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THE DANISH FOLK HIGH SCHOOL AS AN
INSTRUMENT OF ATTITUDE CHANGE

(Translation from the Danish)

1. How to create the right Attitude of Mind in the Young.

When the question of shaping the right frame of mind in young people arises, it is first essential to ask "Is there a wrong frame of mind?" and if there is, "What does that right frame of mind consist of, and why?"

It is difficult to-day to draw general conclusions as to the spiritual attitude of Western European youth, for the confusing experiences of the war have quite naturally created mistrust, perplexity and aimlessness in many minds. But it should be possible to indicate the characteristic trends of the period preceding the World Wars and the growth of the totalitarian systems, trends still significant to-day. The heritage from the nineteenth century's individualist and liberalist view of life - in spite of the powerful growth and rapidly increasing influence of socialism - is still an important factor in understanding modern youth.

We can take, as a typical representative of the 19th Century mode of thought, the theories deriving from the political economist, Adam Smith. Adam Smith never lost sight of the welfare of the whole, but he considered that the motivating power in economic life was self-interest, that is to say, the individual's desire for personal gain, and he believed, somewhat naively, it seems to us, that Our Lord had so ordered it that, if only every individual worked with all his might for his own narrow ends, this would secure the largest possible production and, as a consequence, the maximum of welfare for all. For it is work, he said, which creates value.

Adam Smith's teaching on this point is only a half-truth, but, even if his mistake is understandable, it has nevertheless proved fatal. We can perhaps best understand the matter through a metaphor. When a physicist wishes to represent force, he draws it like arrows, whose length represents the quantity of power, 50 kg. 100 kg. etc and whose points indicate the direction of the force. If we were then to conclude that the combined forces could be obtained simply by adding the quantities of the different forces, it would be a serious error. The total result in power is also conditioned by the direction of the different forces. Two horses can pull more than one, but only if they strain at the same end of

the cart. We can - to keep the metaphor - imagine that the many forces are so divergent, that they only produce tension at the spot where they operate, without causing any movement or performing any work. For different forces to work together with all their strength, they must be parallel, which they are not automatically.

The limited truth in Liberalism's outlook was not immediately noticed. The powerful results from the free play of forces seemed sufficient justification for the system. Under Liberalism's banner the white man became ruler of the entire globe, while progress in Natural Science and the splendid results of technology greatly magnified the productive strength of man. If anyone objected that freedom obviously had most value for the strong man, while the less well-endowed had small satisfaction from the free play of power, he could be referred to biology. Had not Darwin proved that the struggle for existence was Life's inexorable law? The weak must bow down and the strong prevail in the battle for life's privileges. To the victorious it is given to reproduce and perpetuate the race. The fight of man against man is the condition of growth.

To-day most people realize that if human dignity is to be preserved and the cultural heritage of Athens and Jerusalem saved, a law must prevail mutually between men and between nations, other than that of the jungle. For the liberal view of society in the 19th Century the great commandment was "Work". To-day we realize that that commandment is insufficient. It should read "Work together".

Co-operation is an absolute necessity. Without it no family can survive. Without co-operation between groups, classes and parties within a race, the race must perish. Without co-operation between nations, every race encounters poverty, want, annihilation. But that does not settle the matter, for co-operation can assume many forms, of which the two most significant are the totalitarian and the democratic. The totalitarian is the method of the military state, even in countries governed by democracy. Co-operation organized on the totalitarian pattern is the most effective, because the many individuals fit into the whole, and the whole functions as a fighting unit with many limbs, all governed, however, by the same brain. It is understandable that statesmen are attracted by the power concealed in a totalitarian state, but it is also understandable that the many ordinary individuals fight against this form. The individual becomes merely a number in a series, a cog in the wheel, and there are few opportunities to develop his feeling for freedom, his life, his creative talents. It is not, however, my task to estimate here the value of the totalitarian system.

The characteristic of co-operation according to the democratic pattern is that it is a free co-operation between free people. Far greater opportunities are thereby given to the individual's initiative,

desire for freedom and natural sense of responsibility: but democratic co-operation is more difficult to establish than a compulsory form of it, because it makes far greater demands on the individual's understanding and character.

The motives for voluntary co-operation may also differ widely. They may be positive or negative. They may spring from the individual's will towards co-operation or can be created by outward pressure or common danger. It is well-known that the quickest and easiest way to create unity is to invoke terror.

In a herd of animals terror creates solidarity, whether the reaction be joint flight or joint defence. The circumstances are the same in the world of men. When sorrow or misfortune strikes the family, its members stand together, even though in daily life they find it difficult to agree. When enemies threaten the country, a coalition government is formed and otherwise quarrelsome political parties work together. The disadvantage of this unity created by outward pressure is not only that it usually breaks down when the danger is past, but that it demands a danger, an enemy, to unite against. If one cannot be found, then it must be invented. Whether the enemy is Kulak or Bolshevik, Jew or Nazi, depends upon circumstances. Even where organization is natural and necessary, it may unfortunately happen that one side constantly organizes against another, industrial worker against employer or vice versa, and treats the other as an enemy, although both parties are in the same boat and totally dependent the one upon the other.

There is another regrettable feature in terror as a motive for co-operation. Terror calls instinctively upon the will to fight and this will to fight inspires fear in others, which in its turn stimulates the will to fight. We have here a vicious circle which constantly threatens the peace of the world.

The task before us then can be formulated thus. How can the will towards free, democratic co-operation both between groups and parties within the country and between countries, be called forth and maintained in the young? Free and voluntary co-operation demands certain conditions, not merely that all parties be unanimous, but that the parties in question trust one another's honour and goodwill. We might also put it this way: the condition of voluntary co-operation is that both parties be committed to a higher consideration than themselves, i.e. to a certain ethical standard.

Modern states are amoral; they recognize no higher consideration than that of their own security and power. Whether individuals are bound to common fellowship by religious duty or by a humanistic self-evaluation, is not in this connection what matters most. The decisive factor is that

a person shall be committed to something higher than a purely selfish purpose.

2. The Danish Folk High School.

It will here be appropriate to give an account of the idea and work of the Danish Folk High School, since this movement has, for a hundred years, worked to create fellowship among Danish youth. It is no easy matter to describe in a few words the D.F.H.S., which is stamped with the founder's outstanding personality and with those special historical premises which apply to the Danish people.

N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783-1872) was a clergyman, politician, historian, and poet, but, first and foremost, an educator of the people. He was born in the Age of Enlightenment and experienced Denmark's military defeats both in the Napoleonic Wars and in the loss of South Jutland in 1864. But he also saw his life's great dream, his High School ideas, take root in the Danish people, indeed, in the whole of Northern Europe, albeit in another shape than the one he had originally contemplated.

Through the great figures in a people's history, that people becomes conscious of itself. The power and views which are latent in the people's mind, here break through to clarity. The great man may be unappreciated or even persecuted by his contemporaries, yet he imprints his deeds on the future of the people. In him the people realizes itself, its individuality, its mission. Grundtvig is the greatest figure Denmark has nurtured for centuries and it would be difficult to understand the Danish people without him as a background. His name is heard wherever any question is raised about people or religion. His word leads in the field of attack and defence as though he still lived among us, and when, in the evil years of the War and occupation, the Danish people gathered to seek fresh heart and courage, it was chiefly around Grundtvig's songs that they gathered. Grundtvig was naturally also a child of his time: he was inspired by German romanticism and had his view of freedom's significance strengthened by his study tour of England. The feeling for spiritual freedom was his already, but the value of economic freedom only became clear to him when he encountered free and effective civil life in England. He thought the spirit of the North more of a reality in English trading companies and industrial towns than in his own native land. He heard Thor's hammer ringing in the English factories, as he expressed it in his mythological language.

But however much foreign material he picked up, he had a talent for assimilating it so completely and so converting it in his fertile mind, that he became for many the incarnation of everything Danish. It is in the time of a nation's defeat and humiliation that great views on education

are born. It was after the defeat of the Athenians in the Peloponnesian War that Plato wrote his Republic, where he set out plans for a completely new education of the young. It was during the misery and terror of the Thirty Years' War that Amos Comenius in exile developed his pedagogic method and his plans for the Folk School, hoping that when all children were taught that those who lived on the other side of the frontier were folk like themselves, peace and understanding would reign between nations, and wars would cease. When Napoleon's troops occupied Berlin, J. C. Fichte delivered his speeches to the German nation and reminded them that even if the nation did not then govern its external life, it still had power to educate the young of the race: that it was particularly then that it was worth educating a people to set itself high aims and to be prepared to sacrifice itself for them. It is not, therefore, so remarkable that Grundtvig, during years of tribulation in Denmark, grappled with plans for a completely new people's education.

Years passed before these plans took shape in Grundtvig's mind, and it was longer still before they were realized and the first F.H.S. built in 1844. It was not until after the defeat of 1864, when South Jutland was lost, that the Danish people was prepared to follow in earnest in Grundtvig's footsteps. In the years following 1864 a series of F.H.S. were built all over the country. By the end of the century they numbered 75.

In our day not only has Denmark suffered defeat, but the whole of our Western cultural heritage is threatened. This disturbing fact may perhaps provoke a receptiveness to new ideas on education and the foundation of a new fellowship between peoples. In adult education, which has meant so much to the Danish people and to their Northern neighbours, Grundtvig may now become a help and a pioneer for a yet wider circle.

Grundtvig insisted that the right time for education - both general enlightenment and personal development - is youth. When a small child gets an answer to a question which it cannot as yet comprehend little good is done, possibly harm. Youth, as Grundtvig says, is the creative hour, the time when a wide outlook must be opened up, when the mind's grasp must stimulate the individual to active life.

In order to understand Grundtvig's ideas on education it is essential to understand what he means by Folk High School and by the word "folk" (folkelig).

The element of "folk" pertains not to what is popular, or easily comprehended, let alone to what is vulgar. Neither is it the same as "national", that which emphasizes what is one's own and therefore different from what belongs to other nations. "Folk" concerns a whole

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people, those values which a whole people can share in. The opposite of "folk" is that which is distinguished by class or party, where the differences within a people are more strongly emphasized than fellowship.

The High School is "folk" not only because it invites the young of the entire race without regard to social position or differences of religious or political opinion, but because it builds on just those values which the whole race can share in. The F.H.S. is built up on the view that true life can only be possessed in common with one's fellow men, and that some of the richest values a people possesses can be accepted and shared by all, rich and poor, high and low.

One of the most important workers in the Danish Folk High School said "The High School is where the teacher's abilities and the pupil's needs meet." Which means that every subject in the realm of research and spiritual life formed a High School subject; but, quite naturally, History, both the nation's own and World History, was the favourite. The same applies to Literature, especially that poetry which springs from the people. But a school for the young can use any subject which throws light on the mind of the people - sociological questions, economics, nature study.

It is not the job of the F.H.S. to take the young from their daily work, whether they come from farm, factory or office, but to encourage them to return to it happier than before. Grundtvig says on this point "The High School must work so that everyone goes back to his job with greater zest, with an enlightened view of human and civil conditions in his native land, and a blithe feeling of natural fellowship which participates in everything great and good that has been and will in future be achieved by the people to whom one belongs.

3. The Task of the Folk High School.

In its outward form the Folk High School is a boarding school for young adults. The pupils must be over 18 and should preferably be over 20. The school is like a big home for the 3 or 5 to 6 months a course lasts. All eat at the same table - principal, pupils and teachers. The community is imbued with a friendly, pleasant tone. The teaching aims at no vocational training and gives no testimonial of aptitude in any subject. It is the person, not economics, we have in mind. The aim of the High School finds frequent expression in many different forms, especially in those songs Grundtvig dedicated to the High School.

Here only a few lines will be quoted:

An even, cheerful, active life on earth

or: What sunshine is for the dark earth
 Enlightenment is for earth's kinsman
 Far more worthwhile than red gold
 Is to know one's God and oneself.

The task of the High School can perhaps also be more philosophically expressed by saying that it aims at a synthesis, while the ordinary schools are analytical in character. Take the first school for young adults mentioned by history, Pythagoras' school in Croton. Little is known with certainty, but the story goes that Pythagoras assembled in his school Greek youths with a desire for knowledge, and first had them taught the ancient sciences: Physics, Geometry, Mathematics etc. But when the young men had learned all that and came to Pythagoras saying: "Now I have learned all these subjects, but I am not yet satisfied; there is something missing, and that is the connexion between the subjects and the significance of the whole:" then, the story goes, Pythagoras took each of the young men into an inner courtyard and revealed to him the coherence of existence, co-ordinating all that the pupil had learned into a view of the whole and giving him a comprehensive view of the world.

The Folk High School works outwards from a view of the whole. The school which decides to assemble the people's youth under its roof, must give youth what it needs, and that is precisely a view of the whole. To this it may be objected that the teaching cannot in this way be objective, which is true. Science can only give us facts: appraisal cannot be scientifically proved; it is always a personal matter. The High School teacher must of course be acquainted with the discoveries of scientific research, but the point of view from which he sees them, the whole into which they enter, will inevitably be determined by his own view of life. The High School man will feel bound to bear witness to what is for him most worthwhile.

The founder of the High School, N. F. S. Grundtvig, was a Christian, and, historically speaking, the D.F.H.S. stands on a Christian basis. But the High School is essentially a place with a message to communicate, and schools with other than Christian ideas can justifiably bear the name of High School: The assumption is that the school imparts a view of the whole. It is this character of wholeness which explains why oral lectures play such a great part in the school's teaching. If one wishes to study a countryside from some particular aspect one can go through it step by step and examine all the details from the point of view of geology, botany, economic geography, or anything else. That is necessary for one who must know all the details, but it takes time and assumes certain special purposes. If one has

neither the time nor the special purposes it is better to go to a viewpoint and, under expert guidance, get the details assembled into a complete picture. The advantage of book-learning is that it gives the details; it is the lecture's advantage to give coherence and a view of the whole. It is true that students soon forget what is poured out to them in a lecture hour, but that also applies, unfortunately, to knowledge which the ordinary schools impart, if the individual has no daily use for it.

The human value in the words the eye sees or the ear hears lies not in the amount one can remember, but in whether what has been taken in contributes towards spiritual and personal growth. It is the same in the spiritual world as in Nature: the seeds scatter over the field in countless numbers. Most of life's opportunities are wasted, but the teacher has reason to be glad provided a little of what he imparts to his pupils strikes root and is to the good of the people.

4. The Influence of the Folk High School.

If one now asks how it comes about that young men and women are willing to offer time and money to stay at a school which confers neither examination certificates nor rights of any kind, the answers would vary. Some come merely because, in the circle to which they belong, it is the custom; others to revive half-forgotten school knowledge: some perhaps think chiefly of spending enjoyable months with their contemporaries, finding good companions, even perhaps experiencing friendships which may last a lifetime. Others have a conscious desire to gain, through History, Sociology and Natural Science, more knowledge and understanding of the world we live in. But at the back of all else lies a more or less conscious desire to gain clarity about oneself, one's ability, one's place in the life of the people and, if possible, an answer to the great questions Whence? Why? Whither? The profit from the High School also, of course, varies greatly with each individual. Perhaps it is only a pleasant break in a long and possibly monotonous working day - this may also be valuable, but the aim of the Folk High School is wider than that. The question is, therefore, whether these wide aims are achieved, or, to return to our starting-point, whether this open School for Youth calls forth and strengthens in the young that frame of mind which keeps initiative alive and has a will towards co-operation not only within the one race but between races. Since the D.F.H.S. have now been at work for a hundred years, it is appropriate to ask what experiences have been encountered and what results achieved in this respect. The answer is not easy; one can neither weigh nor measure within the personal world. Moreover, the D.F.H.S. has not influenced the whole of Danish youth direct. It is unfortunately chiefly the middle classes of the population whose children have attended the High School, while the youth of the towns, especially in industry, have sought enlightenment and orientation by other

ways, though the worker's own educational societies have also built High Schools.

It might have been feared that the Grundtvig High Schools, which are emphatically national, would become breeding-grounds for a narrow nationalism, expressing itself in hostility towards other peoples and in the extolling of self-sufficiency. This has, broadly speaking, not been the case. The attitude of the High Schools may be best represented by their view of Nordic problems. Within the High School there is much concern with co-operation and solidarity between the Nordic lands, and throughout the years the High Schools have always been in close connexion with one another. Nordic assemblies were held, where Nordic High School workers met in hundreds, while individual teachers have visited the Schools in the sister countries. But the High School people have always maintained that this solidarity must be built upon the right of each separate people, great or small, to develop its spiritual and cultural life in complete freedom. That free co-operation demands, in fact, that the separate peoples shall not only be, but shall feel themselves to be, free. That is why the Danish people found it right that Norway should become an independent kingdom in 1905 and supported the Norwegians' efforts to develop their own language, even though it meant that Danish, which had hitherto been the national tongue, was thrust into the background. In the same way High School circles appreciated the Icelanders' desire for independence, convinced that the old tension in the Icelanders' attitude towards Denmark, will disappear when the two peoples stand free and equal, and will be replaced by friendly, confident co-operation, as is natural for two peoples of the same stock, with centuries of history in common. The short time which has passed since Iceland became an independent republic suggests that this expectation will not be disappointed.

The attitude towards the other Nordic peoples presents of course no particular difficulties, so it is rather a question of the feeling in relation to our great German neighbour. The D.F.H.S. grew up in the shadow of the 1864 defeat and Grundtvig's remark: "All our hurt is German" was often quoted in F.H.S. circles. That the conquest and occupation in 1940 created deep-rooted anger against Hitler and Germany in the entire Danish people is comprehensible, but when Hitler was dead and Germany had capitulated, and when the mind had again to be focused on constructive tasks and the re-building of Europe, the D.F.H.S. people were among the first to extend a friendly hand to democratic Germany and were ready to resume connexions with those German youths who see the future not as a war of revenge, but as peaceful reconstruction, so that the Germans may once again be a respected member among races. It may also be mentioned that those minority laws which the German minority was granted in the 1920 frontier Regulations, and which in their liberality were taken as a model for minority law all over Europe, were drawn up by men belonging to the High School and imbued with its views.

Even now, in the post-war years, when a deep and comprehensible aversion to the German minority has modified the original arrangement, voices have steadily sounded from the High School circle, recalling that Denmark's treatment of the German-minded Danish citizens must be determined, not by what they have possibly deserved as retribution, but by what is consistent with the Danish people's view of spiritual freedom and human dignity.

5. The Folk High School and the Co-Operative Movement.

Now it is a good thing to have a wide horizon, so that the individual can see that those who live on the other side of the frontier are also men, but it is undoubtedly at home, first and foremost, that proof must be shown whether the individual has a mind and will towards co-operation. To show what the F.H.S. has meant in this matter, it is necessary to mention the Danish Co-operative Movement and the connexion between it and the High School.

The rules for working together in the economic field, now known all over the world as "Co-operation", were discovered not in Denmark but in England - in the very year when the first D.F.H.S. was established - but co-operation has in our country had both a special and a manifold application, so that Denmark is considered one of the leading countries in this matter.

It is easy to see that there is a connexion between the sturdy development of Danish agriculture in the generation before the first World War and the co-operative movement, nor is it difficult to discover a connexion between the Folk High School and the Co-operative Movement.

The High School's importance was not, as one might expect, that it laid down co-operation in its programme or agitated for it; we generally look in vain for this "subject" in the timetable. Its importance is more indirect. The Co-operative Movement is not built up by men from University circles or a socially interested upper class. Apart from the founder of the first co-operative society, who was a clergyman, the movement is nurtured and directed by ordinary people. A movement like this can only grow when from parish to parish and village to village people are found with the qualifications for starting and directing such small enterprises as dairies, Co-operative stores etc., men and women who can keep the necessary accounts, direct committee meetings and general assemblies and here the High School has been a great help to many. The High School's indirect importance is not therefore exhausted by extensive scholastic knowledge and skill taught or by impartial enlightenment on social problems and schooling in the form of parliamentary debate. All this can be given by any school. Emphasis should rather be placed on that awakening to an understanding of a people's oneness, which has always been the core of the High School's message.

Co-operation really only means working together in the economic field according to set rules and for the common benefit. A co-operative enterprise which does not pay cannot be justified, but it is also evident that, if this co-operation is to succeed, there must be a broad outlook and understanding among the members. The individual must not fail in his co-operation for the sake of some temporary advantage. He must have a different yard-stick for his transactions from what pays in each instance. Co-operating between separate homes, whether it is a question of buying the necessities of life or selling produce, will always mean a profit for the individual, but it is by no means certain that the profit is equal for all concerned. If, then, the undertaking is to succeed, the separate members must have a will to solidarity, based not only on the realization that it will be advantageous to themselves in the long run, but on an attitude of mind which can rejoice - not only at its own progress, but at that of others. He who is comforted in misfortune by reflecting that others are worse off, or whose enjoyment of his own progress is marred by the thought that the venture succeeds as well or better for others, is no friend of co-operation. That there seems to have been a good basis for the co-operative movement among Danish farmers is partly due to the fact that in hard times throughout their history they have been schooled in the lessons of reciprocal help and solidarity. Yet poverty and need have held sway in many places and at all times without engendering the desire for mutual help. It is certainly true that the High School's message has invoked the will for co-operation. If the High School, in narrating the history of the people, has sought to awaken in the individual the sense that he or she is not merely an individual, but a living unit of the Danish people, and has thereby invoked the will and strengthened the capacity to serve the people, then it has at the same time strengthened the will towards co-operation. For the young man - or woman - who, within the High School walls, has felt his oneness with his people and through it wished to use his strength not only to maintain and fend for himself in the struggle for existence, but also to help his companions and countrymen to the best of his ability, co-operation will be a natural field of action. So it is that, when an individual has experienced the feeling of kinship with his fellow men, he has also realized that he can never perform an important task alone, whether it is something as modest as the home "Co-op", or as great as World peace. One must have the help of others, too, but in such wise that they help from a sense of inward conviction and not by outward compulsion.

6. The Folk High School and the "living word".

A foreigner may think that the F.H.S. is the prevalent form of education in Denmark, but that is not the case. There is hardly a country in the world where such a big percentage of the population is in possession of an examination certificate. Now both energy and skill are needed to take an examination and these are in constant demand: though the High School maintains that these do not suffice, yet ignorance

suffices still less. When F.H.S. circles watch with anxiety the steadily increasing interest in examination schools, it is not through lack of respect for knowledge, but from doubt whether the mentality which the examination school, by its very nature, must call upon, is that which is required to rebuild the world through all-embracing co-operation. There may easily, of course, be some lack of synchronization between the school and the job that the age needs done, for the school staff is anchored to views which belong to the last generation and the examination school of today is certainly stamped rather with liberalism's injunction: "Work" than with democracy's "Work together". The examination certificate tells what the individual has been capable of acquiring in the way of knowledge, and the aim of the school was naturally that he should get as far ahead as possible, preferably beating all his companions by a head. That may be an excellent thing, but if we consider what is needed by modern society, the question is not what a man knows, but what he both can and will do in co-operation with others. It may easily happen that the examination school educates "swotters" and these societies do not need to train, for their innate faculties are sufficient in themselves. Furthermore, it is not sufficient simply to call upon the will to co-operate. That is a capacity which needs training. Teaching and school work must be so directed that the pupil both sees the value and feels the pleasure of performing a task in common. Here the Folk High School and the ordinary school face as yet unsolved problems.

Someone may say that that is all very well, but there is one premise missing, i.e. "that men are as good as they ought to be". The truth is, however, that self-assertion is Man's strongest instinct and the struggle for existence is the law of Life. At odd periods in history and in favoured parts of the globe the idyllic may prevail for a short time, but normally the individual, like the race, can only attain a desirable life by fighting. The truth of this must be neither concealed nor ignored, but at the same time it must be said that it is not the whole truth. Man has not only selfish, but also gregarious instincts, and the pleasure which comes from helping another to his feet is not less than that of winning a fight. A contributing factor to this is that in the last century something has happened which has altered the conditions of life more decisively than we have yet become conscious of. That technical development has transformed our daily life and impressed our vision we realize, but it is as though the possibilities of technical science have not yet sunk into our minds. We are still instinctively filled with the old apprehension that there are too few of Life's goods for our needs. Therefore I think "If my neighbour gets more, there is less for me." This view has certainly been true throughout the centuries, but it need no longer be. The capacity of modern science to produce even more than the necessities of life is such that, if mankind united its strength in confident co-operation to execute this task, there would for a long time be a surplus for everyone. We need only suppose that all the strength which in the World Wars was concentrated on destroying other people's

chances of life was concentrated instead on helping them on; but that knowledge which every reasonable man possesses has not yet penetrated our subconscious minds. If it were to happen, many difficult problems would be easier to solve. The new view will not sink into the mind overnight, so the only thing to be done is that those who have gained a comprehensive view should consciously take up the task.

Democracy's free co-operation between free people, with the good of all as the leit-motif makes great claims on the individual. So far we have spoken chiefly of the advantages and rights which democracy confers in contrast to the totalitarian systems. It is now high time to speak of those demands and commitments with which true democracy confronts the individual. For those who know the minds of the young there is one ray of light: these demands will not weaken their interest in democracy - quite the reverse.

If it is now asked "Have that view and those experiences of which the Danish Folk High School is the exponent any interest for countries other than the Nordic states, where the F.H.S. has been known for one, two or three generations? Are there here thoughts and views which can mean something to the reconstruction of Western Europe?" Had the question been put some years ago, the answer from the North would assuredly have been "No". The many attempts made to transplant the Nordic High School to non-Nordic soil have consistently failed. Today, however, the situation is different, for all the peoples of Western Europe now stand approximately where the Danish people stood when the High School was an aid to "gaining inwardly, what had outwardly been lost." Even if the practical form must depend on the individual mood and outward circumstances of the particular race, there is reason to believe that in Grundtvig's views on education - and it was he who urged that the historic view should be a world-wide one - there are values which carry a message to all western culture. Meanwhile, if a school is built by the different races to the Nordic design, and the time-table copied and set in motion, the results will be largely disappointing. The "nerve-centre" of the Nordic F.H.S. is difficult to explain and can only properly be understood if experienced, but, if Grundtvig were to express the High School secret in a phrase, he would call it "The living word". The living word is not merely the spoken word, that is to say the lecture as opposed to study. It is the word spoken by the man whose life is rooted in that of which he speaks; so that the word may, like a seed, germinate and grow in another's mind. The living word is the one which comes from a mind, itself gripped by it, and which can grip others so that they become committed to what they have heard. A living word is one that person can speak, who himself belongs to a living fellowship and can, through his word, draw others into that fellowship.

If there are to be found men and women with a desire to serve, vitally absorbed in the message entrusted to them - committed not only to party, not only to their own people but to that which for them has eternal validity, men who are bound to a living fellowship with their own people, to the whole of our Western cultural legacy, and to a religion: if they are to be found - and they are - it would be good that they should find one another and stretch their hands across frontiers and when they get working among their own people, they are likely to derive both pleasure and benefit from acquaintance with the views and methods of work in the Nordic Folk High School. If these people are not to be found, what hope is there for the future of Europe?

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