

necessity of nations possessing deterrent weapons or of setting up efficient systems of defence on the frontiers between nation and nation. The "real frontier" through which war enters is man himself - it is through a devalued and socially disorganized Mankind that the universal enemy finds its way.

Maria Montessori

CONSIDERATION OF AN OLD MONTESSORIAN

Quoted from : "The Montessori Method, a Revolution in Education";

by : E. M. Standing; editor : The Academy Library Guild, Fresno - California, USA.

Great movements usually have small beginnings. They come into the world unseen, as a seed, and time is needed for their development. The greater and more original the idea, the longer will be the time necessary for the unfolding of all that lies within it. This is the meaning of Emerson's remark that "an institution is the lengthened shadow of a great man".

Though Montessori is no longer with us, it is quite clear that the development of her work is continuing and taking new forms. It is evident that the original impetus is still very far from being spent, and that her vital principles are still going forth conquering and to conquer. It is equally clear, too, that he would be a rash prophet who would attempt to put a term on their further evolution. Because many of these later developments have taken place in different countries, even in different continents, and among groups of people working in different spheres, it is not easy to get an over-all picture of what has happened, and is still happening, in the Montessori world - still less to judge what is going to happen. That is why diverse ideas are current with regard to the nature and significance of Montessori's work, and of the influence of the movement that goes by her name.

We may divide the various assessments of Montessori's work and its influence into four main groups.

To the general public, the name Montessori suggests little more than a special kind of school for teaching small children - a sort of glorified kindergarten. People have a rather hazy notion that it is a method that has to do with freedom - often, it is thought, with too much freedom, and "letting children do just what they like".

The average kindergarten teacher has a somewhat better acquaintance with the Montessori method. She has "done" it in her college course, along with other modern methods - Dewey, Froebel, Decroly, the Activity school, etc. She has probably been told that, as a system, it has its good points, but that too much stress is laid upon the Montessori materials - that its principles are too rigid and formal, that Montessori did not believe

in fairy tales, and as a consequence her system tends to hinder the free development of the imagination. Further, they may be informed that the method is now outmoded and that what was good in it has already been incorporated in other more up-to-date systems.

Next we come to a third group, better informed and much more penetrating in their evaluation of Montessori's contribution. This includes many psychologists, doctors, biologists and professors of education. These persons realize that Montessori's ideas, taken as a whole, constitute a new and seminal principle in the sphere of education - a sort of leaven which has worked, and still works, far beyond the limits of those schools which call themselves after her name. Typical of this group in England was the late Sir Percy Nunn, former principal of the London Day Training college, who wrote twenty years ago: "It argues no ingratitude to the great name of Froebel and his thousands of devoted followers to connect the new impulse which is everywhere at work in our schools more directly with the doctrine and labors of Maria Montessori than with any other single source".

To this third group also belong many of Dr. Montessori's own followers who have studied her method and now devote their lives to carrying out her principles in Montessori schools in every part of the world. For we must remember that this is an international movement, and centers for the training of Montessori directresses exist in most of the countries of Europe, in places as far away as Delhi and Ceylon, and now in the United States. Before passing on to consider the fourth group, let us note that all those we have mentioned so far have this in common: that they look upon Montessori primarily as someone who has invented a new method of education - the Montessori method.

ONLY TO THOSE WHO DID NOT YET PAY THEIR MEMBERSHIP FEE

May we please remind those who have not done so, to pay their membership fee for 1963 (there are some who are in arrear also for 1962).

It would save costs and spare us a lot of trouble if remittances could be made either by cheque or by paying into our postgiro no. 172110 before December 1st 1963. The money saved, by not having to write separately to each who has not yet paid his/her fee, will be of some help to cover the expenses which will have to be met in connection with the International Montessori Congress in 1964.

