

# **The Social Future**

## **Social Future: Lecture IV: Cultural Questions, Spiritual Science, Art, Science, Religion**

**Schmidt Number: S-3890**

### **IV**

CULTURAL QUESTIONS. SPIRITUAL SCIENCE (ART, SCIENCE, RELIGION).  
THE NATURE OF EDUCATION. SOCIAL ART.

WHEN we look over the history of the last few years and ask ourselves how the social problems and needs occupying the public mind for more than half a century have been dealt with, we can find only one answer. Although in the greater part of the civilized world, opportunity to carry out in practice their ideas of reconstructing social life was given to people who, after their own fashion, had devoted themselves for decades to the study of social problems, yet it must be regarded as extremely characteristic of the age that all the theories and all the views which are the result of half a century of social work from every quarter have shown themselves powerless to reconstruct the present social conditions.

Of late years, much has been destroyed and, in the eyes of all observant persons, little, or probably nothing, built up. Does not the question force itself here upon the human soul: What is the cause of this impotence of so-called advanced views, in the face of some positive task? Shortly before the great catastrophe of the World-War, in the spring of 1914, I ventured to answer this question in a short series of lectures which I delivered in Vienna before a small audience. A larger number of hearers would probably have treated what was said with ridicule. In regard to all the assumptions of the so-called experts in practical affairs as to the immediate future, I ventured to say that an exact observer of the inner life of humanity could see in the social conditions prevailing all over the civilized world something like an abscess, like a social disease, a kind of cancerous growth, which must inevitably very soon break out in a terrible manner over this world. Those practical statesmen, who were then talking of the "improvement in political relations" and the like, looked upon this as the pessimism of an idealist. But that was the utterance of a conviction gained by a study of human evolution from the point of view of spiritual science, which I will describe to you this evening. To this kind of research the building known as the Dornach Building, the Goetheanum, is dedicated. Situated in the corner of the northwest of Switzerland, this building is the outer representative of the movement whose object is the study of the spiritual science of which I speak. You will hear and read all kinds of assertions about the aims and object of this building and the meaning of the movement which it is intended to represent. And it may be said in most cases that the gossip about these things is the very opposite of the truth; mysterious nonsense, false and senseless mysticism, many varieties of obscure nonsense are attached to the work attempted by this movement in the building at Dornach representing it. It cannot be expected that anything but misunderstandings without number should still exist regarding this movement of spiritual life. In reality, the meaning of the movement is to be found in its striving with set purpose to bring about a renewal of our whole civilization, as it is expressed in art, religion, science,

education, and other human activities; in fact, it may truly be said that a renewal is sorely needed from the very foundations of social life upwards. *This stream of spiritual life leads us to the conviction, already indicated by me. in these lectures, that it is no longer of any use to devise net schemes for world-improvement; from its very nature, human evolution demands a transformation of thoughts and ideas, of the most intimate life of feeling of humanity itself.* Such a transformation is the aim of spiritual science, as it is represented in this movement. Spiritual science stimulates the belief that the views of society, of which we have just spoken, proceed from the old habits of thought which have not kept pace with the evolution of humanity and are no longer suited to its present life. These views have been clearly proved useless in aiding the reconstruction of social life.

What we need is understanding. What is really the meaning of all the subconscious yearnings, of the demands, which have not yet penetrated into the conscious thought of our present humanity? What do they mean, above all things, with regard to art, with regard to science, religion, and education? Let us look at the new directions followed by art, especially of late! I know well that in giving the following little sketch of the development of art, I must inevitably give offence to many; indeed, what I am going to say will be taken by many as a proof of the most complete lack of understanding of the later schools of art.

If we except a few isolated, very commendable efforts of recent years, the chief characteristic in the development of modern art is that it has lost that inner impulse which should drive it to place before the world that which is felt by humanity as a pressing need. The opinion has grown more and more common that, in contemplating a work of art. we must ask: How much of the spirit and significance of outer reality does it express? How far is external nature or human life reflected in art? One need only ask, what meaning has such a criterion with respect to a “Raphael”, or a “Leonardo”, or to any other real work of art? Do we not see in such great works of art that the resemblance to the outer reality surrounding us is by no means the measure of their greatness? Do we not see the measure of their greatness in the creation of something from within that is far removed from the immediate outer reality? What worlds are those that unroll before us as we gaze at the now almost effaced picture at Milan, Leonardo's *Last Supper*, or when we stand before a “Raphael”? Is it not a matter of secondary importance that those painters have succeeded more or less well in depicting the laws of nature in their work? *Is it not their chief aim to tell us something of a, world which we do not see when we only use our eyes, when, we perceive only with our outer senses?* And do we not find more and more that the only criterion now applied in judging a, work of art, or in judging anything artistic, is whether the thing is really true, and “true” here is to be understood in the ordinary naturalistic sense of the word. Let us ask ourselves — strange as the question may appear to the holders of certain artistic views — what does an art confer on life, actually on social life, what is an art, which aspires to nothing higher, than the reproduction of a part of external reality?

At the time in which modern capitalism and modern technical science became a power, landscape painting began to be developed in the world of art. I know, of course, that landscape painting is justified, fully justified from an artistic point of view. But it is also true, that no artistically perfect landscape painting, however perfect, equals in any sense the scene lying before me, as I stand on a mountain side and contemplate Nature's: own landscape. Precisely the rise of landscape painting shows to what an extent art has taken refuge in the mere imitation of nature, which it can never equal. Art turned to landscape

painting because it had lost touch with the spiritual world; it could no longer create out of the spiritual and supersensible world., What will be the future of art, if it is inspired only by the recent impulses toward naturalistic art? Art such as this can never grow out of life, as a flower grows from its roots; it will be a luxury outside life, an object of desire for those only for whom life has no cares. Is it not comprehensible that people who are absorbed in the pressing cares of life from morning till evening, who are shut off from all culture, the object of which is the understanding of art, should feel themselves separated as by an abyss from art? Though one hardly dare to put the sentiment into words now-a-days, because to many it would stamp the speaker as a philistine, it is distinctly evident in social life that great numbers of people look on art as something remote, and unconsciously feel it to be a luxury of life, something that does not belong to every human life, and to every existence worthy of a human being, although, in truth, it brings completion to every human life worthy of the name.

Naturalistic art will always be in one sense a luxury for those whose lives are free from care, and who are able to educate themselves in that art. I felt this when I was teaching for some years in a working-men's college, where I had the opportunity of addressing the workers themselves directly in order to help them understand the socialist theories which were being instilled into their minds, to their ruin, by those who called themselves "leaders of the people." I learnt to understand — forgive the personal remark — what it means to bring scientific knowledge from a purely human standpoint (See: [Appendix VII](#)) within reach of those unspoiled minds. From a longing to know something also about modern art a request was made by my students that I take them through the museums and picture galleries on Sundays. Though it was possible, of course, to explain a great deal to them, since they had themselves the desire to be educated, I knew quite well that what I said did not at all make the same impression on these minds as did the things that I had told them from the standpoint of universal humanity. I felt that it would be a cultural untruth to tell them about the luxury art of the later naturalistic school, so far removed from actual life. This on the one hand.

On the other hand, do we not see, how art has lost its connection with life? Here, too, praiseworthy endeavors have come to light in the last few decades; but these have been by no means decided enough, though much has been done in the direction of industrial art. We see how inartistic our everyday surroundings have become. Art has made an illusory progress. All the buildings around us with which we come in contact in our daily routine are as devoid of artistic beauty as possible. Practical life cannot be raised to artistic form, because art has separated itself from life. Art which merely imitates nature cannot design tables and chairs and other articles of utility in such a manner that when we see them, we at once have the feeling of something artistic. These objects must transcend nature as human life transcends itself. If art merely imitates, it fails in the shaping of practical life, and practical life thereby becomes prosaic, uninteresting and dry, because we are unable to give it an artistic form and to surround ourselves with beautiful objects in our everyday lives.

This might be further amplified. I shall only indicate the decided direction which the evolution of our art has nevertheless taken. In like manner we have moved in other domains of modern civilization. Have we not seen that science has gradually ceased to proclaim to us the foundation which lies at the base of all sense-life? Little wonder that art

has not found the way out of the world of sense since science itself has lost that way. By degrees science has come to the point of merely registering the outer facts of the senses, or at most to comprise them in natural laws. Intellectualism of the most pronounced type has over-spread all modern scientific activity to an ever increasing degree, and a terrible fear prevails among scientists lest they should be unable to exclude everything but intellectualism in their research, lest something like imaginative or artistic intuitions should perchance find their way into science. It is easy to see by what is said and written on this subject by scientists themselves how great is the terror they experience at the thought that any other means than the dry, sober intellect and the investigation by sense-perception should find entrance into scientific research. In every activity which does not keep strictly to intellectual thought men do not get far enough away from outer reality to judge it correctly. Thus the modern researcher, the modern scientist, strives to carry on his work by intellectualism only; because he believes he can by this means get away far enough from the reality to judge it, as he says, quite objectively. Here the question might perhaps be asked: Is it not possible through intellectualism to get so far away from reality that we can no longer experience it? And it is this intellectualism, above all, which has made it impossible for us to conquer reality by science, as I have already indicated in these lectures and into which I will enter more fully today.

Turning to the religious life: with what mistrust and disapproval is every attempt to penetrate into the spiritual world by means of spiritual science received by the religious communities! On what grounds? People are quite ignorant of the reason of their disapproval. From official quarters we learn of a science which is determined to keep to the mere world of the senses, and we hear that in these official quarters the claim is apparently allowed that it is only in this way that strict and true scientific knowledge can be attained. But the student of historical evolution does not view the matter in this light. To him it appears that for the last few centuries the religious bodies have more and more laid claim to be the only authority in matters relating to the spirit and soul, and have recognized as valid only those opinions which they themselves permit the people to hold. Under the influence of this claim to the monopoly of knowledge by the Church, the sciences have neglected the study of everything except the outer sense-perceptions, or at most they have attempted to penetrate into the higher regions with a few abstract conceptions. They believe they are doing this purely in the interests of exact science, and do not dream that they are influenced by the Church's pretension to the monopoly of knowledge, the knowledge of the spirit and the soul as contained in their religious creeds. What has been forbidden to the sciences for centuries, the sciences themselves now declare to be an absolute condition for the exactness of their research, for the objective truth of their work. Thus it has happened that the religious communities having failed to develop their insight into the world of soul and spirit, and having preserved the old traditions, now see in the new methods of spiritual research, in the new paths of approach to the soul and spirit, an enemy to all religion, whereas they ought to recognize in these new methods the very best friends of religion.

We shall now speak of these three regions of culture, art, science, and religion. For it is the mission of Anthroposophy or spiritual science to build up a new structure in these three regions of culture. To explain what I mean, I must indicate in a few words the vital point of spiritual science. Its premises are very different from those of science as it is commonly known today. It fully recognizes the methods of modern science, fully recognizes also the

triumphs of modern science. But because spiritual science believes it understands the methods of research of modern science better than the scientists themselves, it feels compelled to take other ways for the attainment of knowledge regarding spirit and soul than those which are still regarded by large numbers of people as the only right ones. In consequence of the enormous prejudice entertained against all research into the higher worlds, great errors and misunderstandings have been spread abroad regarding the aims of the Dornach movement. That here is truly no false mysticism, nothing in any way obscure in this movement, is plainly evident in my endeavors in the beginning of the 'nineties, which formed the starting-point for the spiritual-scientific movement to which I allude, and of which the Building at Dornach is the representative. At that time I collected the material which seemed to me then most necessary for the social enlightenment of today in my ***Philosophy of Spiritual Activity***. Whoever reads that book will hardly accuse the spiritual science of which I speak of false mysticism; but he may see what a difference there is between the idea of human freedom contained in my book and the idea of freedom as an impulse prevalent in our modern civilization.

As an example of the latter, I might give Woodrow Wilson's idea of freedom; an extraordinary one, but very characteristic of the culture, the civilization of our age. He is honest in his demand for freedom for the political life of the present day. But what does he mean by freedom? We arrive at an understanding of his meaning when we read words like the following: 'A ship moves freely,' he says, 'when it is adapted to all the forces which act upon it from the wind, from the waves, and so on. When its construction is exactly adapted to its environment, no hindrance to its progress can arise through the forces of wind or wave. Man must also be able to move freely through life, by adapting himself to the forces with which he comes in contact in life, so that no hindrance may ever come to him from any direction.' He also compares the life of a free human being with a part of a machine, saying: 'We say of a part, built into a machine, that it can move freely when it has no connection with anything anywhere; and when the rest of the machine is so constructed that this part runs freely within it.' I have just one thing to say to this; we can only speak of freedom with regard to the human being when we see in it the very opposite of such an adaptation to the environment, we can only speak of human freedom when we compare it, not with the freedom of a ship on the sea, perfectly adapted to the forces of wind and weather, but when we compare it with the freedom of a ship that can stop and turn against wind and weather, and can do so without regarding the forces to which it is adapted. That is to say, at the bottom of such an idea of freedom as this lies the whole mechanical conception of the world, yet at the present day it is considered to be the only possible one. This world-conception is the result of the mere intellectualism of modern times. In my ***Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*** *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* I have felt compelled to take a stand against views of this kind. I know very well — forgive another personal remark — that this book has fragments of the European philosophical conception of the world, out of which it is born, still clinging to it, as a chicken sometimes retains fragments of the eggshell from which it has emerged. For the book has, of course, grown out of European philosophical world-conceptions. It was necessary to show in that book the erroneous thought in those world-conceptions. For this reason the book may appear to some to be pedantic, though this was by no means my intention. The contents are intended to work as an impulse in the immediate practice of life, so that, through the ideas developed in that book, the impulse thus generated in the human will may flow directly



into human life.

For this reason, however, I was obliged to state the problem of human freedom quite differently from the usual manner of doing so wherever we turn, throughout the centuries of human evolution, the question regarding the freedom of human will and of the human being has been: Is man free, or is he not free? I was under the necessity of showing that the question in this form was wrongly framed and must be put from a different standpoint. For if we take that which modern science and modern human consciousness look upon as the *real self*, but which ought to be regarded as the *natural self*, then, certainly, that being can never be free. That self must act of inner necessity. Were man only that which he is held to be by modern science, then his idea of freedom would be the same as that of Woodrow Wilson's. But this would be no real freedom; it would be only what might be called with every single action the inevitable result of natural causes. But modern human consciousness is not much aware of the other self within the human being where the problem regarding freedom really begins. Modern human consciousness is only aware of the *natural self* in man; it regards him as a being subject to natural causality. But those who penetrate more deeply into the human being must reflect that man can become something more in the course of his life than that with which nature has endowed him. We first discover what the human being really is, when we recognize that one part of him is that with which he is born, and all that which he has inherited; the other part is that which he does not owe to his bodily nature, but which he can make of himself by awakening the *real self* slumbering within him. Because these things are true I have not asked: Is man free or not free? I have stated the question in the following way: Can man become a free being through inner development, or can he not? And the answer is: He can become free if he develops within himself that which otherwise slumbers, but can be awakened; he can only then become free. Man's freedom is not a gift of nature. Freedom belongs to that part of man which he can, and must, awaken within himself. But *if* the ideas contained in my ***Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*** are to be further developed and applied to external social life, so that these truths may become clear to a larger circle of people, it will be necessary to build a superstructure of the truths of spiritual science on the foundation of that philosophy. It had to be shown that by taking his evolution into his own hands, man is really able to awaken a slumbering being within him. I endeavored to do this in my book, ***Knowledge of the Higher Worlds***, and in the other books which I have contributed to the literature of spiritual science. In these books I tried to show that the human being can indeed take his own evolution in hand and that only by so doing, and thus making of it something different from that to which he is born, can he rise to a real knowledge of soul and spirit. It is true that this view is considered by a large part of humanity at the present day to be a most unattractive one. For what does it presuppose? It presupposes that we attain to something like intellectual humility. But few desire this today. I will explain what I mean by this quality of intellectual humility, to which we must attain.

Suppose we give a volume of Goethe's lyric poems to a child of five. The child will certainly not treat the book as it deserves; he will tear it to pieces, or spoil it in some other way. In any case he does not know how to value such a book. But suppose the child to have grown ten or twelve years older, that he has been taught. and trained; then he will treat Goethe's lyric poems in a different manner. And yet there is no great difference externally between a child of five and one of twelve or fourteen with a book of Goethe's poems before him. The difference lies within the child. He has developed so that he knows what to do

with such a volume. As the child feels towards the volume of Goethe's lyrics, so must the man feel towards nature, the cosmos, the whole universe, when he begins to think seriously of soul and spirit. He must acknowledge to himself that, in order to read and understand what is written in the book of nature and the universe, he must do his utmost to develop his inner self, just as the five-year-old child must be taught in order to understand Goethe's lyric poems. *We must acknowledge with intellectual humility our impotence to penetrate the universe with understanding by means of the natural gifts with which we are born; and we must then admit that there may be ways of self-development and of unfolding the inner powers of our being to see in that which lies spread out before the senses the living spirit and the living soul.* My writings to which I have referred show that it is possible to put this in practice. This must be said, because intellectualism, the fruit of evolution of the last few centuries, is no longer able to solve the riddles of life. Into one region of life, that of inanimate nature, it is able to penetrate, but it is compelled to halt before human reality, more especially social reality.

That quality which I have called intellectual humility must be the groundwork of every true modern conception of the impulse towards freedom. It must also be the groundwork of all real insight into the transformation necessary in art, religion, and science. Here intellectuality has plainly, only too plainly, shown that it can attain no real knowledge which truly perceives and attains to the things of the soul and spirit. As I have already pointed out, it has confined itself to the outer world of the senses and to the combining and systematizing of perceptions. Hence it has been unable to prevail against the pretensions of the religious bodies, which have also not attained to a new knowledge of matters pertaining to the soul and spirit, but have on this account carried into modern times an antiquated view, unsuited to the age. But one thing must be conquered, that is the fear I have already described, the fear that we might become too much involved in the objects of the senses, in our endeavors to gain a spiritual knowledge of them. It is so easy to call oneself a follower of intellectualism, because, when we occupy ourselves merely with abstract ideas, even of modern science, we are so far removed from the reality that we only view it in perspective, and there is no danger of our being in any way influenced by the reality. But with the knowledge that is meant here, which we gain for ourselves when we take our own evolution in hand, with such knowledge we must descend into the realities of life, we must plunge into the profoundest depths of our own nature, deeper than those reached by mere self-training in intellectualism. Within the bounds of intellectualism, we only reach the upper strata of our own life. If with the help of the knowledge here spoken of, we descend into the depths of our own inner nature, we find there not only thoughts and feelings, a mere reflection of the outer world, we find there happenings, facts of our inner being, from which the merely intellectual thinker would recoil in horror; but which are of the same kind as those within nature herself, of the same kind as those which happen in the world. Then, within our own nature, we learn to know the nature of the world. We cannot learn to know that life of the world if we go no further than mere abstract conceptions or the laws of nature. We must penetrate so far that our own inmost being becomes one with reality. We must not fear to approach reality; our inner development must carry us so far that we can stand firm in the presence of reality, without being consumed, or scorched, or suffocated. When we stand in the presence of reality, no longer held at a distance by the intellect, we are able to grasp the truth of things. Thus we find described in my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, the inner development of the human being to the stage of spiritual

knowledge at which he becomes one with reality, but in such wise that, being merged in reality, he can imbibe from it knowledge which is not a distant perception by means of the intellect, but is instead saturated with reality itself and for this reason can merge with it.

You will find that one characteristic feature of the spiritual science which occupies us here is that it can plunge into reality, that it does not merely speak of an abstract spirit, but of the real, tangible spirit, living in our environment surrounding us just as the things of the sense-world surround us. Abstract observations are the fruit of modern intellectualism. Take up any new work, with the exception of pure natural science or pure philosophy, and you will find the conception of life it contains, often a would-be philosophical view, is far removed from actual life or from a real knowledge of things. Read what is said about the will in one of the newer books on psychology, and you will find that there is no profound meaning underlying the words. The ideas of those who devote themselves to such studies have not the power actually to penetrate to the core, even of nature herself. To them matter is a thing outside, because they cannot penetrate it in spirit. I should like to elucidate this by an example.

In one of my last books, *Riddles of the Soul*, (*Von Seelenraetseln*, not translated [yes it is, e.Ed.]. Anthroposophic Press, New York.) I have shown how an opinion of long standing, prevailing in natural science, must be overcome by modern spiritual science. I know how very paradoxical my words must sound to many. But it is just those truths which are able to satisfy the demands — already making themselves heard and becoming more and more insistent as time goes on — for a new kind of thought which will often appear paradoxical, when compared with all that is still looked upon as authoritative. Every modern scientist who has occupied himself with the subject maintains that there are two kinds of nerves (See: *Appendix VIII*) in human and animal life (we are now only concerned with human life), one set, leading from the sense organs to the central organ, is the sensory nerves, which are stimulated by sense-perceptions, the stimulus communicating itself to the nerve center. The second kind of nerves, the so-called motor nerves, pass from the center out to the limbs. These motor-nerves enable us to use our limbs. They are said to be the nerves of volition, while the others are called the sensory nerves.

Now I have shown in my book, *Riddles of the Soul*, though only in outline, that there is no fundamental difference between the sensory and the so-called motor nerves or nerves of volition, and that the latter are not subject to the will. The instances brought forward to support the statement that these nerves are obedient to the will as is shown by the terrible disease of *locomotor ataxia* really prove the exact opposite, which can easily be shown. They, indeed, prove the truth of my contention. These so-called voluntary nerves are also sensitive nerves. While the other sensitive nerves pass from the sense organs to the central organ, so that the outer sense-perceptions may be transmitted to it, the voluntary nerves, as they are called, which do not differ from the other set, perceive that which is movement within ourselves. They are endowed with the perception of movement. There are no voluntary nerves. The will is of a purely spiritual nature, purely spirit and soul, and functions directly as spirit and soul. We use the so-called voluntary nerves, because they are the sensory nerves for the limb which is going to move and must be perceived if the will is to move it. For what reason do I give this example? Because countless treatises on the will exist at the present day, or may be read and heard, in which the will is dealt with. But the ideas developed have not the impelling power to advance to real knowledge, to press



forward to the sight of will in its working. Such knowledge remains abstract and foreign to life. While such ideas are current, modern science will continue to tell us of motor nerves, of nerves of volition. Spiritual science evolves ideas regarding the will which at the same time show us the nature of the physical human nervous system. Spiritual science will penetrate the phenomena and facts of nature. Instead of remaining in regions foreign to life, it will find its way into reality. It will have the courage to permeate material things with the spirit, not to leave them outside as things apart. For spiritual science everything is spiritual. Spiritual science will be able to pierce the surface and penetrate into the social order, and will work for a reality in social life, which baffles our abstract, intellectual natural science. And thus, spiritual science will again proclaim a spiritual knowledge, a new way of penetrating into the psychic and the spiritual in the universe. It will proclaim boldly that those spiritual worlds, represented in pictures envisioned by artists such as Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci, can no longer suffice for us. In accordance with the progress of human evolution, we must find a new way into the spiritual world. But if we learn to understand the spiritual world anew, if we penetrate into that world, not in the nebulous manner of pantheism, by a continual repetition of the word “spirit”, a universal, abstract, vague spirit which “must be there”: if we pierce through to the real phenomena of the spiritual world not by spiritualism, but by the development of the human forces of spirit and soul in the manner described above, then again we shall know of a spiritual world in the only way adapted to the present development of humanity. Then the mysteries of the spiritual world will reveal themselves to us, and then something will happen of which Goethe spoke. Although he was only a beginner in the things which modern spiritual science goes on developing in accordance with his own spirit, but of which he had a premonition, Goethe beautifully expressed that which will happen in the words: *“He to whom nature begins to reveal her open secrets, experiences a profound longing for her worthiest exponent — art.”* Once more will the artist receive a revelation from the spiritual world; he will then no longer be led astray in the belief that his portrayal of spiritual things in a material picture is an abstract, symbolic, lifeless allegory; he will know the living spirit and will be able to express that living spirit through material means. No longer will the perfect imitation of nature be considered the best part of a work of art, but the manifestation of that which the spirit has revealed to the artist. Once more an art will arise, filled with spirit, an art which is in no way symbolical, in no way allegorical, which also does not betray its luxurious character by attempting to rival nature, to the perfection of which it can never attain. It demonstrates its necessity, its justification, in human life by proclaiming the existence of something of which the ordinary, direct beholding of nature, naturalism, can give us no information. And even if the artist's attempt to give expression to something spiritual be but a clumsy effort, he is giving form to something which has a significance, apart from nature, because it transcends nature. He makes no bungling attempts at that which nature can do better than he. A way opens here to that art in which a beginning has been made in the external structure and the external decoration of the Goetheanum at Dornach.

The attempt has been made there to create a University of Spiritual Science for the work to be carried on within it. In all the paintings on the ceilings, the wood carvings, etc., an attempt has been made to give form to all that spiritual science reveals in that building. Hence the building itself is a natural development. No old architectural style could be followed here, because the spirit will be spoken of in a new way within it. Let us look at

nature and consider the shell of a nut; the kernel within determines the form of it; in nature every sheath is formed in accordance with the requirements of the inner core. So the whole of the building at Dornach is formed in consonance with that which as music will one day resound within it; with those mystery dramas which will one day be presented there; with those revelations of spiritual science which will one day be uttered within its walls. Everything described here will echo in the wood carvings, in the pillars, and in the capitals. An art as yet only in its beginnings, which is really horn of a new spirit, altogether born of the spirit, is there represented. The artists who are working there are themselves their own severest critics. In such an undertaking one is, of course, exposed to misunderstandings; this is only natural. Objections are raised against the Dornach Building by visitors, who say: "These anthroposophists have filled their building with symbols and allegories." Other visitors who increase in number from day to day, understand what they see here.

Now the characteristic of the building is that it does not contain a single symbol or allegory; in the work attempted here the spirit has flowed into the immediate artistic form. That which is expressed here has nothing of symbolism, nothing of allegory, but everything is something in its own form. Up to the present we have only been able to build a covering for a spiritual center of work; for external social conditions do not yet permit us to erect a railway station or even a bank building. For reasons, which may perhaps be easily comprehensible to you, we have not yet been able to find the style of a modern bank or of a modern department store; but they must also be found. Above all things, the way must be found along these lines to an artistic shaping of actual practical life.

Just think of the social importance of art, even for our daily bread; for the preparation of bread depends on the manner in which people think and feel.

It is a matter of great and social significance to men, that everything by which they are immediately surrounded in life should take on an artistic form; that every spoon, every glass, should have a form well adapted to its use, instead of a form chosen at random to serve the purpose; that one should see at a glance, from its form, what service a thing performs in life, and at the same time recognize its beauty. Then for the first time large numbers of people will feel spiritual life to be a vital necessity, when spiritual life and practical life are brought into direct connection with each other. As spiritual science is able to throw light on the nature of matter, as I have shown in the example of the sensory and motor nerves, so will art, born of spiritual science, attain to the power of giving direct form to every chair, every table, to every man-created object.

Since it is plainly evident that the gravest prejudices and misunderstandings come from the churches, we may ask: What is the position finally reached by the religious creeds? If they have any justification at all, they must have a connection by their very nature with the spiritual world. But they have preserved into our period of time old traditions of these worlds, grown out of very different conditions of the human soul. Spiritual science strives to advance to the spiritual world, in accordance with the new mode of thought, with the new life of the soul. Should this be condemned by the religious sentiment of humanity, if it understands itself aright? Is such a thing possible? Never! What is the real aim of religious sentiment and of all religious work? Certainly not the proclamation of theories and dogmas pertaining to the higher worlds. The aim of all religious work should be to give all men an

opportunity to look up with reverence to higher worlds. The work of religion is to inculcate reverence for the supersensible. Human nature needs this reverence. It needs to look up in reverence to the sublime in the spiritual worlds. If human nature is denied the present mode of entrance, then, of course, the old way must still be kept open. But since this way is no longer suited to the thoughts of our day, it must be enforced, its recognition must be imposed by authority. Hence the external character of religious teaching as applied to modern human nature. An antiquated outlook on the higher worlds is imposed by the religious teachers.

Let us suppose that there are communities in which an understanding exists of the true nature of religion consisting in reverence for spiritual things. Must it not be to the highest interest of, such communities that their members should develop a living knowledge of the unseen world? Will not those whose souls contain a vision of the supersensible, whose knowledge gives them a familiarity with those worlds be the most likely to reverence them? Since the middle of the fifteenth century human evolution has taken the line of development of the individuality, of the personality. To expect of anyone today that he should attain a vision or an understanding of the higher worlds on authority, or in any other way than by the force of his own individuality or personality, is to expect of him something which is against his nature. If he is allowed freedom of thought with respect to his knowledge of the supersensible he will unite with his fellow-men in order that reverence for the spiritual world, which everyone recognizes in his own personal way, may be encouraged in the community. When men have attained freedom of thought to approach knowledge of the spiritual world through their own individuality, then the common service of the higher worlds, true religion, will flourish.

This will show itself especially in the conception of the Christ Himself. This conception was very different in earlier centuries from that even of many theologians of the later centuries, especially of the nineteenth. How greatly has humanity fallen away from the perception of the true supersensible nature of the Christ, who lived in the man Jesus! How far is it removed from the understanding of that union of a supersensible being with a human body, through the Mystery of Golgotha, in order that the earth in its development might have a deeper meaning! That union of the supersensible with the things of the senses, which was consummated in the Mystery of Golgotha, how little has it been understood even by theologians of a certain type in recent times! The man of Nazareth has been designated “the simple man of Nazareth”, the conception of religion has become more and more materialistic. Since no one was able to find a way into the higher worlds, suited to modern humanity, the supersensible path to the Christ-Being was lost. Many who now believe that they are in communion with the Christ, only *believe* this. They do not dream how little their thought of Christ and their words concerning Him correspond to the experiences of those who draw near to the great Mystery of Humanity with a spiritual knowledge that is suited to our time.

It must be said that spiritual science makes absolutely no pretension of founding a new religion. It is a science, a source of knowledge; but we ought to recognize in it the means for a rejuvenescence of the religious life of humanity. As it can rejuvenate science and art, so can it also renew religious life, the very great importance of which must lie apparent to anyone who can appreciate the extreme gravity of the social future. Much, very much has been said recently on the subject of education, yet it must be acknowledged that a large

part of the discussion does not touch the chief problem. I endeavored to deal with this problem in a series of educational lectures which I was asked to deliver to the teachers who are to form the staff of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart, which was founded last September [1919], in conformity with ideas underlying the Threefold Social Order.

At the foundation of the school I not only endeavored to give shape to externals, corresponding to the requirements and the impulse of the Threefold Order; I also strove to present pedagogy and didactics to the teaching-staff of this new kind of school in such a light that the human being would be educated to face life and be able to bring about a social future in accordance with certain unconquerable instincts in human nature. It is evident that the old-fashioned system of normal training, with its stereotyped rules and methods of teaching, must be superseded. It is true nowadays that many people agree that the individuality of the pupil ought to be taken into account in teaching. All sorts of rules are produced for the proper consideration of the child's individuality. But the pedagogy of the future will not be a normal science; it will be a true art, the art of developing the human being. It will rest upon a knowledge of the whole man. The teacher of the future will know that in the human being before him, who carries on development from birth through all the years of life, a spirit and soul element is working through the organs out to the surface. From the first year of school, he will see how every year new forces evolve from the depths of the child's nature. No abstract normal training can confirm this sight; only a living perception of human nature itself. Much has been said of late on the subject of instruction through observation and, within certain limits, this kind of tuition is justified. But there are things which cannot be communicated through external observation, yet which must be communicated to the growing child; but they can only be so communicated when the teacher, the educator, is animated by a true understanding of the growing human being, when he is able to see the inner growth of the child as it changes with every succeeding year; when he knows what the inner nature of the human being requires in the seventh, ninth, and twelfth years of his life. For only when education is carried on in accordance with nature, can the child grow strong for the battle of life. One comes in contact with many shattered lives at the present day, many who do not know what to make of life, to whom it has nothing to offer. There are many more people who suffer from such disrupted lives than is commonly known. What is the reason? It is because the teacher is unable to take note of important laws of the evolving human being. I will give only one instance of what I mean. How very often do we hear well-meaning teachers say emphatically that one should develop in the child a clear understanding of what is being offered him as mental food. The result of this method in practice is banality, triviality! The teacher descends artificially to the understanding of the child, and that manner of teaching has already become instinctive. If it is persisted in, and the child is trained in this false clarity of understanding, what is overlooked? A teacher of this kind does not know what it means to a man, say thirty-five years of age, who looks back to his childhood and remembers: "My teacher told me such and such a thing when I was nine or ten years old; I believed it because I looked up with reverence to the authority of my teacher, and because there was a living force in his personality through which I was impressed by his words. Now, looking back, I find that his words have lived on in me; now I can understand them." A marvellous light is shed on life by such an event, when through inner development we can look back in our thirty-fifth year at the lessons we have learnt out of love for our teacher which we could not understand at the time. That light, which is a force in life, is lost when the teacher descends

to the banality of the object-lesson, which is praised as an ideal method. The teacher must know what forces should be developed in the child, in order that the forces which are already in his nature, may remain with him throughout his life. Then the child need not merely recall to memory what he learnt between his seventh and fifteenth years; what he then learnt is renewed again and again, and wears a new aspect in each successive stage of life. What the child learnt is renewed at every later epoch of life.

The foregoing is an effort to place before you an idea of the fundamental character of a system of pedagogy which, if followed, may truly grow into an art; by its practice the human being may take his place in life and find himself equal to all the demands of the social future. However much people may vaunt their social ideals, there are few who are at all capable of surveying life as a whole. But in the carrying out of social ideals, a wide outlook on life is indispensable. People speak, for instance, of transferring the means of production to the ownership of the community and believe that by withdrawing them from the administration of the individual human being, much would be accomplished. I have already spoken on this point, and will go into the subject again more thoroughly in the following lectures. But assuming for a moment that it is possible to transfer the means of production to the ownership of the community at once, do you suppose that the community of the next generation would still own them? No! For even if the means of production were transmitted to the next generation, it would be done without taking into account the fact that this next generation would develop new and fruitful forces, which would transform the whole system of production, and thus render the old means useless. If we have any idea of molding social life, we must take part in life in its fullness, in all its phases. From a conception of man as a being composed of body, soul, and spirit, and from a real understanding of body, soul, and spirit, a new art of education will arise, an art which may truly be regarded as a necessity in social life.

Arising from this way of thinking, something has developed within the spiritual movement, centered at Dornach, which has to a great extent met with misunderstanding. There are a number of persons who have learnt in the course of years to think not unfavorably of our spiritual-scientific movement. But when we recently began, in Zurich and elsewhere, to give representations of the art known as eurythmy, an art springing naturally out of spiritual science itself, but, as we are fully aware, as yet only in its infancy, people began to exclaim that after all, spiritual science cannot be worth much, for to introduce such antics as an accompaniment to spiritual science only shows that the latter is completely crazy. In such a matter as this, people do not consider how paradoxical anything must appear which works towards reconstituting the world on the basis of spiritual science. This art of eurythmy is a social art in the best sense; for its aim is, above all things, to communicate to us the mysteries of human nature. It uses the capacities for movement latent in the human being, bringing to expression these movements in a manner to be explained at the next representation of the eurythmic art. I will only mention here that eurythmy is a true art; for it reveals the deepest secrets of human art itself by bringing to evidence a true speech, a visible speech expressed by the whole human being. But beside the mere movements of the body, founded on physiological science and a study of the structure of the human form, eurythmy presents to us at the same time a capacity of movement through which man, ensouled and inspired, yields himself up to movement. The purely physiological, gymnastic exercises of our materialistic age may also be taught to children, and they are now taught in the Waldorf School of which I have spoken. Ensouled



movement, however, actually employs the whole being, while gymnastics on physiological, merely material lines employs only a part of the whole nature of the human being, and therefore, unless supplemented by eurythmy, allows much to degenerate in the growing human being. Out of the depths of human nature spiritual life in a new form must enter into the most important branches of life.

It will be my task in the next few days to show how external life may really be given a new form in the present and for the future, when the impulse for the change comes from such a new spirit. Many people of all sorts, noteworthy people, feel today the necessity of understanding spiritually the modern pressing demands of social life. It is painful to see the number of people who are still asleep as regards these demands, and the many others who approach them in a confused way as agitators. We find faint indications of a feeling that none of the mere superficial programs can be of any use without a change of thought, of ideas, a new mode of learning from the spirit. But in many cases how superficial is the expression of that longing for a new spirit! We may say that the yearning for a new spirit is dimly and imperceptibly felt here and there in remarkable men, who most certainly have no idea of that which the Dornach Building represents in the outer world. But the expression of a longing for this new spirit can be heard. I will give one out of many examples of this.

In addition to the numerous memoirs published in connection with the disaster of the World War just ended, those of the Austrian Statesman, Czernin, will soon appear. This book promises to be extremely interesting. It is difficult to express what I wish to say without the risk of being misunderstood; I mean that it is interesting, because Czernin was a good deal less pretentious than the others who up to now have given expression to their opinions on the War, and he should therefore be leniently judged. In this book of Czernin's we may read something like the following passage:

‘The War continues, though in another form. I believe that coming generations will not call this great drama which has held the world in thrall for five years, the World-War; they will call it the world-revolution and they will know that the world-revolution only began with the World-War. Neither the Peace of Versailles nor that of St. Germain will create a lasting effect. This peace contains within it the destructive germ of death. The conflicts which shake Europe are not yet on the wane. As in a mighty earthquake, the subterranean rumbling still goes on. Now here, now there, the earth will continue to open and hurl fire towards heaven. Again and again events of elemental vehemence will sweep over the lands, bringing destruction in their train, till everything has been swept away, reminiscent of the madness of this War. Slowly, out of: unspeakable sacrifice, a new world will be born. Coming generations will look back to our times as to a long, terrible dream. But the darkest night is followed by the dawn. Generations have sunk into graves, murdered, starved, victims of disease. Millions have died in the effort to annihilate, to destroy, their hearts filled, with hatred and murder. But other generations will arise, and with them a new spirit. They will build up, what war and revolution have destroyed. Every winter is followed by spring. It is an eternal law in the circuit of life that resurrection follows death. Happy those who are called upon to cooperate as soldiers of labor in the work of rebuilding the world.’

Even this man speaks of a new spirit. But this new spirit only a shadowy conception, a dim presentiment in heads like In order that this new spirit may take hold of the hearts, of minds, of the souls of men in a really concrete form, the spiritual science and the art of education of which I wished to s today in connection with human evolution, will labor for the social future of humanity.