



The
MODERN
SCHOOL

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TO LIBERTARIAN IDEAS IN EDUCATION

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EDITORIAL NOTE

THE cost of building the new School House far exceeded the original estimate. It will run to \$16,000.00 and so strained our strength and resources that a number of things in connection with the school have suffered; among these has been the magazine. We will do our best, but can not promise it will appear regularly for a while. In the meantime subscribers will receive a number of copies equivalent to their subscription, and we hope they will appreciate the contents and the difficulties we are laboring under.

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PEACE

Peace is a glorified light,
Which shines by any sunlit brook
Or at the benches of all carpenters,
Who fashion with delight.
The carpenters are kindly men
Who carve themselves into their workmanship;
They may be hewers, husbandmen or smiths of any craft.
They see the line of harmony and follow with their tools,
Tracing the merriment of ripples,
Or the long, ascending curve of some skyline.
They have their inspiration in their daily rounds,
Which are the more intense if they but bathe in
daybreak's glow,
Or seek the sod whenever they are weary.
For men are but winged seedlings, as of the maple tree,
Strewn by a wayward wind upon a soil,
Where they may happily survive
Only through friendliness for what surrounds them.

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They have their nurture at that hour when they have
yielded most,
And but execute the eternal revelation of every clod
Or timbered knoll
Or the magnificent vault of heaven,
According to their communion.
Therefore the way of life is an irradiant way,
And whoso walks at noonday with the sun and does as
he beholds
Whether unto his beast, or on the chiseled block or at
the forge,
That man is touched with divinity
And knows the way of peace.

SHERWOOD TRASK



BASKETRY IN THE MODERN SCHOOL

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"CLASS" in our school resembles rather a friendly meeting where workers, big ones and small ones, meet to work out certain things in which they are interested. We, that is to say a group of boys and girls and myself, are getting together every morning in our "classroom" on the stage of the new school house, to make baskets. That is not as easy as you may think at first: muscles are required, and technique, and endurance [and don't mind your manicured finger nails, either.] Without guidance or suggestion from any teacher--in this case the teacher knows but little more than the pupils--we try to work out whatever basket we may have in mind. The initiative of each individual child is thus called out, making the work true self expression. The development of any human being always corresponds, as it were, with the accomplishment of his work, his work being the material manifestation of his inner state. This is true in craft work as well as in art.

Naturally, we workers on baskets do not turn out two baskets alike. They all vary. There are straight ones and crooked ones, there are those of a strong and firm weave, while others are loose and shapeless; there are the big ones and the tiny ones intended for dolls. Little Mary has a special "nack" at the latter.

The way we learn is by comparison, and the pride or dissatisfaction we feel in our own work. I do not think that the spirit of competition ever enters. Competition

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is bad: it places one in a wrong attitude toward the fellow-worker.

Now, here comes--well, what's in a name? He is a fellow full of ambition. His imagination is strong, as Alexis points out, stronger than the patience needed for the material result. One day, however, in spite of himself you may say, and because baskets give you quick results anyway, this boy finished a very fine bread basket. This encouragement may have given him the self-confidence needed, for he has accomplished other work since, well finished, as even those who were rather pessimistic about him must admit.

While I am in the class experimenting on a lamp-shade, trying hard to get it into shape, little Max feels he needs some one to "hold on" to the spokes so he can make a start. Clara wants encouragement, for her basket is getting all "loosened up," while Roselyn suggests winding purple raffia around the "weaver" so as to bring in some color. Dorothy vows she will never try another basket, "because-----!" She changes her mind after she is helped over the difficulty. "I am going to start a basket this morning, Auntie Anna." "No, Harry, not to-day; come to-morrow after the assembly; we must put things away now, it is lunch hour." Some exclamations: "Oh, say! May I just finish this one little reed?" "Why, no, children; there is Jimmy, now, with the broom to sweep up. Who is helping to pick up the material that is dropped on the floor?" At this point the enthusiasm is decidedly going down, some how. Usually the gathering is dispersing right and left, and rather hurriedly, leaving me behind with some sad thoughts on co-operation and mutual help.

ANNA KOCH-RIEDEL



HARRY KELLY'S BIRTHDAY



AM asked to describe the celebration of Harry Kelly's fiftieth birthday. I should like to say that I saw it as a child: red candles in an orange room, one hundred and thirty eaters at long boards on trestles, the children banging to their hearts' content on the adjacent stage or clamoring the length of the room for cake.

But, though I do cut jinks and relish swimming in a mud hole, I am not as a child. At Harry's party I heard things that were not said; saw sights to which the child would be oblivious; for instance, the fifty divergent and dietetic glances following in his wake when he disrupted the speaking to run crying after cake.

I say I heard things that were not said. For Stelton speakers are not their best at laudation. What I heard

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was the unconsciously-given tribute to Harry. Here was but his dream six years ago, hen coops five years ago, shacks four years ago, and so on. Here now is a jumble of things for which he is held sponsor: volunteers going out Sunday mornings to dig a swimming pool and of ooze absorbing the better part of the pool, of cinders laid down and washed off, of ditches dug and not dug, a school-house left open one winter to all the blizzards that blow, squabbles over paint and decoration, jerry-building here, trussing up and doing over there. Yet at Harry's celebration in January there sat one hundred and thirty people steam-heated—belatedly heated, but heated—in an auditorium where comrades may bob up at convention after convention, and meeting on meeting, to grapple anew these complex perplexities, the draining, the building and whatnot of the foundations for the Free City.

I heard speakers talking much of Harry's size, which has nothing to do with the case, of steadfast optimism which I feel nowise describes him; and of his versatility. There was an obvious endeavor to qualify what each was saying, what sum totally we should say. There was genial criticism of each other's commendations. Here they were getting nearer home, for comrades' forte lies in dissecting dispassionately, passionately, this or that subject. All I can do is to sum up the pros and cons, to strive for the consensus of opinion upon Harry Kelly.

Hippolyte Havel in this number of the magazine describes the mental man. I will confine myself to describing what was said, and what I take it was meant to be said of Harry, as he has expressed himself in Stelton experiments. Always Harry is here, always he sits by,

always he can dash in to figuratively knock the opposition's head off or compassionately throw the fly-wheel off center to start the sawyers sawing wood again. He introduces, if introduction is crucial; he sums up if summation is the thing.

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What is this Stelton and Modern School of which we facetiously sang that night, with Harry its Columbus founder? A colony: steppe-born carpenters, a calf added here, a peppery fellow there, twins born on the second tract, idealism talked everywhere, idealism lived (in part), a spontaneous woodland dance of children flitting in and out, uncaught, untangled, through it all. A school with sixty children: criticized and tacking wrong to many a wind, but sailing on where others dare not venture. There is a magazine, struggling but coming out, and gloriously printed (who can tell how far so because of Harry Kelly's Kelmscott printer dreams?) Here is a grouping of people about a libertarian school, engaged in a multitude of endeavors. Take, for instance, housing. Who knows whether Hugo, the drawing teacher, will modify an adobe type of house from the potter's clay of this marl district, or if the many-windowed Japanese-like huts will prevail; whether long-armed fellows and squat ones shall hoist their roofs and tuck on chambers through personal idiosyncrasy. Or will Harry's own shack, occasionally added to, room by room, finally become that communal, non-barrack dwelling that is to be ours? Who knows whether the bake oven purchased co-operatively by comrades from an army commissary building will become that something more than field kitchen where something more than a communal Saturday night dinner--comparable to the early bourgeois Saturday night bath--will be served? Harry is versatile to the nth power, some of

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his praisers pointed out: his versatility, on which each speaker threw added light, serves as stimulus in all our Stelton activities.

As to optimism? I am mindful of a wrangling staff meeting and a board meeting one week before the dinner; and of a co-operative store meeting with several thousand dollars lost, the experiment scouted, one week after the dinner. What about Harry's optimism here? I should say that out of the weltering of goings to and fro, of our strugglings up and on, Harry's crowfooted twinkle comes finally to prevail over a perplexed brow and incisive tongue; I should say that the underlying consensus of opinion at Harry's birthday celebration was that these experiments, of which he is usually and literally chief cook and bottle washer, go on, barely go on, through him. He ultimately adds the necessary jot of optimism.

Comrade Cohen--Aaron, if Harry is our Moses--felt that we should not make too much of the personal tribute, seeing a man only the personification of a phase of the movement. I feel that he was in part right, joyous as it was to eat with, talk at and sing of Harry's prowess. Harry Kelly, I believe we wanted to say, is not the mainspring of our experiments, for our mainspring is made up of hundreds of brassy-golden endeavorers. Harry Kelly is rather our delicately-balanced hairspring.

SHERWOOD TRASK

HARRY KELLY: AN APPRECIATION

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OME men are endowed with a personality which makes them superior to their fellow citizens. The names of such men seldom gleam from the front page of the daily press, yet they excel in themselves and find their recognition amongst those who are able to appreciate their characteristic qualities.

Their inherent modesty never creates jealousy or envy, and their lives have greater influence and are of greater reality than the lives of those who achieve their fame and fulfill their ambition by kowtowing before their masters and rulers.

Such a man, who excels through his personality among his fellows, is Harry Kelly, at present the organizer of the Ferrer Modern School at Stelton in New Jersey. By birth and occupation Kelly belongs to the working class. Those who are not acquainted with his life fancy that his cradle stood on Emerald Isle of Erin; they are mistaken; Harry May Kelly--to give him his full name--was born in the city of Saint Louis in Missouri. His early years were spent on the banks of the Mississippi. Figuratively speaking, he piloted like Mark Twain a great part of his life on the Father of Waters. Undoubtedly he could relate as many accidents and adventures as did Mark Twain in his "Life on the Mississippi."

On his mother's side Kelly comes from the well-known Calvert clan, whose members to this very day claim as

THE heirloom from Lord Baltimore the site on which is
MODERN built the city proudly carrying the name of that Colonial
SCHOOL Governor.

Among the trades Kelly had to choose from on reaching the wage-earning age, he preferred the art of Guttenburg; he became a printer. As such he had a greater opportunity to get acquainted with social ideas than workers in other trades. It was the period of the Knights of Labor and no thinking worker could stand outside the organized movement against exploitation of labor. Anarchist ideas gained a strong foothold among progressive workers at that time and Anarchist thought soon permeated Kelly's social vision. He became the collaborator of Charles Mowbrey on the "Rebel" in Boston. After the disappearance of that paper, he lighted his own candle; he published a paper called the "Match." The "Match" went out all too suddenly, but while it burned it gave Kelly great pleasure and satisfaction.

A journey to England gave Kelly the impatiently awaited opportunity to get in closer touch with the revolutionary movement in Europe. There, among congenial friends and comrades, he without doubt spent the happiest days of his life. There, among thinkers and propagandists of Anarchism, he fortified his ideal with historical, economical and social facts and data. In Peter Kropotkin he not only found an enthusiastic comrade, but also a great teacher and a sincere friend. His journeys to Bromley in Kent, where Kropotkin lived at that period, Kelly counts as the most blessed hours of his experience in England. He was a collaborator on the "Freedom," now the oldest Anarchist journal in existence; here he worked with mind and brawn

among such well-known Anarchists as Kropotkin, Tcherkesov, Louise Michel, Dr. Max Nettlau and John Turner. A great meeting place for all shades of social rebels was then Tom Mann's hostelry Enterprise in Longacre. One is apt to paraphrase Keats' "Ode to the Mermaid Tavern" of Marlowe's and Shakespeare's fame:

Souls of rebels dead and gone,
What Elysium have you known,
Happy fields or mossy cavern,
Choicer than Tom Mann's Tavern?

Often it has been stated with some levity, and a great deal of acrimony, that Anarchism is the offspring of the ignorance, vice and tyranny of Europe. Even if this were true it would not affect the truth or falsity of what Anarchism represents. Such names as Godwin, Bakunin, Reclus, Kropotkin, Stirner, Proudhon and Tolstoy can lend only lustre to any cause with which they are coupled. But it happens that America has contributed more than her share to the intellectual labor that has made Anarchism the most consistent theory, the most beautiful ideal, and the only practical method of solving the social problem.

The American pedigree includes such names as Jossiah Warren, Lysander Spooner, Nathaniel Greene, Dyer D. Lum, Albert R. Parsons, Voltairine De Cleyre, Ross Winn—to mention only those who went their way into Nirvana, and who during their lifetime achieved prominence as writers, orators or organizers in the labor movement.

Among those who follow in the footsteps of these pioneers, Harry Kelly holds a prominent position. Max

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Nettlau, the historian of the Anarchist movement, says truly:

Kelly is one of the living Anarchists who contribute real thought to the movement, a man who can state his theory of society in scientific, logical and precise manner, and in convincing language.

It is the fashion nowadays to change one's convictions from day to day. Those followers of fashion in social ideas maintain with La Rochefoucauld that only jackasses stick to their convictions through life. Those wiseacres forget, though, that the readiness to leave off one set of convictions in order to assume another set shows a complete indifference to convictions altogether. This weakness of will is a disease which consists not merely in the loss of desire, but in the loss of the capacity to translate desire into deed. Harry Kelly does not belong to those weathercocks; he does not change his convictions according to fleeting fashions; he remains true to his ideals--for that ideal is his very life.

. To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Yet Kelly is not satisfied with having merely a desire; what he is longing for is to translate his desire into deeds. He is not content in having an ideal--he works for the realization of his ideal. Consequently he is always willing to put aside his private life and to act at every opportunity as speaker, organizer or writer, as the occasion requires. Like Francisco Ferrer, the martyred founder of the Modern Schools in Spain, he has to preach the gospel at all times.

It would hardly be possible to enumerate all the occasions on which Kelly participated during the years he spent in the revolutionary movement, at protest meetings, in strikes and demonstrations; and, in the all too often underestimated work of organizing, he always stands in the forefront. A staunch friend of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, he worked with these comrades through many years, ere our wise rulers made the decision to deport them from the shores of America to Soviet Russia on the day of the tercentenary of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers from the Mayflower.

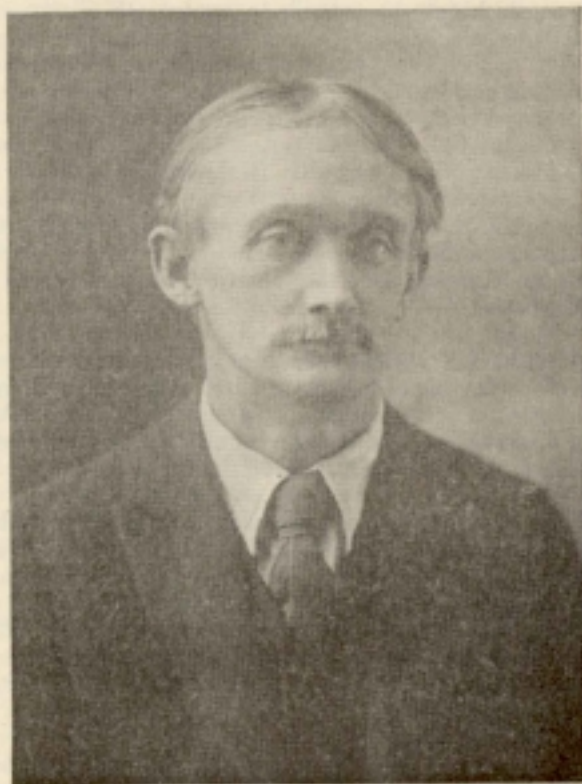
We humans realize only a small part of our dreams; Kelly is fortunate to have realized one of his supreme dreams: a social community and a school for children of proletarian parents in the country, far from the nerve-racking influence of the modern city.

The Ferrer Colony in Stelton is to a great part Harry Kelly's achievement. What an amount of sacrifice, labor and enthusiasm it took to organize a libertarian community only those can estimate who worked with Kelly in that undertaking. Due mainly to the efforts of Harry Kelly, we see today a free community and a free school based on rational education--a free community on a free soil.

Harry Kelly is only fifty years old, and notwithstanding all hardships he encountered during these years, just as young in spirit as on the day he entered the ranks of the militant labor movement. His best work is still ahead of him.

HIPPOLYTE HAVEL

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HARRY KELLY

One of the founders of the Ferrer Modern School
and of the colony at Stelton in the midst of
which the school is located.

HISTORY OF THE WALT WHITMAN SCHOOL

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THE Walt Whitman School, of the Modern School Association, had a small beginning—just as all really good things have. And it was unpremeditated, “untheorized,” so to speak. It was a natural development, not a thing specifically planned out from the start. This is how it all happened:

Three families in Los Angeles, who were forward-looking and progressive, became dissatisfied with the spirit of the public schools to which they were sending their children. They realized that there is something wrong not only in the methods of teaching there, but in the entire atmosphere. They got together and decided to have private instruction for them all.

After six months of trial, the success of the experiment was so apparent, that the promulgators of the idea became fired with the ambition to share their good fortune with others. With the help of Wm. Thurston Brown, who has devoted his entire life-time to the development of sane methods of teaching, the Modern School went through a successful first year. During this time the large grounds and building were purchased, the house thoroly renovated and modernized. Another significant event, indicating the growth and success of the school, is the addition of Professor Paul Jordan Smith to the staff as official Educational Adviser. He believes sufficiently in the methods used and the spirit created in the school to stand sponsor for the educational policies put into practice.

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The Modern School Association is an incorporated organization, consisting of persons interested in the experiment of conducting a school on modern principles. It is financed by dues of members of the association, by tuition fees of the children, and by donations of generous friends.

The Membership dues range anywhere from \$5.00 to \$100.00 per year, each member paying according to his ability and interest in the movement. As the tuition is only nominal, we depend mostly on dues for running expenses. Dues may be paid in full or in installments.





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THE WOODCRAFT COUNCIL



WITH the coming of Spring Joan and Tommy begin to look with longing at the outdoor life of wood and field. It is the time of year when one can plan a very happy and successful outdoor party in which everything done shall be an invitation to go afield and do valiant deeds—seeking deep knowledge in the domain of bear, wolf, squirrel and woodchuck. I have found it possible to delight and instruct dozens of groups of children, from Maine to Porto Rico, by giving a Woodcraft Council. It can be given outdoors or indoors. I have set up my gypsy tent in such diverse places as the roof of a New York hotel, the gymnasium of a great university and by a campfire under the tropic stars. Here at Stelton we have tried the Woodcraft Council many times indoors and outdoors. The children have built themselves a special little outdoor theatre among the trees which is especially dedicated to the memory of the American Indian, that mighty individualist, whom

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the white man could never enslave while he had his own lands and customs. Having selected the day and picked out the place, it is well to give the setting of a forest camp. Perhaps a tent is available or a piece of canvas can be set up with whatever woodsy equipment is at hand (ax, cooking-pots, etc.). Some casual branches can be scattered in front of the tent and all is ready for the Woodcraft Council.

It is well to begin with a story. Let the youngsters sit around on rugs or cushions and have the Story-Teller begin. Of course the children have been told what kind of a party it is, and those who are the proud owners of Indian or scout suits will be sure to wear them.

After half an hour or more of stories, it is time to play some game. Begin with "Find the Possum." To play this game take any small object--it can be a Teddy Bear, a stuffed animal, a cap, a ball, or a glove. "Here is the Possum. When you leave the room I will hide him. When you hear me squeak, come in and try to find Possum. The one who finds him first must call out, 'One!' The one who sees him next calls out, 'Two!' And the third finder calls out, 'Three!' The first finder gets three points, the second two points, the third one point. Ready. Now go!"

The children can play the Possum game until they want something else--perhaps more stories. If there are two large boys with strong backs, or two useful adults, a wonderfully amusing rough and tumble game is "Cavalry Battle." The two large boys get down on hands and knees, facing each other, with a three-foot interval between them on rug or grass. "Now who

wants to challenge any one else to a battle riding on these horses? Bill challenges Ronald. All right. You two are evenly matched. You, Ronald, are lighter, so you have choice of horses. Now, both get on your horse. Lock feet underneath. At the word 'Charge,' the horses will close up and the riders will try to wrestle each other off. Ready, charge! . . . Ronald is down. Bill is champion. Who will challenge Bill? In this game one has to be careful not to tire the horses. If there are several big boys or adults it will be possible to let the riders select their favorite steeds. Horses must not wrestle each other, but they may push, pull and turn and run as proper horses would.

A gentler game is the following: Take a checkerboard or chessboard. Take five white checkers and five red. Let one of the children who is to be tested close his eyes. Then put down five white counters on one side of chessboard. At the word 'Ready' the candidate opens his eyes, studies the checker formation for five seconds, when it is covered up. Then he tries to reproduce it on the other side of the chessboard. If no chessboard is available, you can ask one of the older children to take two squares of paper or cardboard and rule off twenty-five squares on each one.

Hand-wrestling contests come next. The opponents stand facing each other with feet far apart and their right shoes toe to toe. Each grasps the other's right hand. At the word "Go!" they try to unbalance each other. The one who forces the other to move either foot ever so slightly, wins.

Now comes the time to introduce the principal entertainment of the afternoon--the Caribou Dance. This

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is an American Indian folk dance introduced by Ernest T. Seton and was intended by the Red Men to be a sacred ritual by which to attract to their hunting grounds one of those wandering herds of caribou on which the northern tribes so largely depended for food. Certain simple properties are needed for the dance--four caribou horns and four tails. Have ready before the dance begins four branches roughly cut in the shape of horns (see illustration) and four sections of barrel hoop or any curved piece of wood, for tails. Tie a handkerchief on the end of each hoop. This represents the white tuft on the end of caribou's tail. During the dance the horns and tails are held as in the illustration below.



THE CARIBOU DANCE

The music for this dance is very simple. Find a drum or tin basin and have the drummer--someone who understands beating time, a captive pianist will do--beat time for a double step. The four children who are Caribou should be selected for their grace in dancing and their ability to keep in time with the Indian drum. Half a

dozen or so of the remaining children can be hunters. Find two of the party, one to go aside and howl like a wolf, the other opposite to screech like a wildcat. The leader in this game should be, if possible, the adult who beats time. He is known as the Medicine Man. He begins the ceremony by beating on the drum to get silence, then standing up he says, "For many moons the

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THE DRUMMER FOR THE CARIBOU DANCE

Caribou have not come. Now we will call them by the magic power of this dance. See, they come, the Caribou!" At this he beats a single step on the drum and the four Caribou, who have been standing off to one side away from the camp-fire, [this is a bundle of sticks if indoors] come solemnly marching in. They lift their

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knees high as they march around the fire, and represent great pride by their demeanor. Having rounded the circle once, the drum stops and each Caribou goes to a corner. Then the drum beats once and the four approach the fire. They bow in reverence before it--thus saluting the Great Mystery. At the moment of bowing, each emits a deep bellow. The drum beats march time while they circle the camp-fire once again,



THE WILDCAT OF THE CARIBOU DANCE

and at the stopping of the music each marches to one of the compass points [North, South, East, West] and bows low to the wind. At this point, too, they utter a simultaneous bellow.

Quickly the Medicine Man beats double time and the Caribou circle the fire once again. At the stopping of the drum Number One and Number Two face each

other in combat. Likewise Number Three and Number Four. The Dancers should have been instructed that this combat is "pretend." They dance around each other with hands held well away from eyes, they snort, lower heads and simulate a spirited fight for ten or fifteen seconds. Then the music ceases and this time a combat takes place between One and Three and between Two and Four. Then the music begins and the Caribou dance around the fire again.

Now the Medicine Man cries, "The Wolves!" This is the cue for the Wolf to howl. As he does so, the Caribou rush towards that part of the circle nearest the Wolf. Standing close together they lower horns, snort, bellow, stamp on the ground and utter threatening sounds. Wolf is promptly silenced. The music begins and the Caribou dance on as before.



THE HUNTERS

Suddenly Wildcat yells from the other side of the circle. The Caribou threaten him the same as Wolf and then resume the victorious dance. While all this is going on, the Hunters, hidden outside the circle, have been waiting their turn. Now they appear, crawling into the

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circle on hands and knees. If convenient, each hunter can carry a bow, otherwise he pretends to have one as well as quiver and arrows. Real arrows should not be carried or used. The leader of the Hunters signals with hand gestures to those who follow, "The Caribou! Here they are! Get Ready! Be silent!" The place where the Hunters enter the ring has been indicated in advance and when they get to it they stand up. Each takes aim. The Caribou dance on in happy unconsciousness of the presence of their deadliest enemies.

The Hunter Leader now lets out a sharp yell and the Caribou, terrified, stop dancing, run to that part of the ring facing the Hunters and stand trembling at this new menace. Each of the hunters stands perfectly still in an attitude of taking aim. The leader yells again and as he yells all the hunters clap their hands together, thus indicating the "crack" of the bowstring. One of the Caribou drops [he has been selected in advance for lightness of weight] and the others run away to the woods, in a direction indicated to them in advance. Yelling, the hunters run to the dead Caribou. The leader holds high the fallen beast's horns. They all dance around him once or twice, and then they carry him from the ring. The dance ends in a frenzy of drumming and yelling. To close, the Medicine Man cries, "Our dance has brought the Caribou. There is meat in the village. Ho!"

Needless to say this dance can be done by girls as well as boys--or by girls and boys together. Be sure to give explicit directions to the Caribou, to the hunters and to all the others in the play. Having done the dance once it can be repeated if there is time. Always there will be children in the audience who want to be

caribou or hunters or beasts. Having given a performance by the picked ones then you can let the others learn and dance till everyone has had a chance.

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If the dance is given indoors, a beautiful camp-fire effect can be produced by bringing an electric light to the centre of the floor. Cover it with an orange paper and put a cage of sticks around it. Lower the other light and see what a fine camp-in-the-forest effect you will get.

BERNARD SEXTON

Illustrations by Gwenyth Waugh



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THE STORY OF TWO TOWN HALLS



LARGE cities have many vices and much to answer for, but one of their worst features is the destruction of all intimacy between the people, and the suppression of the individual in the interest of an imaginary whole. It is assumed, not without some justification, that the community should not be made to suffer inconvenience because of any imaginary or legitimate grievance of the individual. As a result of this, the words Town Hall have a strange and even archaic sound, for, to all intents and purposes, they have become obsolete in all but the smallest communities. One of the purposes of a town hall is to give all the citizens a chance to air their grievances, not merely the majority of the ruling minority, to such an extent that it should not be necessary to ask the permission of anyone. It used to be that it was only necessary for a certain number of citizens to sign a call and the hall had to be opened.

An uncle of mine, who was born and raised in the little town of St. Ives, England, once had a controversy with the mayor who was at the same time the Queen's Tax Collector, whom he had accused of grafting. He got the required number of signatures for a meeting in the Town Hall to denounce the latter. The mayor tried to interfere by withholding the keys on the night of the meeting, whereupon my uncle obtained a crowbar from a neighboring blacksmith and broke open the door, the mayor was fittingly and properly denounced, and

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graft charges proven. These things are impossible in large cities and the only avenue open to the obstreperous citizen through which to air his opinion or grievance is to hold a meeting in a private hall where the rent and advertising are so high that it is out of the question except for organizations, well-to-do citizens or wealthy newspaper proprietors. In the case of the halls, the police can always be used to terrorize the owner by threatening to take away his license under the charge of running a disorderly place. All of these things are fairly well known to people with opinions and no money, and unknown to the mass of the people with neither.

With these things in mind, we were mildly interested when we heard that an organization called the League for Political Education had built and was about to open a beautiful building to be called the Town Hall. It was to be used for lectures of a character similar to those given at Cooper Union which, in its time, was the great temple of free speech in the city of New York but which in later days is denied to everyone but those who hold the most orthodox political opinions; it was also to be used for concerts and entertainments of the character of those given at Carnegie and Aeolian Halls. Our heart sank when we read the prospectus and saw the names of Henry W. Taft, Otto H. Kahn and other eminent citizens included in the list of directors of the organization. Still, we thought a concert, with no speeches or propaganda, would be permissible, and as our school needed, as it always needs, funds to supplement the tuition paid by the parents of the children who attend, we applied for and rented the hall. It was rented in the name of the Modern School Association of N. A., the name in which the organization is incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey.

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The writer signed the lease as chairman, and, as the participating artists and musical bureau were respectability itself, the matter rested until four days before the date of the concert.

Suddenly, out of a clear sky, came the news that the executive secretary, a sister of a former distinguished president, Grover Cleveland, had been trying to find the writer, and, failing in this, had found another member of the committee whom she notified that the concert could not take place. Why? She had discovered that the Modern School of which we had spoken was none other than the Ferrer Modern School of Stelton. Oh, infamous words, Ferrer and Stelton! Not being able to get in touch with the writer that day, Joseph Cohen was appealed to and he at once suggested that that staunch friend of the school and of free speech and assemblage, Harry Weinberger, be notified. It was unnecessary to furnish Harry, if we may so familiarly call him, with more than the barest details, for he dearly loves a battle, and, besides, were not the Ferrer School and Free Assemblage attacked? He proceeded without delay to get in touch by phone with Miss Cleveland, informing her that a contract is a contract and not a scrap of paper, that he would institute mandamus proceedings--whatever those terrible words may mean--against the trustees of "Town Hall" (it is necessary to put these words in quotation marks) and compel them to live up to their agreement; that he would let the people of New York (Harry believes in the "people of New York") know about this "Town Hall" and spread the news. Perhaps Miss Cleveland hates a scandal as much as we do; perhaps after consultation with Mr. Taft, that eminent and distinguished ornament of the New York bar, she decided that a contract

really is a contract, for when Messrs. Weinberger and Tafel called, Miss Cleveland informed them that if the statement of principles Mr. Ferm had prepared and all references to Stelton were eliminated from the program the concert could proceed. It was easy to agree to this, as we had not at any time had any idea of doing any propaganda for the school or for libertarian education, considering the concert merely as a means of raising funds for the school, and the concert proceeded as advertised. We have reason to believe that those in charge of the hall, while taking the full rental agreed upon, sabotaged upon the concert, as several people who tried to buy tickets were told it had been called off.

It has often been the lot of those working for the Stelton school to be told by sincere comrades that schools such as ours are of no importance, that what the capitalist class fears is an organized revolutionary labor movement; that schools where children are raised are dealing with the next generation, and that the attitude of the exploiters of labor is like that of the French king who said, "After me, the deluge!" To those who hold that view we print on the last page of the cover of this magazine the statement prepared by Alexis Ferm for the program and which was objected to by those in charge of "Town Hall." This class admit nothing and concede nothing, insisting at all times that this is the best of all countries and that the prevailing system of inequality will prevail as long as they are able to maintain it.

We now come to the story of a Town Hall that is a Town Hall. It is located in the heart of Ferrer Colony and is used for classrooms where weaving, carpentering, printing, basket making, cooking, drawing, paint-

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ing, dancing, singing and a number of other things are taught children whose ages vary from two to fifteen years. Classes for adults in chemistry, literature, sociology, and other things have been run pretty regularly during the winter. Communal dinners have been held in the school auditorium almost every Saturday night for the past four months. Following these dinners, lectures or short talks have been given on poetry, literature, the drama, the revolutionary labor movement, the organization of industry, the story of the conscientious objectors of Leavenworth, Kansas, and other subjects by such speakers as Bernard Sexton, Howard Scott, Roger Baldwin, Earl Humphries, Albert de Silver, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and our own local talent. Questions of a communal nature such as roads, water, lighting the colony, a co-operative store and the maintenance of the school are all discussed and decisions arrived at, not always in the most satisfactory manner but as best we can under the circumstances. Dances and entertainments are a regular feature of the colony and practically all of these activities take place in the same Town Hall. In a general way, the building, as the property of the Modern School Association of N. A., is under the control of the Board of Management, but not a single voice in the colony is stilled in that town hall and no permission has to be obtained from anyone to hold meetings or other forms of social activity there. Perhaps this community will grow large and unwieldy and the charming intimacy now prevailing will pass away, or again, like Brook Farm, it may die and leave a fragrant memory. If it does, we believe the same tribute paid Brook Farm will be paid the Ferrer Colony: that none who have lived here during the past six stormy years will ever admit it was a failure. As men and women who have the spirit of revolution in their

very blood, and travel in their various ways in the years to come, but wherever they go will take with them some of the fineness and spiritual brotherhood fostered and developed in the little town hall, Ferrer Colony, Stelton, N. J. Stelton is a glimpse of the future, for all its shortcomings, and we venture to think that no one will ever live here for any length of time without being the better for it.

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HARRY KELLY



AS MIRIAM SEES IT

My daughter, three and one half years of age, came home the other day with a little cup in her hand. She showed it to me and seemed to be very happy over her possession. "Where did you get the cup, Miriam?" I asked her. "I got it at Clara's," was her innocent answer. I tried to explain to my little girl that it was wrong of her to take the toy from Clara's children. Surely they will miss it. But Miriam could see nothing wrong in taking the toy.

She insisted that she wanted it and said, "Clara's children have many things to play with. I took only one of them." It was evident to me that my child did not understand the significance of her act, so I tried to explain to her that if each child who called there should take away only one of the playthings, there would soon not be any toys in Clara's house. But my argument seemed to make no impression on my girl, so I put it directly up to her, "Miriam, how would you like it if

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the children that come to play with you should take some of your toys to their homes?" This she seemed to have understood. No, she did not want other children to take her toys away, so at last she promised me never to take toys belonging to other children. Miriam then ran out, but returned immediately saying: "Let's throw it out and be done with it."

"No, Miriam," I said, "that will not do. You must return the cup to Clara's children." My girl again went out, but hesitatingly, and I went on with my work. A while later, I heard Miriam crying near the house. I looked out of the window to find my little girl stooping over a mud puddle. I asked her what was the matter, but received no answer, while she continued to cry bitterly. I ran out and beheld a pitiful sight. Her hands and clothes were full of mud, her face red in spots, with the tears running down in torrents. I asked her why she was crying. With a trembling voice she told me she had thrown the cup into the mud and now she must find it in order to return it. She showed such grief that I offered to help her find the cup, but our search was in vain. After our fruitless efforts I took my girl into the house, washed her and took her up to comfort her. I felt that the lesson of the cup had gone far enough.

After I had succeeded in quieting her I said: "Miriam, didn't that cup give us a lot of trouble?" "No, you did," she quietly answered.

LUBA LEHRER

The Modern School

DEVOTED TO LIBERTARIAN
IDEAS IN EDUCATION.

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The Statement That Scared "Town Hall"

Below is the quotation from Herbert Spencer and the statement of the Ferrer Modern School which made the authorities of the New York Town Hall see red and which they would not permit to appear in the advertising pages of the program for the school's own concert :

"As suggesting a final reason for making education a process of self-instruction, and by consequence a process of pleasurable instruction, we may advert to the fact that, in proportion as it is made so, is there a probability that education will not cease when school-day's end. As long as the acquisition of knowledge is rendered habitually repugnant, so long will there be a prevailing tendency to discontinue it when free from the coercion of parents and masters."—HERBERT SPENCER.

BUT there is more than self-instruction involved in education according to the ideas followed at the Modern School of Stelton, New Jersey. Individual initiative can be fostered only through self-expression, and we are more concerned about self-determined men and women than with well-informed men and women who lack ability to carry out their designs. And yet we find that our children have a greater fund of information than children who are compelled to pore over books or take up tasks by compulsion for a given number of hours each day. We also assume that knowledge can be acquired only through experience, and therefore knowledge of how to live in harmony with our fellow men can be acquired only through experiences with them. And as the experiences of childhood are as important to the child as the experiences of adulthood should be to the adult, we cannot afford to cut him off from the play with his companions and his self-determination as to his daily activities.

Froebel says that the true educator is a passive follower, but at the same time is positive in relation to his or her own life. This is the ideal of our teachers—always being ready to help the child to gain knowledge of his own power and through this knowledge to develop self-reliance, which is so necessary in order to overcome the obstacles met with along the road of life.

We do not believe that a child should be criticised in his work, but must be encouraged to go on so that he shall not become disheartened by his lack of ability, but may develop ability as well as self-confidence through his interest in his work.

Inquiries addressed to the MODERN SCHOOL,
Stelton, N. J., will be gladly answered.