

## Steiner teaching regards the child as an individual

To the Editor, *The Argus*

SIR,— To avoid any possible misconceptions which may have arisen as a result of J.F.A.'s letter to *The Argus* on July 26 which mentioned the method of education adopted at the Waldorf School, we would like to explain briefly how a Steiner education strives to achieve the object of developing well-rounded and responsible adults for higher university education or business life.

Basically, the Waldorf School views each child as an individual who can play a constructive part in adult life if his talents, both evident and latent, are fully developed.

Thus the curriculum followed, enlarges on that of the conventional school by the incorporation of various additional subjects which bring a balance into the child's life that a purely intellectual approach cannot achieve. The development of all talents, both cultural and academic, is naturally of great assistance in the finding of the right vocation in later life.

For example, to give the necessary stimulus for the development of the child, music and art form an inherent part of the syllabus from Sub A upwards for all children.

Foreign languages are also included from Sub A and many practical activities, such as needlework, clay modelling, wood-carving, book-binding, and gardening, are introduced at different stages so as to balance the purely intellectual development.

It has been found that this wider education can be very successful as well as being thoroughly enjoyed by the children, if imaginative teaching methods are introduced. This is being done here on the same lines as those developed in other schools of this type throughout the world.

### More ground

For example, many different subjects are not taught in watertight compartments, but as an integral whole, which thus enables the children to have a deeper appreciation of the part each plays in the whole.

This makes the subject more interesting to the children and enables the teacher to cover more ground than would otherwise be the case.

It has also been found that, by the introduction of subjects at the right time — sometimes earlier than in conventional schools and sometimes later — the children assimilate what is being taught more easily. A close collaboration of teachers, with weekly meetings to discuss children and co-ordinate the teaching, stimulates the teachers and helps the children immensely.

This sketchy outline endeavours to illustrate how the Steiner educational principles operate in practice.

It should be made clear that we do not seek to criticize the present orthodox methods of education. If any criticism is inferred at all, then it is directed solely against the general trend of exclusively intellectual thinking which makes it so extremely difficult for the child to adapt himself to the practical life of our times.

H. SCHOTTE

(Chairman,  
College of Teachers)

Cape Town