sound of clanking chain mail, up to high castles and challenging situations. Not much comparison! The wide highways and smoggy skies of Los Angeles, the noise, the mechanical and urban environment are as different from medieval romance as one could imagine; and yet both are beset with challenges. And the challenges which Parsifal meets have an echo in the hearts of citizens of the 20th century.

The students who have come up with us from the lower school are glad to have a story again, to be able to draw pictures, write poetry. They become quite nostalgic. Many who have come later wonder what on earth this crazy block is about. Many of them (but not all) relax and find freedom in the new kind of thinking which the work demands. Some of my classes have been more intellectual, they argue with me, with each other, they want to know my sources. They are the ones who cannot relax into imaginative thinking; often there is only a small nucleus who have come from the class teacher period. Another class with many students from the lower school enjoyed the story simply as a story, and were at first reluctant to look for any interpretation beyond the literal in our recapitulation next day. They were patient to let the story work on them in time; the first group were impatient and wanted all the answers at once. Everyone wants to know what the Grail is, but we have to wait patiently for book 9. Wolfram is a masterful storyteller, and his timing is all planned.

One class gave me all the interpretations; I sat back and listened to them come without difficulty to some of the deepest truths of the poem. These are the moments when we have the truest feelings of comradeship, - we are all students together, and there is more in Wolfram than any of us can find. We must let it work on us. Some of the students are so deeply touched that they find it difficult to write their impressions in a notebook; one girl struggled for two months to make her book. She was a highly intellectual student who re-formed her way of thinking in order to come to

terms with the poem. Often in class she had been my devil's advocate. One student whose attention wandered, who never seemed to be captured by the poem, suddenly answered my question: "Why does Parsifal wear white armor for one brief moment at the end of book 6, instead of the usual red in which he appears again later?" "Because he is making himself his own God." Exactly so, and I had never thought of it in that light before.

Such are the pleasures of teaching a block year after year! Usually I am a class teacher, always moving on to a new block, but once a year I leave my class to join the 11th grade for Parsifal. I usually meet one or two envious 12th graders that morning: "I enjoyed that course so much!" they say, and sometimes drop in to see how it's going this year. I begin with a historical survey: Epic and Romance, and the transition from the Dark Ages to the Chivalric Middle Ages, from the 9th century in which Parsifal is supposed to have lived to the year 1200 when Wolfram was writing. Then we begin to read book 3 where Parsifal is a child. Usually we read aloud, as they did in the Middle Ages, and mostly I find I do the reading, actually a fully prepared artistic performance, though class readers do help me. We read the poetic Zeydel-Morgan version, with the prose summaries, but sometimes have to turn to the complete Vintage paperback for the Sigune episodes and Gawain's fight with the lion. In the last week we come back to books 1 and 2 to complete the circle, and quite possibly Wolfram wrote these rather difficult books after he completed the poem. I finish with the story of Sigune and Schionatulander to show Parsifal's obligation to the dead knight, and how from his first meeting with Sigune, Parsifal starts on the path of the twelve virtues.

There is always a drawing to be done as part of the Friday review, graded for courage rather than artistic merit. During the last week each student is given a character from the story, and is asked to prepare an oral report. ("Do you try to match them up with us?" I am often asked.) This requires a creative effort, something like a teacher's preparation experience to bring forth a new artistic picture in words. A shy girl shows that she really lived into the experiences of the Lady Cunnerware who would not laugh. A lively boy acts out the childhood of Parsifal ("I really identify with him.") Another gave the whole story of Parsifal's adventures in three minutes flat in 1970's jargon. Many beautiful poems appear, often in the first person. Often there is a touch of humor. Some students surprise me by being completely lacking in courage to do anything orally at all, even when they are allowed to read from notes.

Perhaps one effect of the course is a development of self-knowledge. Certainly it affects many of the students very deeply, and even if the story

is forgotten the aura lingers on. After the block some teachers have noticed changes in some of the students, of which those students were fully conscious. It is obviously a deeply working and far-reaching study, and for three weeks room 11 becomes something of a mystery temple.

"Anyone who approaches the Mysteries today must feel that he is confronting himself in such a way that he will strive after the virtues of Parsifal, while knowing that - because of the modern conditions already described and because he is a man of modern times - he is in fact someone else also, the wounded Amfortas. That is what his self-knowledge must lead him to feel. Then from this recognition will flow the forces which out of duality must make a unity, and so should bring man a little further on in the course of world-evolution. In our Intellectual Soul, in the depths of our inner life, there must be a meeting between Amfortas, wounded in body and soul, and Parsifal, whose task is to cultivate the Consciousness Soul. And it is entirely true to say that in order to gain freedom for himself, a man must go through the wounding of Amfortas and become acquainted with the Amfortas within himself, so that he may also come to know Parsifal. Just as it was right for Egyptian times that one should rise up into the spiritual worlds in order to know Isis, so it is right for our times to start with the spirituality, the spiritual nature of this world, and through it to rise into the higher spiritual worlds..."

- Rudolf Steiner: Mysteries of the East and of Christianity

BOOKLIST

The Text

Wolfram von Eschenbach: Parzival. Vintage Books, 1961.

Wolfram von Eschenbach: Parzival, edited by Zeydel & Morgan. University of North Carolina, 1951.

Supplement to Text

Albrecht von Scharfenberg: Sigune and Schionatulander. Dornach, 1972.

Anthroposophical Commentary

Walter Johannes Stein: Das neunte Jahrhundert. Stuttgart, 1966.
 Rudolf Meyer: Der Graal und seine Hüter. Stuttgart, 1956.
 Hubert Zipperlen: Grail Images. Copake, 1967.

Comments by Dr. Steiner: (By date and place of lecture)

Christ and the Spiritual World. Berlin, 1913.
 Christianity in the Evolutionary Course of the Modern World. Feb.15,1909.
 Cosmic Christianity. London, 1924.
 Mysteries of the East and of Christianity. Leipzig, 1913-14.

General Background

William T. Fernie: The Occult Powers of Precious Stones.
 Rudolf Steiner Publications, 1973.
 Emma Jung & Marie-Louise von Franz: The Grail Legend. London, 1960.

Poems about the Grail:

John Masefield: The Ballad of Sir Bors.
 Thomas Jones: Forever burns the glory of the Grail ...

- Elizabeth Nobbs
 Highland Hall School

Sixth Grade Acoustics:

As part of the sixth grade study of sound, we tried making our own instruments, and the following remarks may prove helpful to someone who thinks he'd like to tackle such a project.

From one standpoint, this was a highly successful experiment, especially for this particular highly musical class. In experiencing the difficulty of creating true pitch, each student could all the more appreciate the perfection of his own real instrument.

From another standpoint, however, it was a frustrating and disappointing endeavor. To be really satisfying, an instrument must be

tunable, and this requires a number of refinements that we couldn't cope with, given the time and supplies at hand.

We made small harps, metal-tube xylophones, and guitars. Circumstances created the design for the guitars, since a second-hand music store offered us eight smashed guitars for one dollar each. These provided strings and key mechanisms. The steel strings themselves were a problem, being needle-sharp at both ends. We made do, but cat gut would have been better. The thickest strings were also not suitable for our purposes. For the other parts, we used nails as bridges and frets, cigar boxes and scraps of pine and mahogany for the outer structure.

The harps were given a beautiful triangular frame, with large screw eyes for keys. None of these were tunable beyond four notes, since only B strings were used, and length and tension were insufficient to raise and lower the pitch. Time ran out before we could experiment with varying the string thickness. Here as well, the steel strings gave many a nasty prick.

The cutting of metal tubes was a one-shot affair, and relied heavily on the care taken by the pupil. We used decimal equivalents of the natural scale. The tubes gave a very pleasant, if not totally accurate sound. I would be interested in having the decimal values for the equally tempered scale, which is difficult to calculate but which is used for "real" instruments.

It was all too soon that the block was over, with the instruments still incomplete. Despite this, the class was conscripted for an assembly performance, which provided many a humorous note before a charitable and impressed audience.

- Joel Morrow
Waldorf School, Garden City

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Eighth and Twelfth Grade Plays:

Because the teacher or advisor of a graduating class is faced with the problem of what is a suitable play to produce - what play can this particular class carry, what play has a sufficient number of roles, what

play is the class most responsive to inwardly - it was suggested that the various schools might list those plays which have been produced over the years, with a commentary when possible. Such a list could be of service to those who are faced with the task of choosing and producing a graduation play.

As a start, we list a compilation of plays given by both eighth and twelfth grades in the Waldorf School, Garden City, over the past 18 years, and a list of eighth grade plays from Sacramento. It is hoped that others will send in similar lists, so that all may share in each other's experiences.

Eighth Grade

One act, or less than one hour performance time.

The Devil and Daniel Webster, by Stephen Vincent Benet. Excellent crowd scenes that can involve a whole class. Opens with a square dance.

The Jade Heart, by Carol Coates. Chinese play, with a Chinese property man. Anne Charles has a script.

Bilbo's Birthday Party

We used a script written by Frederic Farrar, a parent, but there is one by Patricia Gray, The Hobbit, available from the Dramatic Publishing Company.

The Mountain King and the Misanthrope, by Ferdinand Raimund. A rare mixture of fantasy and satire. Susl Berlin has adapted and translated it from the German original. Copy available. Lots of nice roles for girls.

The Spendthrift, by Ferdinand Raimund. Susl Berlin's adaptation and translation.

Full length

Mrs. McThing, by Mary Chase (author of Harvey.) Lots of good parts: a good witch, charming gangsters, a changeling, and others.

The Firstborn, by Christopher Fry. Biblical theme. Moses, Aaron, et al.

Monsieur Beaucaire, Ethel Hale Freeman, published by Baker Plays. If you find it out of print, the Waldorf School has a copy.

The Inspector General, by Nicolai Gogol. Lots of characters. Also suitable for a Senior Play. Our director added parts for suppliant peasants, so as to give more girls roles, and made the Postmaster a Postmistress.

The Kinfolk of Robin Hood, by Percy MacKaye, published by Samuel French. This may be out of print, but we have a copy to loan.

The Ivory Door, by A.A. Milne

As You Like it, by William Shakespeare

Midsummer Night's Dream, by William Shakespeare

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High School

One act

Spreading the News, by Lady Gregory. Comedy. Less than a dozen parts, but most of the characters are on for most of the action. Our students enjoyed working on the brogue.

The Travelling Man, by Lady Gregory. A Miracle play. 3 characters. Available in Coole edition of Lady Gregory's works. Beautiful.

The Ugly Duckling, by A.A. Milne. Not the Anderson story. Very actable comedy.

Childhood, by Thornton Wilder. 5 characters, 3 of them children - requires high school students old enough to enjoy playing young children. Available in All the World's a Stage, an anthology edited by Lowell Swortzell. This anthology contains a lovely play by Tagore and some other unusual things.

Full length

John Brown's Body, by Stephen Vincent Benet. The script taken from Benet's poem can be cut to any length you will, or parts added by going to the original for episodes. Can be done as staged reading, or dramatized. Choral speaking was used in many parts of our production.

The Madwoman of Chailot, by Jean Giraudoux. Cut the first scene drastically and get to the entrance of the Madwoman, or the opening drags. Loads of parts for everyone.

Life with Father, by Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse. A real old-fashioned play. Parents liked it very much.

I.B., by Archibald MacLeish. Drama. Takes careful reading ahead of time with the class, who should be mature. Requires imaginative staging.

The World of Sholem Aleichem, adapted by Arnold Perl. 3 one act playlets interwoven by narrative and music. Can be edited to accomodate one's cast and time. We did the first two, A Tale of Chelm, and Bontsche Schweig. Warmth and humor.

The Tempest, by William Shakespeare.

Arms and the Man, by George Bernard Shaw. Students enjoyed doing this play and did not think of it as wordy. Only 3 women's roles.

Androcles and the Lion, by George Bernard Shaw.

Playboy of the Western World, by John Synge.

Under Milk Wood, by Dylan Thomas. Can be edited to suit. Can be done as a staged reading. We did it as theatre in the round, using choral speaking for many of the descriptive narratives.

The Matchmaker, by Thornton Wilder. Lots of parts, lots of action, but 3 sets.

Our Town, by Thornton Wilder.

The Skin of Our Teeth, by Thornton Wilder. We tried using eurythmy for the Hours of the Night at the end of the third act. Be sure the class has read the play and understands it before the rehearsals begin.

- Aina Barten
Waldorf School, Garden City

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Eighth Grade:

The Taming of the Shrew, William Shakespeare. Abridged by teacher.
The Hobbit. Approved Tolkien version, Chicago Publishing Co. A two-act play, small royalty charge.

Aesop's Fables, written by class and teacher.

As You Like It, William Shakespeare. Abridged by teacher.

Midsummer Night's Dream, William Shakespeare. Abridged by teacher.

King of Ireland's Son, play written by Betty Kane.

- Betty Kane
Sacramento Waldorf School

Following the suggestion made in the January issue that the various schools send in names of their class and special teachers, the growing Hawthorne Valley School sends in its list of faculty:

Grade 1: James Pewtherer
Grades 2 and 3: Frances Faust
Grade 2 Main Lesson: Gail Baring
Grade 4: Rudolf Copple
Handwork: Gail Baring
Eurythmy: Astrid Barnes
Shop, German, Games: John Barnes
Music: Franziska Steinrueck
French: Rudolf Copple

- Frances Faust
Hawthorne Valley School

RECOMMENDED READING:

- Splendour of the Earth, Anderson, Phillips Publishers, United Kingdom.
(good for geography, deserts, volcanoes, etc.)
- The Human Habitat, Huntington, Van Nostrand, N.Y.
- Farmers for 40 Centuries, King, Cape Publishers, United Kingdom.
(China as a peasant community)
- Small is Beautiful, Schumacher, Bond & Briggs, United Kingdom.
(Economics humanized)

- Eric C. Byford, Librarian
Michael Hall School

TEACHER OPENINGS

"We are in need of two teachers - one for Class V next term
(April 30th-urgent!) and one for Class I in September."

- Kay Eastmond
Wynstones School

TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS?

Eric Byford of Michael Hall reports that rumor has reached him that G. Ott's Chemie is being translated in America. If anyone knows whether or not this is so, please inform either Mr. Byford or the Clearing House.

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NEW PUBLICATIONS:

Form Drawing by Margaret Frohlich. 65 p, profusely illustrated,
7 1/2" x 10" paperback, price \$3.95. Available August 1,
St. George Book Service, Spring Valley, N.y.
