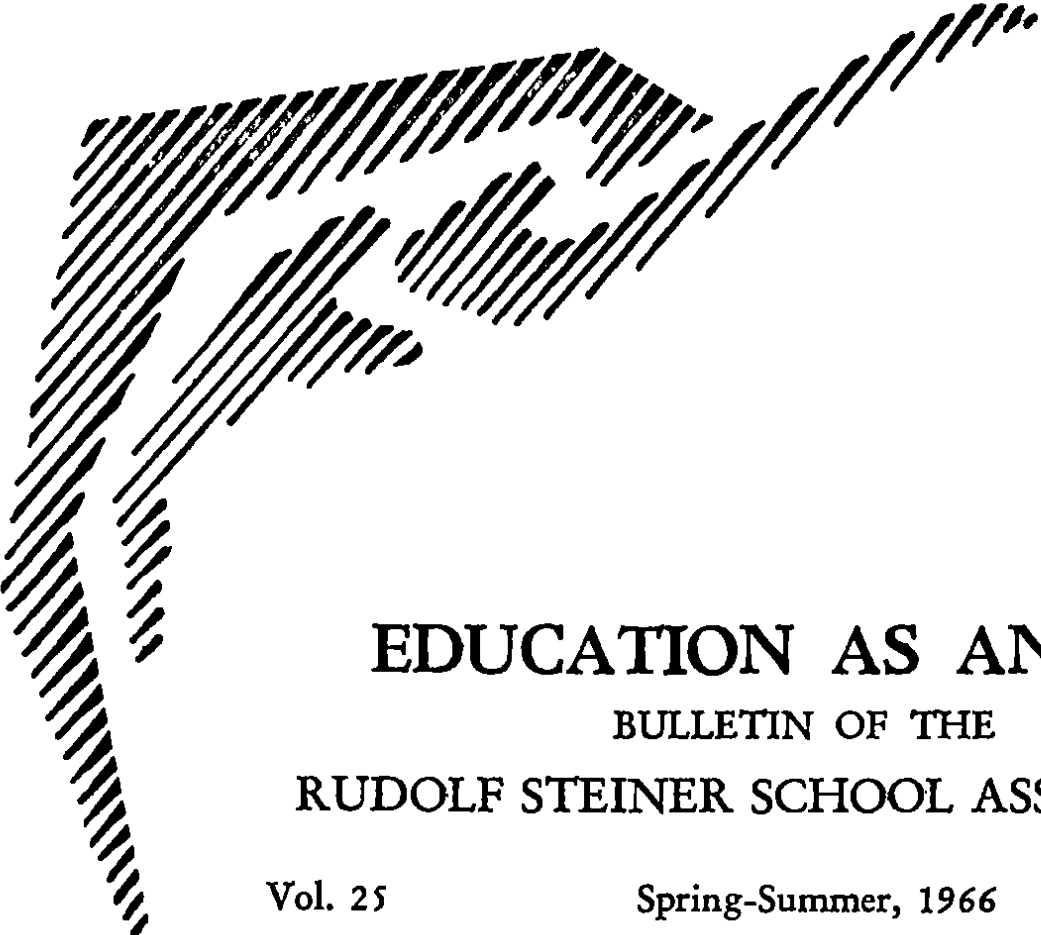




EDUCATION AS AN ART

BULLETIN OF THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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From THE SENSE OF WONDER*

A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood. If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children, I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantment of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.

If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder without any such gift from the fairies, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in. Parents often have a sense of inadequacy when confronted on the one hand with the eager, sensitive mind of a child and on the other with a world of complex physical nature, inhabited by a life so various and unfamiliar

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that it seems hopeless to reduce it to order and knowledge. In a mood of self-defeat, they exclaim, "How can I possibly teach my child about nature — why, I don't even know one bird from another!"

I sincerely believe that for the child, and for the parent seeking to guide him, it is not half so important to *know* as to *feel*. If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow. The years of early childhood are the time to prepare the soil. Once the emotions have been aroused — a sense of the beautiful, the excitement of the new and unknown, a feeling of sympathy, pity, admiration or love — then we wish for knowledge about the object of our emotional response. Once found, it has lasting meaning. It is more important to pave the way for the child to want to know than to put him on a diet of facts he is not ready to assimilate . . .

Exploring nature with your child is largely a matter of becoming receptive to what lies all around you. It is learning again to use your eyes, ears, nostrils and finger tips, opening up the disused channels of sensory impression . . .

Of course it is always convenient to give a name to things that arouse our interest. But that is a separate problem . . . If a child asked me a question that suggested even a faint awareness of the mystery behind the arrival of a migrant sandpiper on the beach of an August morning, I would be far more pleased than by the mere fact that he knew it was a sandpiper and not a plover.

What is the value of preserving and strengthening this sense of awe and wonder, this recognition of something beyond the boundaries of human existence? Is the exploration of the natural world just a pleasant way to pass the golden hours of childhood or is there something deeper?

I am sure there is something much deeper, something lasting and significant. Those who dwell, as scientists or laymen, among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life. Whatever the vexations or concerns of their personal lives, their thoughts can find paths that lead to inner contentment and to renewed excitement in living. Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is symbolic as well as actual beauty in the migration of the birds, the ebb and flow of the tides, the folded bud ready for spring. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature — the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.

I like to remember the distinguished Swedish oceanographer, Otto Pettersson, who died a few years ago at the age of ninety-three, in full possession of his keen mental powers. His son, also world-famous in oceanography, has related in a recent book how intensely his father enjoyed every new experience, every new discovery concerning the world around him. "He was an incurable romantic," his son wrote, "intensely in love with life and with the mysteries of the cosmos." When he realized he had not much longer to enjoy the earthly scene, Otto Pettersson said to his son: "What will sustain me in my last moments is an infinite curiosity as to what is to follow" . . .

The lasting pleasures of contact with the natural world are not reserved for scientists but are available to anyone who will place himself under the influence of earth, sea and sky and their amazing life.

Rachel Carson died in 1964 at the age of 56. She had written THE SEA AROUND US, UNDER THE SEA WIND, THE EDGE OF THE SEA, and finally that rousing and tragically important best-seller, SILENT SPRING. At her death Miss Carson was still working on THE SENSE OF WONDER, that has been published in an enchanting volume, with photographs of her beloved Maine coast taken by Charles Pratt and others. Someone has said, "Her own enduring sense of wonder at the universe around her, and her capacity to convey it to her readers, were perhaps her greatest gift and her greatest contribution."

For teachers and parents her words are a clarion call to recognize "something beyond the boundaries of human existence."

COMMENCEMENT SPEECH

June, 1966

For all of us, the end of high school does not mean the end of a formal education. However, it means the end of a certain type of education that cannot and should not be continued in college. From this point on, the demands that our education puts on us will be different. We will be more responsible to digest material on our own and to learn independently. The process of self-education will continue through life as a major life function. Because it will be necessary in future years to take our education into our own hands, it is important now to look back on what has been offered to us here, and to consider what we should take with us to help us in meeting new experiences.

One feels very strongly that throughout the education in this school, there exists a sense of balance that keeps one from blindly going in one direction. One finds a weighing of opposite extremes and a resulting synthesis of something valid and positive. This activity is apparent in many fields: in the reconciliation between artist and scientist; in religion between the fundamentalist and the empiricist; in history between Western materialism and Eastern mysticism. If one takes this activity into the sphere of education, one can say that there are two main processes in learning: the exploration of the individual and the exploration of the abstract or ideal.

Perhaps that activity which concentrates on specialization of the individual is most usually connected with education. One sees this trend especially in modern science. For instance, a scientist in the field of cytology can devote his entire life-work to the exploration of the inner structure of a cell. A more common experience is the ability to study, for instance, the structure of a single leaf. One can become thoroughly engrossed in the leaf and find a world of beauty in it.

In education, it is very important to develop concentration on the particular and to appreciate the value of the individual, especially in a society where "all make all", where nothing can be done without the individual responsibility of each citizen. In the school itself, one learns to value the single gift that each person has to offer. Also, in human relationships one can gain a lot by directing the vision inward and concentrating on one's own development.

However, there is a danger in such a concentration on isolated specifics. The danger in this concentration is a resulting heaviness or narrowness of vision.

One can lose one's self in the intricate beauty of a leaf, with its graceful shape and branching veins. But if one could step back from the leaf, and see that the branching pattern in each leaf is an echo of the branches of the tree itself, and that the structure of the leaf is basic to plant life, one becomes more aware of the unfathomable scheme and harmony that underlies the world.

In the same way, it will do little good to concentrate only on one's self and to observe one's own development. The more beautiful and constructive development occurs when the gap between people is bridged by an understanding.

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. . . . Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind . . ."

To gather knowledge of specific experience is a vital part of learning. But it must be freed from the narrowness of vision and given a meaning and a value from a wider encompassing of ideas. In this way, the posts of a bridge are strong and rest on firm ground, but they do no good until the bridge is laid across to connect them, and to make it possible for one to reach another bank. Conversely, a bridge without posts will sag dangerously for lack of proper foundation.

The polar activity to such concentration on specifics is the learning of abstract or ideal concepts. This capacity of man "frees" him from the material world. One has often heard of the terms "winged thoughts" or "flights of the imagination" and it is true that anything is possible in the sphere of thought. One can reach the stars in a second in the mind, or one can imagine the world as a Utopia or paradise. The ability to conceive ideas gives life and meaning to the study, for instance, of science or history. Kahlil Gibran expresses something of this in his parable of the scholar and the poet, which begins:

"Said the serpent to the lark, 'Thou flyest, yet thou canst not visit the recesses of the earth where the sap of life moveth in perfect silence.'

And the lark answered, 'Aye, thou knowest overmuch, nay, thou art wiser than all things wise — pity thou canst not fly.' "

Perhaps one can see the most developed capacity of pure thought in mathematics, which allows man to deal directly with the ideal, as in geometry. However, this activity has its dangers, too. One could easily concentrate on mathematics and never be concerned with the world. It is said that the geometrician Thales was so intent one night upon watching the stars that he fell into a ditch. Idealism presents another kind of blindness: whereas realism

lacks a far-sighted vision and proportion, idealism often lacks a focus on the actual world, and can become too vague and cloudy. I said before that the capacity of imagination frees man from the material world. But with freedom comes the responsibility to use it correctly. For thoughts do one little good if they are not valid and firmly founded on facts. Mathematics is not merely an arbitrary invention to the true mathematician who can see the intrinsic value and properties of numbers, and who sees mathematics as the basis of world order.

Thus one of the main tasks of our school has been to activate the two powers of downward and upward vision. And in learning, it is our task and responsibility to meet these two within ourselves, and to create a vision that is level and that has insight into the problems that we face. We will always be confronted with the meeting of theory and experience, as it is basic not only to education, but also to life.

—ANDREA WOODNER, '66

RUDOLF STEINER'S CURATIVE EDUCATION

Retarded children are no longer a strange sight. Their increase in the last decades has been so startling that surely every reader of this Bulletin is acquainted with one or more. And finally there begins to be a changed attitude toward them. People are coming to realize that they are not "idiots" to be hidden away: that on the contrary they are eager, intriguing young citizens of this world who need desperately our intimate love and care.

No one has regarded them more lovingly or with more profound insight than Rudolf Steiner. Out of the impulse he has given, many joyous Homes have been established in Europe where his pedagogy, his medical indications, his knowledge of human beings in general, provide the basis for very serious work with these children. In America the need is as great, with the special-schools so one-sided in the stress they put upon intellectual improvement; with the state institutions providing custodial care and not much else; with Foundations pouring millions into scientific research in this field, while the scientists themselves — most of them — overlook the very thing which the rest of us begin to see: that retarded children are first and foremost children, human children, our own children, clearly possessing qualities of soul and spirit just as do their so-called "normal" brothers and sisters.

Dr. Karl König has been the prominent expert in this field who pushed beyond current scientific knowledge to an exhaustive study of Rudolf Steiner, and from there went on to important creative work of his own. He built up in Great Britain and Europe a vigorous community of home-schools for retarded and handicapped children of all types, where Rudolf Steiner's ideas are put into daily practice and his own original research is carried forward. They are called the "Camphill-Rudolf Steiner Schools for Children in Need of Special Care". Since 1959 three units have been started in America also, by outstanding Camphill people. We believe the Camphill work will be recognized in America within a very few years as presenting a challenge to the serious thinkers in this field.

—GLADYS HAHN

THE CAMPHILL MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

No single person in a similar position of authority has demanded and pioneered such a new and comprehensive approach to mental health and mental retardation as did the late President John F. Kennedy. Unlike some of the other programmes which he had intended to introduce, the new legislation appertaining to this field was passed and became law about a month before the tragedy of his death intervened, and he was certain that these plans were on their way and would in due time be implemented.

When the Camphill Movement started to be developed in the United States in 1961, it did so when the attention of the public had been turned decisively to the staggering nationwide problem of mental handicap, prominently so because of the activities and speeches of the President. A certain readiness in many places could be experienced; a groping for fundamentals as well as attempts to devise ways and means of organisation on a nationwide basis and to plan for the future. By the end of 1961 President Kennedy had appointed his panel of experts to investigate the whole field under the chairmanship of Leonard M. Mayo: fact-finding commissions were sent to many places in the United States as well as abroad and the panel had been charged to submit a report to the President by the end of the year 1962. This report has been published and forms to some extent the basis of the new legislation.

It must be the concern of the Camphill Movement, wherever it establishes schools for the mentally handicapped children, to plan and to provide the necessary sequel in the form of the Villages for mentally handicapped *adults* which have their example and model in Botton, the first village of the Camphill Movement, in Yorkshire, England. It was in the fall of 1961 that this work by the Camphill Movement in the United States began, after their efforts at Downingtown Special Schools in Pennsylvania had been consolidated and had begun to require urgent expansion.

The Downingtown Special Schools had been in existence since 1954; at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. William Hahn, several Camphill-trained people came to the school in 1959, and the work was continued under the guidance of Miss Janet McGavin.

Following a lecture tour of Dr. Karl König in 1960 and an ever-widening interest shown in this work, as well as the need to start a village, it was decided to give the work of the Camphill Movement in the United States the scope it seemed to demand. This was aided by a number of seriously interested American people who were willing actively to support such an expansion, and the village was made feasible through the generous offer of Mrs. A. Roothbert, who placed her farm of 210 acres in Copake, New York, at the disposal of this venture. This farm was then taken over in the fall of 1961 by a further group of trained co-workers from Camphill, and the village started operations with the first admissions after two or three weeks. It had been possible to obtain the necessary licenses from the State Department of Mental Hygiene in New York, and existing buildings were made ready and equipped for their purposes.

More or less at the same time a second house was needed for the expansion of the work of the schools in Pennsylvania. A very suitable, large building on 15 acres of well-cared-for, parklike grounds was rented for this purpose from the Elizabethtown College near Mount Joy, Pennsylvania, and Miss McGavin moved with a number of children to the new property, called Donegal Springs House, in November, 1961. Fully equipped and carrying on the regular school and therapeutic program, this house accommodates 31 children — its maximum capacity.

In the course of further operations it became obvious that the comparatively small house at Downingtown would not lend itself indefinitely to the work of the schools. After prolonged negotiations it was possible to acquire a much more suitable, stone-built house on 60 acres of grounds, Beaver Run, Glenmoore, Pennsylvania, which will allow in the course of the next years considerable expansion. This new house can accommodate approximately 20 children. An existing barn, now called 'The Chantry', has been converted into a children's unit (11 children, ages 16 to 18), — or perhaps should it be called a pre-Village Training Centre? The building also houses two schoolrooms, two small offices and staff accommodation.

But a project is envisioned whose full realization will span a period of years: to improve over the conventional school setup by substituting for it a village-type community of single family households, grouped around a village center for school, chapel and communal activities. Definite advantages — indeed, a new departure in dealing with mentally handicapped children — may be expected from this venture. Enthusiastic interest is being expressed from many sides!

The schools which hitherto had been known as The Downingtown Special Schools, Inc., also changed their name and will now be more appropriately known as The Camphill Special Schools, Inc.

The development of the Village in Copake, New York, was a fairly rapid one, encouraged by an ever-increasing demand for growth and a very considerable endorsement of its programme and activities by many professional people.

It was possible in the first months after work had started to acquire an adjacent property of 260 acres and then another small one in the centre of both which gave to the Village a total of approximately 500 acres and two more houses for living accommodation, as well as several other buildings which could be suitably converted for use.

The first newly built house, a family unit for about 15 people, was completed in May, 1963, and two further family units started in the fall of the same year. Early in March, 1965, a large farmhouse was ready for occupancy and two further houses were completed in the same year. Farm and garden activities and workshops were begun, to give training and then work opportunities to the villagers. The total population of the Village by June, 1966, was well over 80. The number of young villagers was 52.

To support the work of the Camphill Movement in the United States a separate organisation was founded, called 'The Friends of the Camphill Movement', which has five chapters working to provide necessary funds and public relations. The total membership by the end of 1965 has been between 600 and 700, though the mailing list of those who wish to receive regular newsletters and other literature is considerably larger.

There is an ever-increasing waiting list both for children needing admission to the schools as well as for the Village, and referrals come from all over the United States from private as well as professional sources and agencies. Urgent inquiries have been received as to the feasibility of starting further schools or villages in other parts of the country and a number of organisations have been and are asking for lectures and talks on the work of the Camphill Movement.

Almost wherever and with whomsoever it was possible to come into contact in our field of work, great interest and appreciation was shown. An expression of this was found in interviews which Mr. Pietzner was invited to have, amongst them with the Chairman of the President's Panel on Mental Retardation, Mr. Leonard W. Mayo; with Dr. S. Warren at the White House who is now in charge of the new programme of Mental Retardation; with Dr. Howard A. Rusk, the pioneer of vocational rehabilitation in the United States; with Dr. R. Felix, then head of The National Institute for Mental Health in Washington, D. C.; with Dr. Reginald S. Lourie, Director of the Department of Psychiatry at Children's Psychiatric Hospital, Washington, D. C.; with Dr. Jerome D. Frank, Professor of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University Medical School in Baltimore, Md.; and many others.

It must be understood in order to have a balanced view of the magnitude of the problem in the United States, that there are an estimated 5 1/2 million mentally retarded children and adults in the United States. The services of the Camphill Movement, now only in its beginning stages, can therefore be only infinitesimal, but the problem of the growth and multiplication of Camphill services is the same as that of the whole nation: it is the problem of the right kind of training — not so much for psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, or special teachers — but for those invaluable workers on whom rests the responsibility of daily and hourly contact with children or adults. One has too long attempted to regard this kind of work as a subsidiary of the nursing profession. In some instances such personnel are called attendants or day personnel substituting for house parents. Whatever random name, it can not, however, conceal the fact that in this area perhaps the most valuable work is both required and actually being done. The field is woefully understaffed, and whenever its work is being performed with real insight and understanding, has little if any recognition as an actual vocation and career, though it may even be more badly needed than the more highly trained academic staff or those concerned with administration.

It will have to be acknowledged that, apart and next to sources of academic training along presently accepted lines, new ways of training will have to be

established. The well-springs of insight which lead to a greater understanding of the mentally handicapped will have to be opened in such a way that they can communicate themselves to those interested in working in this field. Ways and means to develop observation, patience and unsentimental but loving regard for seemingly bizarre behaviour will have to be developed into methods of therapeutic approach. *A training of the soul* is needed for those who wish to engage themselves in daily service for the mentally handicapped. Such training must lead to the conviction that individual initiative and self-training is needed, by which the limiting frontiers of insight can be constantly enlarged. Personal involvement is needed as a starting-point and requires development in each person so trained, the necessary detachment being achieved solely by the ever deepening insight into the individual destiny into whose orbit every worker in this field is being called. Without an acknowledgment of the spiritual factors involved (and to which Rudolf Steiner has so eloquently and urgently drawn attention) this is likely to remain impossible. But also impossible will it be to attract the right kind of persons into this work as long as there does not exist a training which attempts to incorporate the means to unfold such qualities and which acknowledges them to be of at least equal importance to purely intellectual pursuits.

The Camphill Movement has found in the United States a surprisingly large number of people who have not only a ready understanding of this, but in fact are aware of the urgency to find ways and means to implement it. Such awareness is not only found amongst parents, but particularly also in professional people who have actual and deep field experience in the work for mental health and mental retardation. The training course which has for so many years been carried on in the Camphill Movement may offer certain possibilities in this respect. It might appear to be one of the most important tasks that lie ahead in the work of the Camphill Movement in the United States to perfect its Schools and Village into demonstration places or pilot projects which could serve as a basis for the training or part-training of workers in this field.

In terms of the nationwide programme it seems imperative, however, that a new kind of profession be created for which professional and social standards will have to be found, just as much as has been done in other fields. Such work would lie half-way between a teacher and a social worker, a therapist and artist: the profession will belong to the humanities and the graduate will incorporate in his studies many results of the modern findings in the diverse fields of science and research, though he will have to administer his knowledge like an art. He will have to make determined efforts to know himself; he must be backed and aided by the pediatrician and he may wish to discuss aspects of his work with the psychiatrist and the psychologist. He may consult the findings of the case worker and try to understand the parents, the environment and background of the child or young person in his charge. He will work closely together with the teacher who looks after the classwork of the child, and he will seek the help of the eurythmist as an indispensable aid. His work, however, will be that of a guide and protector in his own right, who will at the same time never forego his position of being in a state of learning from his charges in order to increase his insight into their needs and into the differing

stages of their development. He will be both a student and an advisor, a pupil and a counsellor and above all one in whose concern the needs of his charges can root themselves so that in time they can point the way to their alleviations.

Within the progressive programs that are being attempted in the United States, which include the founding of sheltered-workshops in an increasing number of communities, one of the slogans often heard is: 'The mentally retarded should be integrated into the community at large.' Wherever it is possible, this seems a highly commendable approach, particularly in urban communities. However, even then a very large number of the retarded will not succeed beyond a limited participation, quite apart from the fact that as yet few valid solutions have been offered for those who for one reason or other have outgrown their home or no longer have parents or other home life.

For many mentally retarded such an integration entails burdens and dangers of which very little has yet been told and it would appear that this very attempt may constitute an unjustified strain and effort with severe limitations as to its success.

It should be said that the villages of the Camphill Movement, and certainly also Camphill Village, U.S.A., are attempting, in forming a community with the mentally handicapped, to remove this burden from the individual while trying to integrate *this community* into the larger community into which it is placed.

For this also the right kind of people are required to help form such a community. Training methods will have to be devised which may enable those who already have useful skills to make them available in the most productive sense for the village as a whole.

Also here, where basic qualities for application to daily life and to the pace of work are involved, a good deal of understanding and appreciation has so far been found in the United States. It is significant that such appreciation is coupled with astonishment and disbelief that 'such things are possible in America today'. At this point Americans themselves are all too ready to call themselves materialistic and yet find it not difficult in the same breath to uphold and to express the inherent longing for a life such as they see in budding development at the Village.

There has been almost invariably the question as to the philosophy behind it all. And while there is an increasing number of serious inquiries, particularly also from the parents who desire to have this philosophy explained to them in detail, most, if not all of them, are chiefly concerned and gratified by the fact that 'it works'. It may perhaps not be exaggerated to say that it is not the philosophy which is of primary interest; but it becomes interesting because of the results and because it obviously seems 'to work'.

To provide on a sufficiently large basis a demonstration of the work of the Camphill Schools and Village may lead to the possibility of providing such training as previously outlined. It is even feasible that such training opportunities may be demanded increasingly where we can demonstrate in our working-places that our combination of spiritual and practical activities form a prototype in which a definite social problem takes on a new and different light, a social problem which contains in itself assets of human relationships which have so far failed to be explored with sufficient intensity and devotion. Yet it is human relationships that are the mainspring and principal concern of the American people.

—CARLO PIETZNER

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Camphill Movement, published in Great Britain.*

Mr. Pietzner is the Executive Director of the Camphill Special Schools in the United States. His new book, ASPECTS OF CURATIVE EDUCATION, will be available shortly and can be ordered (at \$4.75) directly from Carlo Pietzner, Camphill Village, Copake, New York 12516.

The addresses of the Camphill Schools are: Donegal Springs House, Mt. Joy, Penna. (Dir. Miss Janet McGavin); Beaver Run, Glenmoore, Penna. (Dir. Mrs. C. Pietzner)

DR. KARL KÖNIG

1902 - 1966

On Sunday, March 27th of this year, at the hour of noon, Dr. Karl König died of heart failure. He had been brought to a hospital from his home in Brachenreuthe after suffering a first attack three days earlier.

Brachenreuthe in Germany, overlooking Lake Constance, is one of the homes founded by him for mentally retarded and movement-disturbed children. Quite recently it had become possible to extend the work to an adjoining farm which formed the nucleus for a village community of mentally handicapped adults with their helpers and friends. Thus Dr. König was stricken in the midst of his work, in the midst of those to whose service his life was dedicated, whom he had taught us to understand, to live with, to love, and to learn from.

In 1939, when Dr. König with a small group of faithful friends started work with handicapped children in the North of Scotland, the severely retarded child belonged to the great army of the mentally ill, the idiots and morons, the ineducable who were of no use to anybody: a heartbreak to their parents, an annoyance to society. One was ashamed of them and the majority disappeared behind the gates of asylums to waste away their lives, forgotten.

In 1924 the great Austrian thinker, spiritual scientist and teacher, Dr. Rudolf Steiner, had lectured to a small group of devoted men and women on Curative Education as pertaining to the mentally handicapped child. He had opened up depths of insight and new vistas reaching far beyond the individual case-history into the whole evolutionary process of mankind.

Walking in Rudolf Steiner's footsteps, Dr. König set out to demonstrate in word and deed that the mentally handicapped, despite his infirmities, is a human being of soul and spirit, worthy of our concern and love.

In implementing his convictions and asking our help in doing so, he became our teacher, our guide and our friend, never resting, always available to help and counsel, to praise and to admonish; but above all, to let children and teachers and co-workers grow in the warmth of his all-embracing love.

To the curative-educational work for children he added an entirely new dimension with the founding of village settlements for mentally handicapped adults. This work was begun in 1955 and has spread through many countries since. It is yet in its beginning and will gain importance far beyond its present scope.

On earth Karl König's work is firmly established and will continue to grow. His being, like a bright star, will be the fixed point by which we set course.

—HUBERT ZIPPERLEN

This double issue is appearing very late in the year, due to "fateful circumstances". The editor begs your forgiveness.

THE RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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