

ANTHROPOSOPHICAL AGRICULTURAL FOUNDATION. (From N&C 1932)

IT was not until four years after a number of farmers and gardeners in Germany and other central European had already begun to work experimentally on the lines indicated by Rudolf Steiner at Koberwitz in Silesia, in 1924, that was publicly known in England of the biological-dynamic methods of agriculture. The occasion was a lecture, given at the World Conference on Spiritual Science, held in London in 1928. So much interest was then aroused that an Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation was formed to further and financially support similar work in this country.

Dr. Mirbt was invited to stay in England for three years and act as Agricultural Adviser, and at the present time the number of farmers and gardeners willing to apply these methods is increasing; our Office keeps in close touch with them, and advice and practical assistance is always available.

Other English-speaking countries that now have representative workers have been affiliated and give a wider scope and field of interest to our work. New Zealand and South Africa are taking an especially active part in experimental work.

Quite at the beginning of the work in England when it was important to let an increasing circle of interested people share in the literature and information available from German sources, as well as to supply news of what was being done in England, a Circular Letter was type-written and sent round to, at first only about a dozen readers. This has gradually grown into a modest journal now printed and published under the title of "Notes and Correspondence," subscribers to which are steadily growing in number. In this periodical an endeavour is made to provide both theoretical and practical information on anthroposophical natural science as applied to agriculture and horticulture, as well as to nutrition.

Another branch of the Foundation's activity is the arranging of lectures, week-end circles for study, and conferences either held by invitation, or as opportunity arises. The lectures are usually illustrated by lantern slides from the laboratories of the Goetheanum.

Recently the work of the Foundation has found a growing interest expressing itself among towns-people, that is, among the consumers, for the consumer is today becoming more and more aware of the fact that the food offered him is no longer of the same wholesome quality as even a few years ago, and though the positive values of biological-dynamic products in this respect are not as yet fully understood, the consumer is ready to appreciate the purity and health-giving nature of food products grown by methods which methods which absolutely exclude all use of artificial chemical and often poisonous fertilisers and sprays in the treatment of either soil or plant at any stage of cultivation.

This growing interest of the consumer affects the work of the Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation in two ways. In the first place, it calls for careful and conscientious study of the consumer's requirements, and where the need arises (and it is usually present today). some general indication of right principles of nutrition and of better methods in the preparation of food in particular. In the second place the demands of the consumer must result in more

attention being given by the farmer and market gardener to methods which can fully satisfy these requirements. It is the aim of the Foundation to establish this co-operation on a real and firm basis of united work. A closer association between producer and consumer bears in itself the seeds of a new and far healthier economic and social life in the sense in which this has been fore-shadowed in Rudolf Steiner's book " The Threefold Commonwealth."

Up to the present time the Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation has depended on the financial support of those members who were the original guarantors, and have now for the last three years contributed the necessary funds.

It is felt today that the Foundation should now be supported by a definite membership and a more formal organisation. With this, the Annual Meeting held in London in December, 1931, were in full agreement, and the proposed Statutes were adopted without dissent.

It is hoped that the annual subscriptions of members (£1) will enable the Foundation to continue to publish the "Notes and Correspondence " to add to the general literature available, and also cover the current expenses of the work at the Office. The Agricultural Adviser will be ready to answer all enquirers and to give practical advice and help by correspondence, consultation, and visits to farm or garden. Arrangements for all these will be made by him personally.

Finally, the Foundation wishes it to be clearly understood that membership is by no means limited to those who have facilities and wish to work practically with these methods in farm or garden for everyone interested and willing to help in the solution of the critical problems of agriculture and nutrition, on the basis of a true knowledge of Man, will be welcomed.