

the plough



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THE PLOUGH

Towards the Coming Order

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Autumn 1939

A Word of Introduction

"From children one can learn to live
and become blessed." Goethe.

In this time of terrible destruction and immeasurable suffering it concerns us closely to tell our friends something of the most important work of our common life: work with and for children. In this work something is revealed that is part of the very essence of life, and therefore cannot be expressed adequately in words — the nearness of God as creative power leading to community, to joy in one another. Nowhere does this show itself more clearly than in children in their relationship to their parents, educators and to each other.

This mystery of the revelation of God is what we need more than anything else at this time. God, as the God of peace and justice, wills to guide and control our life so completely that true community and brotherliness utterly change and transform the conditions of actual life of individuals, groups, classes, parties, nations and races. His will shall be so fully sovereign on our earth that his Kingdom shall come, and bloodshed and injustice have an end.

Nothing can help us, human beings, towards this more than the recognition that we must become "like children": that our life must be as pure and straight from the source of being as is the life of the tiniest child, whose strength comes from God. This means repentance, conversion and a new birth as necessary precursors of a new communication of the strength of God, of a new Pentecost. God's Spirit must come over us, and bring us peace. Therefore let us fight and pray.

From the very beginning the problems of education and the problem of the need of children — social and moral need — was especially close to our heart. Even in the first years of our life we received children from the slums of continental cities to educate them in the right spirit with the children of our own families, and to meet their spiritual and material need. We still regard this work as one of the most important tasks of our common life.

This number is an attempt to give our friends a living impression of our children's work. It consists of three essential parts: An introduction by Dr. Eberhard Arnold to the fundamental principles of our educational work; accounts by a number of men and women taking part in our educational work; and little essays, poems and drawings by the children themselves.

This is no exhaustive, systematic report attempting to deal with all aspects of education and all educational problems. Our aim is rather that through the contributions of the children and grown-ups something of the deepest mystery — that true child-like character that leads to the community of the Church — may be seen.

Real, genuine life unfolds in true freedom when bound to its source, God. Life is movement: never rigidity, never dead mechanism. Movement expresses itself in struggle. Even in early childhood one can see how life must force its way constantly against all that disturbs its unity. Where there is true life there is community, mutual service and love as joy in one another. For all that is anti-social, such as egotism and joylessness, destroys the unity and genuineness of life. Children sense this in their unspoiled souls much more clearly than we grown-ups do, as our power of feeling and thinking is only too often ruined. So in our life together with our children, we are not only the givers, but those who receive; not only the leaders, but those who are led.

The future is the children's. God is theirs. Theirs is his coming Kingdom! Therefore in the constant fight for the victory of life they point us to the source and goal of all being, namely to God, and so to community, as oneness with his creation in nature and among men. We must ourselves become children to find God and to strive for community, as love and justice.

How strongly these powers are alive among our children can be seen from their contributions in this number. These have all grown out of actual life and experience, without any conscious exertion of influence from the grown-ups. Here is genuine life; true, spontaneous originality. It expresses itself as the fight against all that is destructive, as the victory of love and community. Here is the finest feeling of oneness with nature and creation as such, which as radiant creative strength gives form to life and matter in a way that is artistic in its truest sense.

Thus it is our wish that this number of THE PLOUGH, which we are publishing in a special edition that it may also be available to wider circles, may be to many people a help on the way to the coming order. "He who seeketh me will find me in children: for in them shall I be revealed." (From 'The Lord's sayings'.)

THE EDITOR.

Our Approach to Education

The educational fellowship of our children's community is founded on faith in the good Spirit at work in all men, and in a special way in all children. On the basis of this faith we stand for the autonomy of the child and of the children's community. By this we do not at all mean that all that a child may demand and do at the urge of his own impulses is to be called good. By autonomy we mean the awakening of the child by the Spirit, guidance to the calling of man, self-determination through the inner light, the fighting lordship of the good Spirit over all impulses, whether better or worse.

Thus our education has its source in trust in the good and genuine, which, with other and extremely dangerous powers, is within the child and develops into a powerful determining and guiding force. Ultimately it is trust in the voice of God which sounds in each child as the will to community, as joy in purity, truth and love. This trust shows itself in the daily round as respect and reverence for this which is alone essential in all children. Thus we see the fellowship of education as the mutual stirring up of the best that is at work in each man, but especially in the undeveloped soul. To us education is the awakening to that which is alone essential and ultimate, which comes to life in the depth of the heart. So coercive power and supervision are replaced by trust in the awakening guidance of the Spirit, which leads the child to test himself freely and courageously in the fight.

To such an attitude of mind all corporal punishment is a declaration of educational bankruptcy, only conceivable when the mental influences which are alone educational have failed. Of course, a certain use of force, in the widest sense of the word, will not always be avoidable, owing to the imperfection of the educators and their lack of spiritual powers. But, through the influence exercised by the Spirit on both educators and children, this is reduced to the very minimum. In its crudest form, corporal punishment, it is to be rejected in our education.

In spite of this there are, especially on this way of approach, very different degrees to which the child may be influenced. For children who are brought up in this Spirit very soon become extremely sensitive to any change of voice, any exertion of the will, or swiftly-rising judgment, though these emotions of the educator may only appear as a change of intonation or a sharpened look. He must, however, speak without fear or uncertainty. Such powerful and definite speech often helps the child in his fight with himself much more than a weak and too patient acquiescence in his naughtiness. Here, no two moments are alike. The educator must have the elasticity and adaptability necessary to do justice to the ever new situation. Only he who seizes the opportunity of the moment is the right man. Within each child there is a change

and alternation of conditions; of his willingness, of his capacity to assimilate, of his readiness for the fight and of his working strength. For this reason alone no two children are alike, so that all attempts at a uniform education must lead in a false direction. We respect what is personal and characteristic in each child from the point of view of the super-personal; for this leads through the forming of the individual to community, which is above the individual, and so makes the individual of service to the whole. The special peculiarity of gift possessed by each child must be recognized and developed for his calling. This in essence always leads to whole-hearted, loving service of the community of all, and so to the unity of special individual qualities. Thus justice to the individual, as the development of all his inborn possibilities, is the way of community education. That which has not been given the child by birth, which does not arise within him through the awakening of his mental life, which is not given him by divine regeneration and re-birth, may under no circumstances be forced upon him. The guidance to the child's calling which is decisive for his whole after-life, the introduction to his practical vocation in the service of all, must be different with each child. Therefore it becomes a very significant duty for the work of education to see the equal value of all services and capacities of body and mind. One must recognize as early as possible whether a child is intended especially for physical work or mainly for mental activity, and what special kind of work fits his gifts. It is only when, from the start and all along the line, the mad conception is fought against that one activity or calling is of higher value than any other devoted work which is done for the benefit of the whole, that it will become possible for the child to develop his powers freely.

Even in the play of a very small child his peculiar nature and character is to be seen. Each real child loses himself in concentration on the object of his play. The gaze of the child as he drinks in the object in wonder is free from the distracted indifference and superficiality of most adults. The inner concentration with which he regards the thing shows that losing and forgetting of the individual ego which alone can lead to instinctive perception of the essential in the object seen. The child's play on the sand-heap or with clay leads even in the very earliest stage to a mastery and shaping of matter, which, in the case of children so gifted, soon shows itself as work of value in plasticine or paper, wood or metal; yes, shows itself amazingly early as artistic handicraft. From this it follows clearly that handicraft must play an important part in our educational community. In our children's community the teachers of practical handicraft and of sewing will always have as significant a place as the other teachers whose task is the awakening of mental interests through intellectual work.

Education *is* awakening. The deepest mystery of life in all its depart-

ments must be revealed to the children. Their instinct for the essential and divine in all things and behind all things must be made keen and strong. It is only possible to indicate here very generally the way to this awakening in some of the main school subjects.

Each real child lives in nature and with nature. To him the soul of the creation is everywhere revealed. It is an easy thing for the educator to direct the observant child to the creative power at work everywhere in nature: to show the mystery of the creation in the fact that it is one whole, an inter-relationship of mutual help — in which context the dark side of nature must dawn on the child as the destructive fight for existence. Love to the earth, joy in the stellar cosmos, enthusiastic interest in the mysteries of the atom world and of the organism is already living in each child and seeking to awaken as love to God and to the creative and re-creative Logos, Christ.

The child has the most vivid capacity for receiving impressions of all facts and happenings, and senses in his experience of them the mystery of their deep relationship. Therefore the wakening of children to historical fact, and especially to the movement of the Spirit throughout history, is given to each true educator by the child himself. From his observation of the events and facts of life around him, he recognizes the tension between the will to power, with its covetous desire, and the urge to love, which brings redemption and union: he knows this tension which constitutes the essence of history. For this reason the child is just as receptive for the history of literature and of thought, of art and of religion as for the apparently more concrete facts of history. The real child immediately grasps as truth that the known history of mankind is an interlude; that it has departed from its original source and yet is being led by God with absolute certainty to an ultimate goal, which must stand in the sharpest possible contrast to this interlude.

It is not true that the child has no sense of the injustice and social guilt of our world; only children who have been artificially withheld from reality could be used to support this false view. In the child's longing for the life of the "street children", for friendship with "poor children", each observer is compelled to find the refutation of that false view. The awakening child knows of the division in man and of his fight against himself — the fight against his evil impulses, the fight for himself, for the true calling of man.

Thus the child can be awakened at a very early age to the mystery of man; for he knows the longing and the capacity for sacrifice of the human soul. He lives in faith in the future, and in the sensing of God as the sole possible discloser of this mystery. So the task of the educator is to awaken a most living interest, already latent in the child, in men and humanity. The mysteries of the first birth and of the later awakening of the spirit of the child, as well as its subsequent adult consciousness,

and not least the mysteries of the second birth as the intervention of God in the human heart can be opened to each child through the man called to be an educator.

Through this ever-deepening understanding of the nature of man in the child who has been led to awaken, there dawns on him the destiny of man. The Son of Man, the expectation of his Kingdom and the reality of his Church come vitally close to the child. The community spirit comes to life in each rightly-guided child as social responsibility and the devoted will to work, as the development of all abilities, and as the overcoming of all privileges.

The method and direction of teaching in the educational fellowship of the children's community becomes clear from all this. Instead of accumulating facts and learning them by heart, the deep significance of the inter-relationship of these facts is opened to the child. Here the main thing is never the material in itself, neither the matter to be learnt nor the raw material to be formed into some concrete object. What matters is the creative, form-producing Spirit that masters this material. Here the way to the Spirit is not sought through matter, but the way of the Spirit to express itself in matter is grasped. Just because of this, in this way, material is really mastered.

Instead of taking many examples, one is here chosen—that of “religion”—which ultimately includes all others. The start is not made with finished religious matter. Neither the learning of the Bible and Christian dogmas nor the finished facts of any other religious confession can be the starting point. Behind the whole history of religion, as at the same time behind the whole history of art and economics, yes, behind all that is natural and historical, the Spirit is seen in surely guided teaching. For it alone gives form to the working of God which through it becomes living relationship and unity. Thus the child is able to sense in all subjects of instruction revelation, power, love and life. The child feels that that Spirit is living in each human being, in the whole history of mankind, in the peoples of the world and in each human fellowship, as well as in the whole creation.

In this approach to education Christ shines everywhere. He comes close to the child as the fulfilment of the religion of men of all ages, all cultures and all continents. Thus the Bible is opened. Thus the prophets and apostles are seen in the focus, Christ, as the peak of possibility, as the revelation of the humanly impossible. So the apostolic way of discipleship in its privilege-free, possessionless and homeless love to God and to all men is seen as the true human and super-human life. The special departments of religion, such as dogmatics and religious practice, are not learnt. But through the fact and working of the living God all departments of life are seen to be religious. In Christ and his love, in his Kingdom and his Church the fulfilment of all reli-

gious feelings and expressions is seen as the goal of the whole of nature and history.

In this way there arises in the children's community the free activity of the religious life itself. The children's community awakes as the working of the Church of Faith. It is something uniquely wonderful to be permitted to live in fellowship with such a children's community. The joy of the childlike sense of life, the worship of sensing God in nature, the whole context of the life of the children among themselves, the vital movement of its living rhythm, not least their amazingly powerful activity in loving work, and finally the peculiarly childlike character of their own gatherings of a religious nature are the signs expressing the very being of such a children's community. It arises spontaneously, again and again, that the children meet among themselves as an educational fellowship in the sense of the fellowship of faith.

One would delude himself utterly should he think that sorrow and struggle are not to be found in such a children's community. Of course the joyful fitting of oneself into the good of the whole, which is radiated from everything to each individual, comes into the forefront of the child's life. All the same, the life of the children among themselves is felt and experienced by them as practice in overcoming self, as strengthening and steeling of resistance to all that is bad. The very recognition and honouring of the good in others sharpens the sight for the fight against evil in them and in oneself.

There is no truly living education without complete universality. The children, as a group, sense this fact so deeply that again and again they feel urged and compelled to extend the children's community by winning more children for the fight against what is evil. The children seek to encompass in the circle of their life the often very different surrounding world of children and men. Thus the "Sun Troop" of enthusiastic children invades the outer territory of other children's worlds in order to experience with them fellowship in the fight of all with all.

All real children want to venture and fight. A trusting educational fellowship will therefore fetter as little as possible daring courage in climbing trees, in bridling, riding and grooming horses and in standing the test of other dangers.

In this freedom lies the best protection for the child. Real protection does not lie in careful supervision by anxious adults, but rather in educative guidance to instinctive certainty in each danger: ultimately to trust in a watchful care beyond our own power.

All this holds good in the struggle of the inner life. Trust in the mystery of ultimate guidance and help must lead the inner spiritual battles to victory without violence and coercion. The real child leans trustingly and frankly on his parents, leaders and educators. It calls for strong

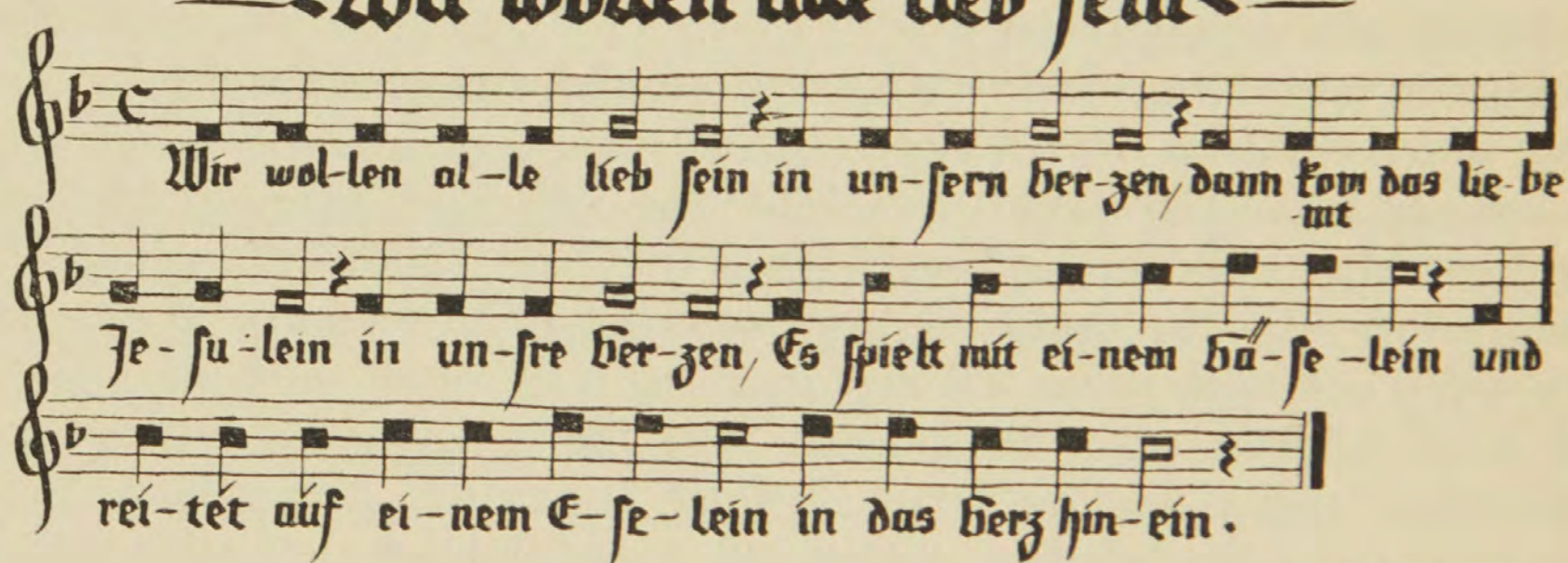
self-control and discipline on the part of the educators to respond to this trust with the free-hearted granting of freedom, which can only have its origin in the trust that springs continually from faith.

Thus, then, the fruitful education of a children's community is only possible where educators as well as children are part of a common life, which is led by the fellowship of faith in both to the true life of the Spirit. For this reason we are steadfast in our desire to accept and educate as many children as possible in our common life—preferably children from the poorest and most unhappy conditions — from their earliest childhood until they are fully capable of an adult calling.

We must begin our life task again and again with children. It is our experience that God's revelation of the mystery of the origin and ultimate goal of the world is most clearly seen in childhood. Horror of soulless, irresponsible sensuality, the fight against the soul-destroying mechanization of vocational work, rejection of the conscience-killing life of pleasure of our machine age, the contrast of the Church and of the Kingdom with the non-christian way of public force and violence, the liberating protest against the lie of society and business life — all this surges forth ever new from the childhood and youth which is led by the living Spirit to the life of spiritual unity and of loving work.

EBERHARD ARNOLD.

Wir wollen alle lieb sein



Wir wol-len al-le lieb sein in un-sern Her-zen, dann kom das lie-be
-ut
Je-su-lein in un-sre Her-zen, Es spielt mit ei-nem hä-se-lein und
rei-tet auf ei-nem E-se-lein in das Herz hin-ein.

Text und Melodie von
Heidi - 6 Jahre alt

We all want to be good

We all want to be good within our hearts,
Then the dear little Christchild comes into our hearts.
He plays with a little bunny sleek,
And, sitting upon a donkey meek,
Rides into our hearts.

Words and music by Heidi, aged 6.

Child life at the Bruderhof

Reports and Extracts from the Diaries of our Co-Workers

The Life of the Bruderhof Children

The hundred and four children of the Cotswold Bruderhof have their own children's ground. It lies on the left of the drive leading to the community, out of the way of the general traffic, the workshops and farm buildings, and at the same time close to the square of dwelling-houses in which the children live with their parents. The children's ground covers a relatively large and extensive area. It includes a large playing green on which stand many spreading lime trees, and the children have also appropriated most of the little wood with its old chestnut tree, its beeches, firs, larches, hazels and willows. The children's houses, four lightly-built bungalows, border on open fields, and at the moment the gardens, which have been laid out to some extent and planted and cared for entirely by the children themselves, are ablaze with summer flowers. Towards the east the children's ground is bounded by a broad wall of Cotswold stone and the wonderful old elm-trees of the drive leading to the community; towards the west it is open. There a new children's house is to be built, as the four bungalows are far from being sufficient. The children spend their waking life in their own ground. Within its wide bounds little groups of happy children are to be seen at all hours of the day playing about or occupied in the pursuit of some interest.

It is 7.15 a.m. The great bell has rung once. In a quarter of an hour it will be time for breakfast. Mothers and fathers, big boys and girls are hurrying to the children's houses. Here a mother is carrying her baby to the baby house; there a father is bringing his children or an elder girl her little brothers and sisters to the nursery school. All the children, from the very youngest to those of school age, have breakfast in the children's houses. The school-children, including the little five-year-olds, go with their parents to the great common dining-room in which the families have breakfast, the children from outside, whose education has been entrusted to us, joining the teachers' families.

There is much to be done in the baby house at this hour. Twenty-seven little children up to about two years of age have to be attended to. The sisters in charge of the babies are there early, because the children are brought shortly after they have been fed at home by their mothers at six o'clock. Two rooms are used for the children up to nine months old. The children are bathed, changed, fed and cared for all

day by sisters showing a special aptitude for the care of small children. Through the shade of a tall hedge round the garden and a verandah it is possible for the children to spend a very large part of their day outside. Those between nine and fourteen months are in groups of six or seven, each group having a fine sunny room. The older children, however, up to the age of two have at the moment a room with a north aspect, for the accommodation in the baby house is not sufficient for so large a number of children, and as has been already mentioned it is necessary to build a new children's house for those between walking and school age. There is much to be done at the toddlers' breakfast. They are just learning to feed themselves, and are being helped to do so with love and patience.

In the nursery school, which faces the baby house, things are also proceeding merrily. The children are trying to change their own shoes in the cloak-room. Then they go to the wash-room, fetch their feeders from their pegs and go into the large play-room. There all the tables have been so placed as to form one or two long tables. The nursery school teacher and the married couple, who for the week share the children's breakfast, begin a song which is usually chosen by one of the children. All little hands are clasped behind the backs and the clear voices of some twenty-five to thirty children peal out "Good morning, dear sunshine". For breakfast there is porridge with milk and sugar followed by bread and jam. When all have finished they go to the wash-room to wash their hands and faces, and then, when the weather is fine, into the garden surrounding the house for a time of free play. In the meantime the play-room is tidied, a wooden partition is drawn and the children gather in the two rooms to immerse themselves in some occupation.

By this time the communal breakfast of the grown-ups and older children is also at an end. All stream from the dining-room. The children go, quickly or not so quickly, in the direction of the two school houses, which till now had lain in silence. There is so much of interest to look at on the way! There a car is just leaving and one simply must stop and watch! Or one is met by the sheep-dog with her three pups. Though the way is not long one hears every now and then a voice, "Be quick, or you'll be late!"

Soon the surroundings of the school houses are again still. All the twenty-four pre-school children have gathered for a short time of being together to begin the day by singing a song or listening together to some story that appeals to the childlike heart. The twenty school-children gather also for a short time of devotion in groups whose ages range from eight to twelve, and twelve to sixteen. The morning is spent quietly and peacefully by the different groups of children in work or play. The following accounts taken from those made daily by the

nursery school teachers, teachers, baby nurses, the school mother and those who help her in caring for the children out of school hours give a vivid picture of their life. In the course of the day, the stretch of green beneath the limes is again and again enlivened by different groups of children. Here the pre-school children are playing in a ring, there a group is going for a walk on a near-by hill, or "Josephine", our faithful donkey, is taking a group of toddlers in a little green cart beyond the bounds of the children's ground.

At mid-day quiet reigns over the children's ground. The small children have dinner at half-past eleven, after which they sleep until two o'clock. When the weather is good, the light little beds are carried into the open. Each group is always watched over by a grown-up. During this time the school-children go into the old Cotswold house in which they have their special dining-room, and at the same time the grown-ups have their common meal. The school-children have dinner together with one of their teachers. Those of fourteen years and over may also have dinner in the communal dining-room with the grown-ups, on condition that at supper they give the other children an account of what they have heard and experienced there. For during the common meals of the Bruderhof, which is always open to all truly seeking people, there are often discussions or talks.

Now, when the meal is at an end and all the small children have enjoyed a refreshing sleep, comes an hour dearly beloved by them all. All fathers and mothers flock to the children's houses to fetch them for the free hour. No one leaves his children in the children's houses unless hindered by some extremely urgent matter. In case of this, however, there is always a sister in each children's house who cares for such children. Now scattered all over the Bruderhof grounds one can see joyful pictures of happy family life. Here parents are taking three or four children for a walk, there others are sitting, leaning against a tree, surrounded by their children. Other children are playing on the sand-heap in the midst of a square of dwelling-houses whilst father and mother talk. A teacher is playing with a group of children whose parents are not at the Bruderhof. When the hour is over, about half-past three, the great bell rings again. All the children hasten to the children's houses, the grown-ups to their work, and the dwelling-houses are once more still. In the children's ground, however, after a short tea-time of milk and bread and butter joyful groups are again to be seen everywhere.

After the concentrated time of school work in the morning, the school-children spend the afternoon mainly outside. The bigger children do practical work. They are entrusted by the schoolmaster and work-distributor of the Bruderhof to the leader of some special department of work, as for example the bookbinder, the gardener or one of the

farmers. Those from ten to fourteen years of age have lessons in gardening four afternoons a week in summer — to begin with purely practical gardening. Quite a number of animals have to be tended, two ponies, three donkeys, two goats and an ever increasing number of rabbits. The care of these animals normally fills every free moment of the school day. Certain children are made responsible for the different animals for a definite period. The children change these duties themselves, for each boy would so much like to care for the pony! In the same way the children exchange other duties, such as tidying the class rooms, corridors and dining-room, fetching food, cleaning boots, etc. In this way disorder and unpunctuality are firmly rebuked by the children themselves.

The children of about seven years old and under have their last meal at half-past five. Shortly afterwards the children's ground presents a lively picture. Mothers fetch their children to take them to bed, and in families where there are many children the older school-children, especially the girls, help them. Some older boys also help to take the children home and carry warm water for their evening wash to help the mothers. After this they attend to their animal charges. Now the children's ground grows still. Those of the sisters working with the children who have not a family of their own clean the children's houses that everything may be in order for the next day.

Happy children's voices sound from the dwelling-houses for the space of about an hour while the children are being put to bed. Sometimes crying is also heard, for washing and going to bed is not always the day's greatest joy. After this, however, things grow quiet. Here and there one can hear a mother singing lullabies with her children. Now the great bell rings to say that the communal supper is ready. Here and there one sees a father coming quickly to say good night to his children. Then there is quiet in the children's rooms. The parents go to supper. A sister remains in each house to care for quiet and order among the children during the evening meetings of the household. A brother or sister also looks after the older school children who have supper practically at the same time as the grown-ups, and shortly afterwards go to bed. By nine o'clock lights are out in the school-children's rooms.

The peace of night comes over the houses. When the night-watchman sings the verse of his song for ten o'clock, all the children have for long been sleeping soundly, guarded by the loving care of the community in the consciousness of the truth hourly brought to mind by the refrain of the night-watchman's song—

"Human watch no ill can ward: God must watch and God must guard.
Lord, in thy great love and might, Give us all a quiet night".

GERTRUD HÜSSY.

With our Tiniest

In a beautiful sunny garden, surrounded by a thick hawthorn hedge, stands our baby house — one of the four bungalows which we have furnished simply though as hygienically as possible. The hedge shelters the garden from the wind so that in practically all weathers we can have our smallest children in the open. When it is hot the hedge provides a fine shade for them. Round the grass there are borders in which nearly all the year round bright-coloured flowers bloom. Throughout the summer we enjoy yellow, white and red roses. When the little babies are left outside it is wonderful to watch how they begin (often when they are only two or three months old) to notice the roses or the twigs in the hedge moving here and there in the wind. Then a quiet smile often creeps over their little faces and one sees that they are happy. After a short time, however, they express their joy more forcefully: they laugh aloud, wave their arms and kick for sheer enjoyment.

There are two entrances to the baby house from the garden. On the east side of the house we built a large wooden verandah where the children spend their time when it is raining. From here the bigger children, who are able to walk, can go to play in a garden specially fenced in for them, where three old lime trees provide ample shade.

The house contains four brightly-decorated play rooms, a room intended for the mothers when feeding their babies, a small room where the children are given ultra-violet ray treatment, a kitchen and pantry, and the necessary sanitary arrangements. The play-rooms house about twenty-two children comfortably, but at present, owing to lack of room in all the children's houses, and especially in the nursery school, the biggest children of this group — those of nearly two — have to be accommodated in a north room in the baby house. As soon as the new children's house is built these six children will be able to move to the now overcrowded nursery school, situated opposite the baby house, and the room facing north will then be used by the mothers as was originally intended.

All the sisters like best to work with the quite small babies, who are brought for the first time to the baby house by their mothers when they are six weeks old. It is always a very special joy when such a little one joins the others. It is laid in a basket on a brown stand. In this room are seven such little baskets. To some mothers it is perhaps not easy at first to bring their child for the first time to the others. For six weeks the mother was free from all community work that she might recover fully, so whatever she was doing, reading, writing or sewing, she could have her baby beside her and watch and tend it — and now she has to be away from the child during the day. But she still comes

twice a day, at ten o' clock and at two, to feed her baby, and these times are now a particular joy to her.

One can also notice during the first day or two that the baby is aware of its unusual surroundings. It usually cries and sleeps less, and not so restfully at that. After a few days, however, it accustoms itself to the new rhythm.

Now the mother is free for community work, and the joy of being able to serve the common life with new and fresh strength wherever she is most needed — be it in the kitchen, wash-house, by doing housework, publishing, or work with the children — outweighs everything else. How glad she is now that she can devote herself to the work without having to worry about her little child, for she knows her child is in the loving and understanding care of her sisters! She feels with thankfulness that her children — whether at home, in the baby house, school or nursery school — are surrounded by the same spirit, by a harmony which, as one can observe, the tiniest sense especially deeply, for they are always most happy and content where a loving, harmonious atmosphere holds sway.

It is the voluntary decision of each family to give up its children from the first weeks of their life to the education of the community. This is done from the deepest urge and desire that everything in our life may be communal, and that our little ones may also grow into the community life of the children. We experience in our joyous children that a blessing rests on this: that it is not said without reason that education begins during the first days of life. Although in the case of small children this is still unconscious, no one can deny that even a very small child notices when he is the centre round which a whole family revolves, and in this way an innocent baby can soon become a little tyrant. From the very beginning this danger is given no foothold when so many children grow up together.

At the moment, there are in our baby house twenty-eight children of between six weeks and two years of age. In the green room there are seven little babies of six weeks to six months of age. As two baby's baths have been built into this room, two children can always be bathed at once, so that the tiniest ones can be taken out as soon as possible. The bathing of the smallest babies is a special joy. While doing this one can observe much: when the head is raised for the first time while lying face downwards, when the baby first laughs, etc. All this is told the mother when she comes, and is also faithfully recorded in a separate book for each child in which the graph of its weight, and any special notes, such as changes in food or signs of illness, are written. In the case of illness a doctor is called in.

Half an hour after their bath the little babies are taken outside, so that the mothers usually find them in the garden when they come at ten

and two o'clock. The babies are, if possible, outside all day, and their bright eyes, rosy cheeks and little brown legs bear witness to the good effects of light, air and sunshine. It is a great joy to watch each sign of progress: the first laugh and gurgle, the first time they try to reach their rattle or begin to play with their little hands and feet, or turn over from their backs on to their stomachs or vice versa.

At half past four in the afternoon they are brought in and washed, and those who are not breast-fed (though at this age this is rare among us, as nearly all are the children of our own families) are given their bottles before they are taken home by their parents at six o'clock. (The babies' food is kept in a refrigerator in the pantry.) When the babies have gone their room is thoroughly cleaned so that they come every morning into a clean and well-aired room.

Opposite the room of the tiniest babies is a smaller but just as sunny room for the children of six to nine months of age. These, at the moment, number four. The daily routine of these children and the equipment of this blue room are the same as for the youngest babies. It is, however, important that they are given a mid-day meal, which is prepared in the baby house kitchen. They require more room for movement, so have bigger baskets, which can be moved about on wheels made in our turning shop. At this stage several new developments are to be seen: the first effort to sit up alone or to crawl or roll about, the first tooth. To give the desire for movement free play and to stimulate crawling we lay each child for a quarter of an hour per day in a pen on a blanket in a soft white washable cover. It is most amusing to watch them striving to roll about to reach a ball, and crying with annoyance when they do not at once succeed! At this stage also one can experience the joy of hearing the first consciously made sounds, like 'bay-bay-bay', etc.

Now the children between six and nine months have reached an advanced age, so are put on to four meals in the day — two bottles and two spoon-fed meals — and go into the orange room where the children between eight and fifteen months are. Here they experience their first birthday — a great day! Until they are a year old they are bathed daily in the baby house and washed at home by their mothers in the evening. When they are one the mother takes over their daily washing, and they are now only bathed twice a week. They are observed daily to see if another tooth is arriving. Every sign of progress is rejoiced over: when they begin to play, when, with some help, they take their first steps and walk along beside the rail. There are five children in the orange room. They have still their wheeled baskets for sleeping in, but they have also two pens on a cork floor in which they can crawl, stand and learn to walk! If the weather is at all good they are outside all day, either in their pens or drawn in a little donkey cart — an event

that always evokes great jubilation. The first words formed are a special joy to the sisters and the parents: when they begin to say 'da-da', 'ma-ma', 'by-by', 'light', etc., daily adding more sounds. At this stage one can often see how differently children develop — how one can stand alone and walk at a very early age, whilst another cannot even stand up alone, but observes and repeats much.

When they can walk properly they go to the large sunny play-room of the children (at present seven in number) between fifteen months and two years of age. There the floor is covered with cork so that they do not catch cold when toddling and crawling about. The walls are panelled with brown wood, and in the room there is a bath and a chest of drawers containing napkins, etc. Here there are little benches, chairs and tables where the children take their meals — breakfast, dinner and supper. The food for the children of about a year and over is prepared in the large community kitchen. The room used by this group is next to the verandah where the children play when it is raining and they are unable to go for a walk or play in the garden. The verandah, unfortunately, is too small for all the children of this age, so that the two groups play there alternately in the morning and afternoon. At such times "Josephine", the donkey, is hailed with special joy when she comes to take a group of toddlers for an outing.

MONIKA ELIZABETH TRÜMPI.

Our Toddlers

It is a fine morning. So we decide we will take our group of toddlers for a ride in the donkey cart, instead of the usual ramble round the farm lanes. Hastily a schoolboy is summoned and despatched to bring the donkey with as much speed as possible. Already the more impatient, understanding the meaning of the conversation, cluster round the verandah gate, determined to be the first to leave. We speedily finish all the preparations in time to see "Josephine" led towards us. Chairs, blocks, benches and rocking-horses are dragged with loud cries to the side of the verandah and climbed upon to watch the donkey's approach. With slower but determined steps the less nimble force their way to the gate, each resolved not to be the last to leave. It takes some minutes to harness the donkey and during this time a great wailing and mourning fills the air. Cries of impatience, whimpers and anxiety, howls of rage, feverish pushings and pullings, are all caused by the fact that the door remains firmly shut.

At last small clinging fingers are detached from the door. It slowly opens and then all scramble and tumble towards the donkey cart. Quickly they are lifted in and a place is found for each. Many radiant

little faces chuckling with delight or twitching with excitement peer eagerly over the sides. All is ready, so off we go.

Our "Josephine" never, never hurries yet her pace suits us very well indeed. The children point to trees and flowers by the wayside. A motor car whirling by leaves them filled with awe and astonishment. But the appearance of a stray dog causes a frantic commotion, and cries of 'bow-wow' linger in the air long after the animal has disappeared.

So after many such moments, we reach, at last, a quiet field where we unload the children, one by one, to run around and explore. The first to return receives a little lunch, a rusk or some fruit, and when this is observed by the other children, the donkey cart again becomes the centre of attraction.

When appetites are a little appeased, we make haste to put the children back into the cart for time is getting short.

The return journey is always done quickly. Even riding in a donkey cart can at last pall upon little folk under two. A few faces look weary and eyes are just a little vacant. Perhaps "Josephine" looks weariest of all but she manages to arouse a sparkle of energy and off we go.

Soon we see the verandah once more, and all the little hearts, filled hardly an hour ago with great desire to leave it, are suddenly filled with happiness to see it again. Now it means dinner, and then a long, long sleep after a very full and strenuous morning.

GERTRUDE VIGAR.

A Ramble with Little Folk

I should like to give an account of a ramble with little folk. Five little boys and three little girls, all between two and three years of age, were my companions.

Our goal was our Oaksey Bruderhof. When I told the little group that we were going to make an excursion they were quite thrilled. They at once wanted to know if we were going in the donkey cart or in the motor van. Heiner wanted to know if we would go in a blue van. Whereupon Johannes answered emphatically, "No, in a green one!" The little rascal then even wanted to go in a red car. When I solved the colour problem by telling them the motor van was nearly yellow, all were quite content, the main thing being that it *was* a car.

We wanted to leave after breakfast. Johannesli just could not understand why he should first go to the nursery school for breakfast. He had seen the van waiting and was filled with anxiety that it might go off without him. We arrived at the nursery school in a flood of tears. Here we were met by roars from Heiner. I found the little fellow stand-

ing in a corner in the rest room, with his rucksack on his back, simply dissolved in tears. His face was quite red, his eyes were scarcely to be seen, his mouth was wide open, and he could hardly breathe. On seeing me, however, he yelled, "Dorli, ramble, not breakfast!" with all the power of his lungs. I managed to pacify him and bring him to breakfast by promising to go quickly to the drive-away man (as our small children call the driver) and ask him to wait until Heiner had had something to eat.

Overjoyed, the little group left the nursery school after breakfast. They ran as fast as they could to the van. Never had we reached our goal so speedily as we reached it that morning.

Quickly I went to get some fruit for the children, who jubilantly clambered into the car. When eventually the car started the enthusiasm knew no bounds. Konrädli pleaded, "Dorli, sing". And Heiner, who had completely forgotten his distress, began, with a voice just as powerful as it had been, "Halli hallo, we're wandering through the world", and we all helped him. With a beaming face Burgel kept calling to me, "Dorli, it's rushing so!" On our arrival at Oaksey, they soon discovered a number of ducks. What shrieks and quacks! It was our plan to go to the neighbouring wood, together with the children from the Oaksey Bruderhof who were in Ruth's charge. We soon saw, however, that we might indeed reach the wood, but that it was questionable when and how we should get home again. The children found so many things that made them forget that we had to get on. Then a whole herd of little pigs came strolling along. Datta had discovered them. Now all the children ran after them yelling. The poor creatures escaped with difficulty. Although not harm, but only love had met them, who can read that in such a storm? But snails and beetles also awakened very great interest. Burgel came running up with a very tiny snail, "Dorli, it smiled at me!", she cried, quite enraptured. An empty hay waggon came by and brought an end to the search for beetles. That was yet another joy, for the children were allowed to get in, and they love riding so much. We were drawn by a pair of easy-going oxen. Little Datta was utterly happy, and kept calling out, "Dorli, we're in an ox-cart!" She must have thought that oxen and Oaksey were one and the same word.

So the morning went by. They had their mid-day sleep on comfortable thick straw sacks. This they enjoyed very much and went to sleep happily. In the afternoon we went to see all the animals in their sheds, Evelein was especially thrilled by a gigantic pig that grunted happily when stroked. The little girl clapped her hands and kept calling out tenderly, "Pig dear, pig dear!" A snow-white calf enraptured all. "Is that its mother?" asked Heinerli, pointing to an old cow standing near the little animal. "Where is its father?" Johannesli wanted to know. Little

Hansli, who lives at the Oaksey Bruderhof and was our guide, showed us a bull at the other end of the byre and said that was its father. Konrädli's great round eyes suddenly grew serious, "Hush! or the father will hit us", he said a little anxiously.

We then went for still another little walk, on which Daniel discovered a water-pump. The small boys immediately gathered round it, and tried to discover what it was. Johannesli thought it was a stove. Daniel then soon found out that the handle could be moved, and oh! wonder, water spouted over hands and feet, and little mouths were also ready for the next spout. Burgel ran on alone. She had seen a house, before which was a lovely garden. She at once opened the garden gate and went in. I called to her that we were not allowed in. But Burgelein did not understand. In her short life she had never yet come across a house into which she was not allowed to go, and in which people lived whom she did not know. She looked at me with wide open eyes. A worm, however, pushed the whole matter on one side. Full of joy at her find she came running to me. The lovely wriggling of the worm must have made little Pauli want very much to hold one end of this long something also. Burgel did not understand the game, so the poor much-loved worm was in great danger of becoming not one worm but two. I did not enjoy this, so made short work of the matter by taking the worm and throwing it into a field, whereupon two voices roared in chorus. I saw that my little wayfarers were beginning to grow tired, so we turned back. As a finish to the day Ruth had prepared some good things to eat—to which they did justice. Sweets were also there, as a part of all festive and unusual occasions. They tasted better than the best.

Content and happy, we returned home. In the van Danielchen stood upon a seat and called a warm good-night to every grazing cow, horse and donkey that we passed.

Going round a specially sharp corner, Evelein slipped from the seat. It was then that I discovered a little old coal-black cooking pot in her hands. "For Mummy" she whispered happily. "Mummy will be very glad, Evelein", I said, whereupon her little face grew still brighter. And the mother really rejoiced over the love behind her little girl's gift.

That was our outing with the youngest nursery school group.

DORLI BOLLI.

Life in the Nursery School

One group of our children consists of four boys and five girls between three and four. Most of their time apart from eating and sleeping is spent in free play. The little girls are very fond of playing 'mothers and fathers'. They have a doll's bed big enough for a small

child. When pretending, the mother is generally very kind and sympathetic, the father more stern and the children incredibly docile. One of the little girls has recently come from Vienna, where her parents still are. She will sometimes for a whole day call another child of her own age 'Mummy', sit by her, play with her, call to her when in trouble, and seems really convinced that the other little girl is her mother. Another day she will say to one of the grown-ups, 'You are my mother'.

This little three-year-old Elizabeth, who knew not a single soul amongst us, was old and sad and silent when she first came. Occasionally she cried "Mummy's not here", but not often. She has gradually become a different being, a child who plays, laughs, runs and is sometimes even a bit naughty. She became a part of her group more quickly than almost any other child, is loved by them, shares in all they do, singing in a high, treble voice her own version of our songs.

The children are fond of most things that other children like, for instance water and sand, with which they will play for hours, making coffee in a bucket, tea in an old tea-pot, a mountain (always with tunnels), cakes and puddings. One day I found them baking and brewing so we made a wedding table of sand, decorated with flowers, put little shells all round for cups, sand cakes on the table, and one child was the bride and one the bridegroom. We sang a song of a birds' wedding and all drank 'tea' out of our shells. Sometimes we go out with dolls' prams and wheelbarrows, sometimes with reins, sometimes taking balls to play with, chasing one another, seeking flowers or when it is hot, paddling in the stream. One happy experience was when we rode on a wagon drawn by oxen past all the workshops, over the fields and up on the Down to where the men were haymaking, some of them fathers of the children. When the weather is hot, we run water into our paddling pool and let the children splash naked in the sunshine. Indoors they build motor-cars, castles and huts with blocks large or small, play with wooden animals (on wheels), look at picture-books, model with clay, draw, make things with sticks, etc., usually each making something different.

They are very much interested in their own little brothers and sisters and like to show how well they can walk or stand or whatever it may be. Also worms, snails, ladybirds and such small insects are of great interest and one little girl rarely comes home without some small creature in her hand, quivering with excitement and complaining that it will keep on getting out of her hand. The smallest snails, worms, etc., are the most beloved.

Nearly all their favourite songs are about the sun and about Christmas. The latter is a very big experience in their lives and is always coming to expression in their play and songs.

BESSIE HARRIES.

Concerning the Work of the Pre-school

One of the four bungalows, which up till now have been at the disposal of our children's work, belongs to our children of five to eight years of age. During the past year we have had a group of such children varying in number from twenty-two to twenty-nine. This group forms a little fellowship of work and play within the greater children's community, and is itself composed of three smaller groups. The eldest children are real school-children, who do their school work daily with both earnestness and zeal. The second group, the five to six-year-olds, is our little pre-school proper, which is on its way gradually from play to real school work. The youngest are still of nursery school age but already take a great interest in the school work of the bigger children.

Our pre-school group is an experiment, which we have made for the first time in England, as an attempt to adapt ourselves to English school conditions. So far it has proved itself justified. The gradual introduction to school work awakens joy and enthusiasm in the children. They already feel themselves to be out-and-out school children. Should it so happen that one day they only paint or do some form of hand-work, they are disappointed and say there was really no school that day.

As is the case with all the bigger children, the usual daily routine in this house begins after the children, from about four years of age upwards, have had breakfast with their parents in the great community dining-room.

The children find their way quickly or not so quickly, as the case may be, to the children's house, for it is possible to meet only too many things of interest on the way. It sometimes happens that the sisters working with the children find the house quite empty on their arrival after breakfast. Then from afar they hear lusty and joyous singing: "Halli hallo, we're wand'ring, we're wand'ring through the world", and after searching the Bruderhof grounds they find the little company marching on its own around the houses and squares singing; and succeed in capturing it like a swarm of bees.

In general, however, all the twenty-four little inhabitants of the pre-school house meet with the sisters in the common-room to begin the day together. This time together every morning bears a very varied character. It is in a special way influenced by what the larger community of the brotherhood is experiencing—in so far as that is understandable by children of this stage. The birth of every little baby is celebrated; the arrival of a new family talked about; loving interest is taken in the progress of any member of the community who may be seriously ill. The different seasons and festivals naturally influence this morning meeting very much, especially in the songs learnt and stories told. Thus it is that for the children and for us grown-ups, the time before Christmas

and Easter is always of special significance. For children of this age sense much of the deep mystery of what took place at Christmas and Easter, expressing what they feel in their free drawings, and sometimes also in original songs and poems. Some morning gatherings also serve for the children to talk over among themselves any want that has been felt or this or that instance of naughtiness and selfish behaviour, and to find a better way. Again and again headstrongness and disobedience, talking ill of others, rage and egotism are fought against. They also talk over the way in which they should treat new children. The right treatment of animals and flowers is very important to children. Again and again the children are ready to make a new beginning, to fight with their whole hearts against what is evil, what destroys community; and to follow what is good. At their own request such talks often end with the song which was composed by a little girl of their own number, "We all want to be good within our hearts. . . ."

After this time of being together in the morning, work begins in earnest. The children separate into groups. Schoolwork, or rather the concentrated occupation of the smaller children as a gradual preparation for school work, is no compulsion to the children, but a joy. Without being told to do so by the grown-ups they get their things—pencils, exercise books, etc.,—from their lockers, and wait expectantly for what is to come, and urgent requests are often made for some special work.

By means of various materials practice is now given in manual dexterity; the shapes of the letters and numbers and very simple words are learnt; imagination and memory are stimulated by listening to and learning stories, songs and rhymes; the observation of nature, which is so strong in children, is cultivated by a detailed observation of plants, animals or the weather. This observation is much helped by the children's own little garden in which each plants and cares for his own plot. Whilst this is going on the youngest group (of nursery school age) is occupied freely, but just as intensively, with the most varied materials. Our children express what is going on within them chiefly in free drawing with coloured pencils, painting or work with gummed paper. Imagination is never lacking and the less skilled children and those who are shy are stimulated by the enthusiasm for painting of those who have a more lively gift of expression, and are helped forward and carried along by them. Very rarely does a day pass without painting. Yet the pictures never become uniform. One can always recognize the characteristic peculiarities of the different children in their drawings. The children often live so completely in their pictures that a boy in the pre-school group, on drawing the story of Red-Ridinghood, declared "I really am almost afraid of my wolf, because it looks so dangerous". An impartial observer of this Red-Ridinghood picture would indeed have had to make an effort to discover the wolf in the picture at all!

When the pre-school group and the group of nursery-school age have been occupied concentratedly for about an hour to an hour and a half, strenuous work is over for the day, and (when the weather permits) all storm and surge out to their beloved little wood which lies near the pre-school house. Each child knows at once what he wants to do. Most of them ask to be allowed to climb trees, and even the smallest boys are often very skilful climbers who can sit at the very top of the highest trees. Some build themselves huts under the bushes, bringing all manner of treasure trove to these places. The girls often sit somewhat apart and play with little dolls made by themselves of sticks, wool and leaves, or they weave themselves garlands—some of which are surprisingly well made.

In this way the morning usually passes quicker than one thinks and it is time (almost 12 noon) to go into the house to prepare everything for dinner. Dinner does not last too long. Then everything is cleared away and the children have the chance of helping of their own free will to do many different kinds of housework. Some wash the dishes. Others give themselves with enthusiasm to the work of wiping the red tiled floors of the corridor and wash-room with a wet cloth—an especially loved task. The boys bring the pails in which food was brought to the children's houses, back to the main kitchen. The seven-year-old girls all sit in a row and plait their hair—a laboriously acquired achievement. All have something to do before the whole house is quite tidy, and the pre-school and nursery-school children have washed and lain down to sleep in their rest room. Most of the smaller children are especially ready to help with the housework, as this presents a very welcome opportunity to postpone going to sleep. Before long, quiet reigns in the whole house. The smaller children very soon fall asleep, after one of their number has told a story made up by himself—a task for which they are never at a loss.

Their sleep, which lasts from an hour and a half to two hours, is brought to an end by the arrival of the grown-ups from dinner. Then the parents and children have an opportunity of being together during the free hour. On the bell ringing at half past three the children once more gather in their house. For these children the afternoon is above all one of free play. Often they go for a walk during which they are always on the look-out for new flowers, birds or nests. Sometimes the afternoon is spent working in their little gardens, diligently weeding and watering. In the afternoons, especially when it is raining, games and the acting of little plays thought out by the children themselves play an important part. Several children, both big and small, gather in a room to prepare a surprise. Sometimes they take the whole afternoon over it. When they have thought and talked everything over, they go and get clothes, coats, veils, jackets, etc., to change into secretly. The play usually takes place

during the children's supper. Those who are not taking part this time sit still in their places, and the whole atmosphere is one of reverence. Then the door opens and the players come in in a long line, usually singing.

In such free plays, the experience of Christmas, of Mary, Joseph, the Christ Child and the angels finds expression even in the midst of summer. It comes again and again with the greatest variations. It lives in the hearts of the children the whole year round. Often, also, the children get inspiration for their play from the mystery of nature and the plant-world. Then they are flower fairies, one being the Moon Princess or the Queen of the Night or some such being.

They express what they are feeling in free and spontaneous rhythmical movements. And although they do not always know beforehand what they will be playing, they all let themselves be filled with the subject in question, so that it becomes a really communal play in which all are carried along by one rhythmical movement. The presence of the listening children—none of whom dares to disturb—and of the sisters who care for them, does not make them feel shy. Before Christmas especially these plays last long after supper is over. Then they all set off together as Mary, Joseph and the angels, kings and shepherds from door to door, through the little wood and round the houses, singing one Christmas carol after another from the rich store of songs our children possess; until eventually they are brought home by their mothers to be put to bed before it is too late. From all these experiences, which are really deep and heart-moving, a genuine children's community comes into being, a community that is able to weld together different elements and characters, the quarrelsome and the conciliatory, the rough and the gentle, the egotistic and the self-forgetting, and all the other contrasts in human nature to be found among children as well as among grown-ups. Community arises among the children, so deep that it can only be the working of the good Spirit to whom every genuine child is constantly ready to give fresh place in his heart.

ANNE MARIE ARNOLD.

How our Children learn English

In our Bruderhof school we have children whose mother tongues are German (including Czech and Swiss dialect), French, Dutch and English. Thus teaching is in many ways more difficult, and in many more colourful, than in more usual schools. From the very beginning in 1920, when the Bruderhof was purely German-speaking, English was taught in the Bruderhof school, and there it was that the editor of *THE PLOUGH* learnt his first English.

As one of the first to join the Bruderhof from Britain, I can recall my amazement at the older school children. English was for them no merely academic subject, but a living link with a new part of the world. We knew no German, and they were brimful of the desire to get to know those who had come from a foreign land to be their brothers and sisters for life. Their English was often quaint and school-bookish but they had the master key that we so longed to possess: they could speak to us as much as they wanted, whereas, when we wanted to express ourselves to our new brothers and sisters, many of whom knew no English, we had to get an interpreter.

Now we are all in England, and the learning of English has become more vitally necessary than ever. How then is it done in our community school? For about half an hour every day our children of kindergarten age learn nursery rhymes, play singing games and listen to stories in English. Story-telling is continued right through the school, such tales as help to give a feeling for the culture and folklore of this country being especially chosen. Reading by the children themselves is not begun until they are about nine years old, because they have enough to do up till that age in mastering German reading and writing. After this stage simple stories are read, and the children are encouraged to think in English. Formal translation is avoided until the children have a fair grasp of both languages. As much speaking is done as the practical difficulty of having several small groups in one class will allow.

In the school year that has just ended only one very small class consisted of one group only. The children had not yet reached the reading stage, so many and various were our occupations during their four English periods per week. When it was raining we told stories, looked at pictures or played "Quartette" in English; when it was dry we went for walks. Sometimes we visited the farm-yard and garden, sometimes the bake-house (a favourite spot!), sometimes the printing shop or other workshops, and talked English—at least when constantly reminded!—on the way. At other times we learnt the names of trees and visited all the bird's nests known to us; or we gathered catkins or flowers for our housemother or for any one whom we knew to be sick. Talk usually arose spontaneously on the way and varied tremendously in range and depth; sometimes, in the true childlike spirit, showing an amazing insight.

One day these children had heard from the older ones of a letter read out at a communal meal. It was from a man who a year before had been our guest for several weeks, and had uttered barely a word during his stay. Now he poured out his life story. And what a tale of misery it was! Yet it was the story of but one tragic victim of a loveless order, among millions. Our English lesson that day centred round

the question, raised by the children themselves: why was he so silent? Why did he not tell us of his need and of his longing for brotherhood when he was with us? "Perhaps he thought we would also be unkind to him", said one, eventually. On another occasion a boy described a visit to Swindon, expressing his astonishment at the tiny gardens attached to the houses, each divided from the neighbouring gardens by a high railing. "And the people think they are happy!" he added incredulously.

A short time afterwards, one boy on being asked by one of our brothers what he learnt in the English lessons, summed it up in these words, "Oh! we just walk about and discuss the world's problems!"

KATHLEEN E. HASENBERG.

Es flog ein Täublein übers Dach

Es flog ein Täub-lein ü-ber's Dach, das sang so süß vom Je-su-lein,
 Wer flög dem Täub-lein nach? Ein schwarz Schwäl-be-lein -
 Ich wollt, ich wär ein Täubelein. -grau
 dann flög ich weit, weit übers Meer
 dann flög ich übern Rhein
 zum lieben Jesulein.

Text und Melodie von
Stöffeli. 7 Jahre alt.

Above our roof there flew a dove.

Above our roof there flew a dove,
 It sang of little Jesus sweet.
 What flew after the dove?
 A grey-black swallow fleet.

I wish I were a little dove,
 Then I'd fly far, far o'er the sea;
 Fly far, far o'er the Rhine
 To Jesus, whom I love.

Words and music by Stöffeli, aged 7.

Concerning the Life of the Junior School Group

Introduction

Anyone who has taught in a village or a town school knows that it is not what is learned during school lessons but the practical daily life that exercises the strongest influence on the hearts of children. Thus the education of children challenges us to form and shape life anew. We must *live* that to which we want to educate our children. We can only educate for peace when we live wholly for peace. We can only educate to brotherliness when we are brothers: to fellowship when we live in community. There is no more wonderful calling than the call to live and work with children in a community pervaded and filled by *one* spirit. In such a life, school instruction is but one part of education, which is very closely related to practical, daily work. To lead children in their fight for Light—that is the most wonderful and at the same time the most responsible task.

The group that I taught during the past year consisted of nine children (seven boys and two girls) from nine to twelve years of age. Among them were six Germans, a Russian with French nationality whose mother had had to flee during the Russian revolution and since then has lived in Paris, a Swiss and a girl from the Sudeten German territory.

The fight for community

The determining factor in the life of this group throughout the whole year has been an inward struggle. The fight for community broke out among the children. A singular period led to this fight. When we read fairy-tales during meals, one boy often said, "That's always the way in fairy-tales: one is fortunate and the other unfortunate: one lives happily ever after and the other is punished. I always know what is coming". One day, when we were all sitting together in a circle during the morning time of inner fellowship, a boy asked, "How can Jesus come into my heart? I can't see him. He can't go through my clothes. I only believe what I can see!" Most of the children agreed with him. We spoke long and freely about this and lost all count of time. I tried to show them how, behind all form, there is something deeper and more mysterious—life. "We can't see that" was the constant answer. For long the children had asked me, when I was about to tell or read a story, "Is that a legend or is it really true?" The fairy-tale world in which all children live had collapsed for them because they saw that much that is told in fairy-tales does not tally with reality. For a time they became little materialists.

Deeper observation led us farther. The sun became the centre of our school work. We discovered that no life can remain in being without the sun: that all flowers, grasses, beetles, flies—in fact, the whole creation lives in the vital strength of the sun. But even the sun could do nothing, if life were not already slumbering in the seed. When the children had *consciously* experienced how the sun's rays penetrate the hard window panes, I asked them, "Don't you think that the rays that come from Jesus can penetrate a hard wall, can penetrate your heart through your breast?" All were silent.

Societies arose. Two or three children joined together to fight for the Good. One society followed another as friendships varied. Disappointment followed disappointment, for the friendships lasted for so short a time. "Why do you change your friends so often?" I asked one day during the morning time of inner fellowship. "We don't want to do so, but sometimes we just can't bear each other," one child answered. At this tears came into the eyes of several. "When one of us wants to play, the other wants to ride; when one wants to read a story aloud, the others don't want to listen. So we can hardly ever do anything together." I told the children of the hard fight it costs us grown-ups to live day by day in peace and love, and of how only Christ can give the strength to do so.

A week or two later, as I was going through our little wood, I came upon two boys busily building a large hut. One of these boys had changed his friends especially often. "How long will the new friendship last?" I asked him. "Do you know," he replied, "I've noticed something. I don't really like him very much"—indicating the other boy, who was standing by hammering a nail—"and just because of that I want to be friends with him. One can only be good friends when one loves, and it's just those that one does not like that one must love especially." Filled with joy, I continued on my way. This boy had experienced something important. He had felt that love wants to include all; that it overcomes antipathy and that it has nothing in common with a feeling of sympathy or attraction.

Soon three, then four, were working with zeal and ardour at the new hut. The work took several days. Their enthusiasm was infectious. High up on a tree, not far from the site of the first hut, a second building was erected: a second society was called into being. Only skilful climbers could reach this hut. Soon, however, ascent was facilitated by means of an improvised ladder. Which hut would be finished first? Which would be the finer? Minor disputes broke out between the two societies. New incidents occurred every day, giving rise to a flood of complaint from both parties which seemed as if it would never end.

A poor, distracted woman, suffering agonies of soul, appealed to us for help. The children heard of her distress, which, indeed, made all

our hearts bleed. One evening, when I was once more on my way through the wood, I heard my name called. "I want to ask you something," whispered a boy in my ear. "May we have supper in our hut this evening?" "Why?" "We want to celebrate. The two societies have united. We have only one society now!" Radiant with joy, he ran back to the hut with the news of my assent. Hardly an evening passed without their singing songs for this poor woman, as an expression of their love. Joy and love, alone, were to characterize their day—only then did they feel that they could sing in the evening. Every day they gathered in the hut, and any one passing could have heard songs, interspersed with times of deep silence:

"Jesus is the Prince of Peace,
Over all his foes victorious.
He it is who soon shall reign
O'er the world in power glorious.
Come, O Lord, and through the night
Lead us onward into light!"

These times were sources of strength for the whole day. The children bound themselves to speak to any of their number who had done wrong and also to accept admonition themselves. The following example will serve to show how this was carried out. One morning on entering the schoolroom a boy received me with these words: "We are not united. We cannot read together. We must first talk it over". It turned out that one of the children did not want to let the others use his pencil-sharpener. "Why won't you let them have it?" they asked the child in question. "You got the sharpener from the whole community. It belongs to all and not just to you." After a while the child saw, without any help from me, that they were right. All decided to lay their pocket knives and pencil-sharpeners on the table first thing in the morning, that all might use them.

It is a great joy to us educators when waves of inner enthusiasm flood the hearts of the children. These waves have sometimes greater and sometimes smaller results. The fight for the Good breaks out again and again among the children. The Light seeks to win them. The hearts of the children turn to its rays. The Light leads them on.

Concerning school work

In the group of which I am here speaking there are no especially intellectually gifted children, with perhaps one exception. Their achievements in school are very average. The gifts of the children lie more in the field of practical work. They know where they are strong and weak, but do not let themselves be depressed as a result, for in communal life all work is of equal value, as all serves the whole. What matters to us is the heart—devotion in the work. Two ponies, three

donkeys, two goats, many rabbits, the gardens round about the children's houses, the community's departments of work: the book-binding shop, garden, farm, dairy farm and carpenter's shop provide them with ample opportunity for practical activity. In this field they do good work.

In spite of being more practically than intellectually gifted, this group is enthusiastically interested in everything. In our lessons we start from our home as the centre. Our home is where there is living community. Life at our Bruderhof communities, and the animal and plant life of our immediate environment, offers us such an abundance of material that the difficulty is to lay hands upon and give form to the right thing at the right moment, that is, at the moment in which the interest of the child awakens for it. First of all we explore the nature and history of the immediate neighbourhood. As the children are able to understand it the circle is gradually widened. One can only know the powers of creation in the whole world when one has first gained insight into the mysteries of the life about us.

In front of our schoolroom lies a wide stretch of cultivated land. On its being ploughed we discovered a large number of flints, including well-fashioned tools of the Stone Age. Immediately a great desire to collect seized hold of the little group. Every free moment was used for gathering stones, which were brought home by boxfuls. Even the smallest stones had to undergo an examination, and a lively imagination made it possible to discover something worthy of note in each nondescript little chip. What enthusiasm broke out when we discovered in our gravel pit, which was then being excavated, pieces of the antlers of a stag! According to the researches of a London museum this find belongs to about the year 2,000 B.C. Countless pieces of coal and cinders surrounded the bones. For three months our schoolwork was concerned with the life of these early inhabitants of the earth.

The children showed a special love for maps. They could scarcely conceive of anything finer than sketching and drawing maps. We soon discovered that the source of the Thames is quite near us. One afternoon we mounted our bicycles, meaning, with the help of a map, to follow the Thames to its source. After a long search we found it in a wide meadow. A strong spring rose directly from the ground, the water gurgling joyously as it surged from a deep hole. On our way home we followed the Thames and Severn Canal, whose long tunnel impressed the children. On another occasion we visited the Roman remains near Cirencester and the abbey at Malmesbury. A longer expedition was made by all the school-children to the Wye Valley. The princely castle at Chepstow, Tintern Abbey, the vast oak woods of the Forest of Dean left an abiding impression.

The mighty monuments of the Celts to be found in Wiltshire roused the children's admiration. A Celtic village came into being on our sand tray. Little figures cut out of cardboard enlivened the scene. On a hill stood a reconstructed Stonehenge. Large and small barrows and stone circles lent character to the landscape. Unfortunately we have so far been unable to visit Stonehenge itself, but a hike in this direction will, we hope, soon disclose this region to us.

All life is a symbol, a parable. Within the form lies a deeper mystery. The children of school age feel this in a special way. Thus it is our duty to give the children symbols, that is, what one sees must become the container and bearer of a deeper mystery. Thus, for example, it is not enough for children of this stage to see pistils, ovaries, petals, stamens, etc., with their eyes; but with their inner ear, with their innermost perception they must grasp the nature and hidden mystery of the whole flower.

The following pages are an attempt to tell how we experience nature together with our children. Our little school house was built two years ago in the midst of a field. It was necessary to make its surroundings more cosy and homelike. Our brothers saved us the hardest work in that they laid a little road. We wanted to change the field into a garden. Each sod of earth was worked upon with hoes and spades. All weeds were removed. We divided out the beds and sowed the lawn. Twenty birches and plum trees soon enriched the hitherto bare surroundings. To-day this little piece of earth is ablaze with colour.

We sowed very many sunflowers. Day by day the children watched their beds. When a sprout broke through the earth a storm of joy swept through the children's hearts. The sunflowers pushed their sprouts higher and higher. In autumn hundreds of suns beamed upon us. We placed one in our room. The mighty plant touched the ceiling. We examined the stem, the roots and flowers, and marvelled at the firm structure of the leaves. On rainy days we noticed how wisely the leaves had been arranged, in that they directed the water straight to the suckers. Some sunflowers had already lost all their petals. The seeds were arranged in a wonderful way. We were reminded by their lines of the mighty arches of Tintern Abbey. While the bulk of the seeds had become brown the outermost circle had remained milky-white. "Why?" asked the children at once. We examined the flower. The form of the individual flowers called forth admiration, and we tried to copy them with pencil, crayons and pastels.

Another day I placed a microscope on the table. As a brother wanted me I had then to leave the schoolroom for half an hour. On my return jubilation greeted me. "We have seen a grain of pollen through

the microscope. It looks like a shining sun. It holds fast to the stigma with its rays."

The different stages of the flower's development showed us other wonderful arrangements. The children soon noticed that the sunflower got its great brightness from a whole community of flowers. All these flowers are on one base, all are fed by the same sap. That all may bear fruit, they bloom in a beautiful order, beginning with the outside flowers, and by so doing the more delicate inner ones are protected. The radiate flowers drew special attention. They are the messengers of the community who attract the bees. Their clear shine made us conclude that they possessed special strength. We had for long known that in each seed a mysterious life was slumbering. We opened one of the seeds of the radiate petals: one of the seeds that had remained white. Now we knew the cause of the light. These petals sacrificed even the life-energy of their seeds to serve the whole community. They wanted to shine and give forth light.

All these discoveries, all these experiences gave us material for further work. Some words and conceptions such as radiate flower, stigma, stalk, evaporation, to shine, to bend, to shake, etc., had to be understood and their spelling learned.

Our observations led us to frequent exercises in style. On one occasion sunflowers waving in the wind, on another their shining radiate flowers gave rise to a search for the most fitting expressions.

We received much inspiration for our arithmetic lessons. First we counted the seeds of a sunflower, each child receiving a little heap. We wrote the numbers and added them. One sunflower had one thousand, nine hundred and eighty-two seeds. Or we counted all the sunflowers that we had planted. By means of addition we got the answer three thousand, one hundred and twenty-five. On another occasion we weighed five hundred seeds, calculated roughly the weight of the expected sunflower harvest, and in so doing got practice in the English measures of weight, which were quite new to our children. Further practice in grouping the seeds in heaps of ten, a hundred and a thousand clarified the construction of the number system on the basis of ten from one to ten thousand, and consolidated what was already known.

Of course we drew sunflowers during this time. We did so with pastels on large sheets of paper. We often sang a song about the sun, because the whole sunflower reminded us of the sun:

I am the Mother Sun, the stay
Of the Earth by night, of the Earth by day.
I hold her firm and on her glow
That everything on her may grow.
Stone and flower, beast, man and tree—



Elfriede, aged 15.

"Once upon a time"



Elfriede, aged 15.

Children at play



Jennifer, aged 7.

"The Queen of the Woods" (Imaginative drawing)



Stöffeli, aged 8. "In the Mummel Pond" (Illustrating Manfred Kyber's fairy-tale)



All receive their light from me.
Open thy heart like a chalice fair,
For I will also shine in there.
Open thy heart, my child, and see
How thou and I one light shall be!

(Translation of Christian Morgenstern.)

Unfortunately we had no suitable reading matter; but we found a way to help ourselves. For long we listened in silence. We wanted to sense the innermost mystery of this flower. In the silence it was to tell us how it had received its name. Then without a word each child took up his pencil. In an hour we had written down what we thought in our hearts, and read the stories aloud. I shall close this account with one of these stories:

"It was at the time when Joseph, Mary and the Christ Child were persecuted. Once they went past a beautiful garden. There they saw a flower that was very sad and was weeping bitterly. When the Christ Child saw this he was sorry. He leapt from the donkey and went to the flower and said, 'Tell me, dear flower, why you are so sad'. The flower said, 'O Lord, I shall tell you. A little boy once planted me in the earth as a seed. I was not — and still am not — a beautiful flower. The other flowers do not like me and say I am very ugly and laugh at me'. Then the Lord said, 'I have heard enough. From now on you shall be more beautiful than the rest'. Joseph wanted to continue the journey, but Mary wanted to find out if the heart of the flower was aglow. So she said to Jesus, 'Are you very hungry?' 'Yes!' answered the Christ Child. 'Christ Child, you may have my honey!' cried the flower. Then he ate up the honey. When he had finished, he said, 'Because your heart is glowing and filled with love, from to-day on your name shall be 'Sunflower'.'"

BALTHASAR TRÜMPI.

The Child in the Children's Community and Family

Our aim is that our children become truly communal men and women; that the good powers and tendencies within them be developed in every direction, and that they, in obedience to their deepest inner urge, give and surrender themselves to the whole. We strive to let our children express in action what they sense and experience of unity: that is, express it in their lives and in actual work for community. To make this possible it is very important that all who live with the children should work in the closest co-operation. The brotherhood, the parents and all who have been especially entrusted with the education of the children strive that the community's children may fit themselves organically into the common life: that they may grow out of the children's community to take their place in the different departments and tasks of communal life.

From the very beginning of our community the life of the children formed the centre of our life. The children of one or two families grew up with an ever-increasing number of children, who were brought to us from conditions of great social need. Since 1931 many families have been founded within our own life, and with them has come a certain change, in that now there is a growing number of children who have been born in our midst, and who make a very strong claim upon all our powers. Amongst those who come from outside to join our life in community there are often young families, and every year new families are founded. Thus family life is a marked characteristic of the community, and through the growth of our forty-two families, our work with orphans and needy children has had to play an important but numerically smaller part. A quite new relationship has arisen from this between the life and experience of the child in the family and in the whole educational community, of which the family itself is ultimately a part. The more vitally the whole circle, grown-ups and children included, is pulsing with spiritual life, the stronger is the interrelationship of all and the more unanimous is the guidance of the children.

In the question of child education we find ourselves constantly faced with new problems, for we have had as yet little experience of such a large number of children, born in the families of our brotherhood, whose parents are all following one way of life, working at one work and eating at a common table. This constantly renewed search for the best way, for the way that embraces the whole child and leads him to unity within himself and to community, is something extremely vital. We all feel ourselves beginners in this matter and expect stimulation from each other and from new people who may be called to our life,

whose special gift for children can here find its fullest expression. The experience of our older children has proved that the fact that the children spend the day in the circle of their own contemporaries in no way estranges them from their parents. The morning, the free hour in the afternoon and the time with the mother when and after the children have been put to bed can be periods of intense fellowship, times together of intense educational value. Here the inner life of a child should have its living spring. Especially when at these times the children really come home, in the deepest meaning of home-coming, to what is good and living, true and pure, this gathering of strength within the loving circle of the family will bear fruit for the life of the whole community. It is just the variety of ways in which this is done within the different families that gives a group of children in the children's houses its own particular character. In one family the living Good is active in the love of the parents to animals or to flowers and plants; in another it is at work as a special interest in the starry universe: here there is a strong social emphasis; there a more mystical outlook and a deep fellowship with nature. All this comes together in the group of children, and the more vital the inner life of the family, the more varied is the stimulation and the more intensely do the children assimilate what is imparted to them by those educating and caring for them. Very often the sister in charge is herself the mother of one or two children in the group, and so a natural contact with all the children is given from the start.

One question that remains acute is: how far are all mothers equally capable of leading their children to inner depth and of caring reasonably for their health and cleanliness? It is a sign of how far our age is from God, that love to children must often first be awakened. Our age needs more real fathers and mothers. It is our will and desire constantly to awaken true understanding for children by means of meetings for parents, meetings for all who work with children, and personal talks. Thus from time to time the brotherhood concerns itself—sometimes for weeks on end—with individual groups of children and with each of the elder children. What we desire ever anew is not to judge the child by any moralistic or other standard, but to sense what the special calling of the child is: to sense and to further that which is unique in him. One must discover how each child in his own unique way and with his special gifts can best work for the whole. We seek to test ourselves in this. If a child through his special individuality is disposed to separate and isolate himself from the children's community, then it is the special task of those who live with the children, of both parents and educators as well as that of the child's compeers and older friends, to draw this child once more into the community; for only there has his special gift its place. In isolation the negative side of

his disposition comes strongly into the foreground. In this we grown-ups test ourselves as to how far we have really led the children to unity. It is needless to say that all these questions lead to very lively talks and discussions that are extraordinarily stimulating to our brotherhood.

We, the parents and educators, do not try merely by means of these talks to challenge and stimulate one another, but we give each mother the opportunity of trying to work practically with children, and, though each of us has much to learn, and some very much, yet every mother has a certain gift that comes to expression in this way—in feeding the smallest children or watching the children during their mid-day sleep, taking them for their morning walk, caring for them physically and nursing them when they are sick, or watching over the sleeping children in the evenings in the various family houses. And there is no mother who has not some such special task for the children in general as well as that of caring for her own family. With such a large number of children the question of the right education naturally enough comes constantly to the fore. It is also evident that the gift of leading and guiding children is not given in equal measure to all parents. Some parents must first learn to understand the impulses and emotions in the little soul, and learn through experience that each child must be treated as a whole, as a personality coming into being, and that this developing human being, however young, must never be the plaything of grown-ups. Any such superficial conception of leading the rising generation to the tasks of the future must be recognized as a deviation from the right way.

This question of how far parents and educators can work hand in hand seems to be especially acute among Zionists, for in different settlements they are seeking to solve it in different ways. In some settlements the children spend the day mainly in the children's houses and remain with their parents at night: in others they are in the children's houses by day and night, and spend only some time in the evenings with their parents. It is important to observe that even in the latter case the influence of the parents, both positive and negative, remains very strong, though the children spend very much less time with them. In this case, however, there is the danger that the relationship of the children and parents can easily become too sentimental. The children, whom one sees so little, are easily spoilt and become too strongly attached to the persons of their parents. Thus a contradiction can only too easily arise between the parents' influence, spoiling the children, and the task of educating them. We read in Hutterian writings of the sixteenth century that in Moravia for some time the children were brought up completely in communal children's houses and that even then the same problems were faced.

Whatever solution may have been found at different periods and whatever the consequences of such experiences, it seems to us essential that the way decided upon should be that which arises organically in the given situation. Everything else must remain subordinate to the aim of the education of the child: that he may develop freely the powers of head, heart, limbs and senses, and be directed and controlled by a will fixed on what is good: that he may become a man who lives and works for the whole.

It seems to us a high aim that all who have a place in the life of the children, by means of natural ties and special gifts of leading the young, should co-operate in the education of our children. This demands that the educational fellowship of the grown-ups should be living, clear, firm, strong and liberating. The children sense by instinct just how far we are aiming at a common goal with them and how far our life is an expression of devotion to this goal. That which pervades and fills our whole circle must show itself in the daily round in the family and children's community. Only then will it touch and fill the heart of the child. This is the responsible task of every sister working with children, every one called to lead them, and, to a very special degree, the task of every mother, because she has the strongest influence on the child during those years in which the spoken word is not of such importance, for the child lives wholly by observation and imitation. These first years of life are the basis of the whole future character formation of the child. In this early time of life, also, the foundation of reverence for the father and mother must be laid, and this is only possible when the children sense that parent and child stand under one common, eternal law, which does not lightly allow something to-day and forbid it tomorrow, or on one occasion laugh at some act of naughtiness and the next time rage at it, but which is and remains constant. If this basis of reverence is present in the case of a child, co-operation between parents and those who care for and educate him is simple and straightforward. The child who is filled by this reverence has found something on which he can rest securely. As he grows older he grasps that God is the Father and the Church the Mother. This reverence he transfers to all who strive with him towards the goal of eternal community and fellowship. To all who know human nature it will be clear that to educate each other to guide children, in a constantly growing circle, is a task demanding time and strength. The inner life of children is never stagnant, but is like a living spring. There are periods when the children themselves are our best helpers; when there is a burning longing within them to live for the whole, to do what is good, to help. There are times when all the children are filled and guided and led by the will for what is good. Children recognize early that it costs a struggle to live in the spirit of love. They want to be good, and sense

that for this they need the help of a good spirit. Was not the primaeval longing of mankind for true humanity, for the only man who remained utterly at one with the Eternal, stirring in the child, when, for instance, a seven-year-old, standing beside the cradle of his youngest brother and looking at him, said, "Mummy, he is so good. He has never done anything wrong, as we all have already. But if he only does what is good, then he will be the first really good man".

The child needs inner guidance. The life of the child reflects the surrounding world, and yet it is often a picture with features utterly its own. It is often hard to grasp how a note given them by us reverberates in their heart: how the echo is often much richer and stronger than the word spoken: how they give and love much more freely than we. Yet the children must be touched and moved in their innermost being, and it is our task to find the way to their heart. Often a child is inspired by an inner urge to take its part and pull its weight in whatever particularly concerns the whole community. Children like to do this in their own way. Thus in the early years of our community life, when there was a very great struggle for economic existence, they felt themselves driven to go from house to house to proclaim the common goal in their own way and help to meet the common need. The children, likewise, were always finding new ways of taking an active share in all that took place in the community. In a childlike way they sought to alleviate the suffering of people in need, to give joy to others, to sing songs to those who were sick and to visit them: indeed, to accept into the world of the children's community all that went on in the whole circle. They are ready to give themselves utterly, with all the glowing love and ardour of their little hearts.

These children, who are inspired by the will to give themselves, wage a constant warfare against egotism in themselves and in others. They want to live for all, and know that all that is good is also meant for all. Thus it was possible to experience the following: When a little girl, warmly hugging her grandmother, called out, "*My Granny!*", a slightly older boy said with amazement and emphasis, "*You are selfish! Why, that is the Granny of the whole world!*" If the children are drawn with us into the life of surrender and devotion, the giving away of little things is never a compulsion. The more strongly we, who guide the children, are standing with our whole being firmly built on the foundation of the whole, the more living will the children become and the more deeply will they take root in community life. The will to community, which must again and again take possession of our hearts and fill them with its light and warmth, is the common basis on which we can build up and carry on our educational work.

EMI-MARGRET ZUMPE.

The Children Speak

Why I No Longer Want to Leave the Bruderhof

The children form a children's community. They work, they play together; they do everything together. At the Bruderhof each person is a brother. I came to the community three years ago.

One evening I thought over why these people live together instead of each for himself. I thought and thought. Why then did God send all men together to the earth? That each might live for himself alone? No, that cannot be; for he could have given each a country in which he should live alone. But God wanted men to live together. That is why he made so much land.

Now another question came to me. Why do these people not fight? I thought: God has not sent men to the earth to kill each other, no he has not done it for this reason but that they might love and help each other. This, alas, is not the case in the world. At the Bruderhof I have learnt to know what brotherly love means.

Before I came to the community I had heard very little about Jesus. Now I heard about Jesus and I learnt more and more from the Bible. But I could not make up my mind. I thought over many things. Every evening a question came into my heart: "Do you want to remain at the Bruderhof or not?" Why did I not like life in community? It was too simple, for in Paris just before I left I had lived much, very much better. I simply could not answer.

Many weeks passed. One Saturday, I think it was, I heard one of the brothers say, "Whoever is willing to be little can follow Jesus". And what I wanted was to become rich later. I thought it over. Can I follow Jesus and love him outside in the world where there is misery and war? No, not very well. Then is not the way these people live the right way of life? Yes, I felt quite clearly that it is the right way. I got a letter from home. They are looking forward to my return they write. Should I leave the Bruderhof? No, I did not want to do that. I want to stay at the Bruderhof. Yes, now I have made up my mind to remain here, and it would be very hard for me to leave the Bruderhof. I used to want to fight for France. But when I think of that I have to say, how could I have wanted to kill men. And I saw that that is something no one who wants to follow Jesus can do. Now my wish is to be able to stay here to follow Jesus and to become a true brother of the community.

Georges, aged 12.

How We Work and Want to Live

A very old man came to meet me. It was Ludwig. Wolf was standing beside Adolf: "Well, how are you?" "Well", I replied. Ludwig is our compositor. Four men work in the compositing room. They are Wolf, Adolf, Chris and Ludwig. We all work together, for if each sets the type of his own books and does just what he wants then it is impossible to live together and to stay at the Bruderhof. THE PLOUGH is being set here now. We sell THE PLOUGH to all who want to read what is in it. It says, for example, that we must not carry weapons, that we scorn weapons, that we must not murder.

We must love and honour Jesus, as is said in the song: "Schönster Herr Jesu, Herrscher aller Enden". This song expresses how Jesus is above the whole of nature, above the flowers, trees, fields and everything living.

Jörgel, aged 10.

How Bessie Became a Princess

One evening, when a cool wind was blowing, and the harebells were ringing, and the elves were gliding amongst the flowers, and the red sun was sinking and a little angel was gliding down to earth on a moonbeam, a little maiden was going through a wood and heard the harebells ringing 'ding dong'. Nearby was a well and the maiden sat under a beautiful beech tree and said her favourite evening prayer. She folded her hands and said "Dear Father in heaven, take care of me this evening and night. I have no father, no mother, no brother and no sister, no house to live in, so I lay me down on the nice soft moss. Let thy angels take care of me, that I come into no danger". Then a shooting star shot down to earth, and brought the little child a jacket and a bonnet in case it should be cold, and the angel who came down on a moonbeam brought her two pretty blue shoes and socks, so that she did not need to go barefoot. She put the nice little socks on and laid the tiny shoes by her side on the moss. Then through the trees came the reindeer, big and little ones, and lay down by her side, and the squirrels brought her nuts for supper, walnuts and hazel nuts. Then she slept the whole night through. The next morning the elves brought her cobweb clothes and a veil so that she looked like a princess. Then the child went out of the wood to a king's castle, and she looked so sweet that everyone admired her. She saw the bright lights through the curtains. The king's son just wanted to seek a king's daughter, and so, when the prince saw the princess, he fell into her arms and wanted her as a bride. Then they were married, and the maiden's name was Bessie, she was the bride, the prince's name was Cyril and he was the bridegroom. And they lived happily ever after.

Written down as told by Jennifer, aged 7.

Our Barley Field on an Evening in June

It is evening. The sun is just setting and sheds a light, golden-red gleam on the green barley field. A gentle wind passes caressingly over it, carrying with it delicately gleaming clouds. Like waves, the corn is rocked hither and thither by the wind. It is quite still, but for the rustling of the great elms, whose wide-spreading branches cross the road in great arches, or for the trilling of a bird.

The sun sinks deeper. Its last beams gild once more the whole of nature, then, shining red, it sets behind the trees. The purple light grows faint, no bird is to be heard, and a faint haze covers the sky. Only the evening wind still rustles in the old elms and twilight descends gently upon silent nature.

Elfriede, aged 14.

In freiem
beschwingtem Rhythmus **Komm Jesulein!**

Ach Je-sus-kind-lein, komm her-ein in mei-nen klei-nen Her-zens-schrein,
es ver-langt so viel nach dir auf die-ser dunk-len Er-de, Ich möch-te so
gern in den Him-mel zu dir, wo die En-gel sin-gen und das Herz nur hüpf-t
und springt in der gro-ßen, gro-ßen Won-ne, Je-sus-kind-lein komm-komm-komm-komm
auf die-se Er-de! Je-sus-kind-lein komm-komm-komm ins Herz hin-ein!

Text und Melodie von
Christoph. 9 Jahre alt.

O little Jesus, come, come in!

To be sung freely, as if spoken.

O little Jesus, come, come in! Come into my heart's little shrine.
It longeth so much for thee on this dark sorrowful earth.
Oh I would so gladly go to Heav'n to thee,
Where the angels sing and hearts can only leap and spring
In great, great and wondrous rapture.
Little Jesus, come! Come! Come down to this earth!
Little Jesus, come! Come! Come into my heart!

Words and music by Christoph, aged 9.

Summary

The Fundamental Basis of our Education

During the many talks given by our members outside the Bruderhof as well as during the discussions we have with guests at the Bruderhof itself, one question is asked almost inevitably by every interested friend: How do you educate your children? What are the principles and methods underlying your school? What is the rôle of children in community?

In this booklet various members of the educational staff at the Bruderhof have tried to give insight into the life of our children and also to convey something of the problems which have to be faced in their upbringing. Also the children themselves bring to expression in various ways what they feel, think and desire.

What is the fundamental faith which lies behind all our educational work? In answering this question we have to state at the outset that children cannot be educated properly by applying to them any cut and dried theory. Educational method grows spontaneously through experience. Life is a reality with an ever-changing variety of circumstances which surprise us with new situations and new factors almost every day. These have to be met, not with a fixed and rigid method, but with that flexibility and adaptability of living experience which is the characteristic of organic community.

This sovereign freedom is only possible on a secure and sound basis. Otherwise it would mean a boneless lack of direction and clarity. Only God, only faith in him, can provide a basis of life which is firm and unshakable like rock.

This faith leads to a realization of some of the basic principles of all true life and therefore also of education. These are as follows:—

(1) God is the central source and directing principle of all life. His eternal love is revealed in Christ. Where he reigns there is true brotherhood of man. From this centre and towards this goal all our educational work must be carried out under the guidance and supreme authority of the Holy Spirit.

(2) Education is a communal effort. Only in community can we educate for community: for the brotherhood of man which is to be found in God.

(3) The individuality, originality and autonomy of every child should be fostered and strengthened as a way to the true community which is the higher value. The way to community is the voluntary, joyful surrender of the fully autonomous individual to God and to his fellow men.

(4) Individualism, as the selfishness which destroys fellowship and

love, is to be combatted by strengthening and nourishing that which is good in the child. The fight against evil is only possible and effective if the educator, who must himself be completely surrendered to love, wins the active co-operation of the child. Therefore, true authority is of an inner nature, which naturally leads to outward order.

(5) The child is to be made conscious of the struggle between unity, love and harmony on the one hand, and separation, disintegration and destruction on the other. This struggle is fought out within every man as well as in the environment around him. Therefore it can be discovered in practically every subject taught as the fundamental truth behind all things.

(6) Faith in the ultimate victory of good over evil, of life over death, of unity over disharmony is the faith in God which is the basis of all true education.

From these fundamental recognitions all the burning problems of life in community, and therefore also of education, can be approached and mastered. If this little booklet gives some indication of how this works out in one particular instance, its publication will be of some help to all who are seeking in the direction of true life in God as the way to the true brotherhood of man.

E. C. H. ARNOLD.

Some Further Notes

The school of the Bruderhof has now moved to Oaksey, nearly five miles from Ashton Keynes. All children above the age of seven are accommodated in the big Manor House there, which has been described in *THE PLOUGH*, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 49. At present there are twenty-seven children of this age at Oaksey, including three boys who have been evacuated from West Ham, London. There are also sixteen smaller children, mostly babies or children of nursery school age, whose parents are living and working in the new community at Oaksey. Altogether this Bruderhof comprises about eighty people, men, women and children.

It is hoped to enlarge the school in the near future by taking in an additional number of boys. All those interested should write to The Headmaster, Community School, Oaksey Bruderhof Community, Oaksey, Swindon, Wilts. Ten more boys under the age of eleven can be accommodated and cared for.

We are sure that all our friends have read with interest the little printed letter which we sent out in October. There has been a continual stream of friendly replies, which we have found very encouraging.

We are glad to report that the tribunals for so-called "enemy aliens", which sat at the Bruderhof communities in the middle of October, have come to a favourable decision. It will be possible for our work to go on undisturbed, as our German members are now exempt from internment, and those who are mainly responsible for the management of our communal life have been freed from all restrictions, such as the five mile limit.

There is at present a great need for further funds for the extension of our work, especially as a growing number of people wish to join the community, who are in most cases practically without any means. Any further help you might be able to give will be very welcome. Cheques should be made out to the "Society of Brothers" and sent to The Steward, Cotswold Bruderhof Community, Ashton Keynes, Swindon, Wilts.

This number of *THE PLOUGH* is being issued in a special edition under the title "Children in Community". The price will be 2s. 6d.

The next number of *THE PLOUGH*, which is to be published in December, will include further news of the Bruderhof communities.

Meanwhile we wish all our friends courage, clarity and faith in these difficult times. May the peace of God (not that of men) soon be with us all!

THE EDITOR.

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

by EBERHARD ARNOLD

with an introduction by JOHN S. HOYLAND

All our friends will welcome the appearance in English of another of the writings of Dr. Eberhard Arnold. "The Early Christians" is his introduction to a collection of Early Christian documents originally published in German in the publishing house of the Bruderhof Community, while still in Germany.

John S. Hoyland, in his inspiring preface to the book, writes: "The unique value of the portion of the Early Christians written by Eberhard Arnold himself, and translated here, consists in the fact that the writer has used his studies in Early Christian history, which he here summarizes, as the basis of a severely practical endeavour to build up, in twentieth century Europe, a community modelled as exactly as possible upon the example here recovered and set forth".

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