

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A careful consideration of the material in the paper seems to warrant the following summations and conclusions.

Humane education as an activity of the humane organizations was first given expression by George T. Angell when he established the American Humane Education Society in 1889. Mr. Angell was also responsible for introducing the subject into the public schools.

Humane Education is regarded at the present time as the most important advance made in the development of the humane movement. This has been shown by the important place it is generally accorded at conferences and conventions of humane workers, by the fact that every society financially able to do so is supporting a humane education program, by the lessening number of prosecutions for cruelty in proportion to the number of cases handled, and by the enactment of compulsory humane education laws by an increasing number of states.

The passage of compulsory humane education laws by the states has given an increased impetus to the movement for the inclusion of humane education in the school curriculum. The greater impetus, however, has come from the activities of the humane organizations.

Among the aims and objectives of humane education those of a social and moral nature have been emphasized. All writers who have attempted to formulate the objectives of humane education have counted these broad aims at prime importance. "In its broadest and best sense humane education is character education," wrote one professor of education.¹

Programs in humane education have been largely limited to lectures and other special forms of instruction arranged by humane societies. In recent years these programs have been much improved and the most advanced methods of instruction have been adopted. This has been shown by an account of the numerous studies made by humane society members and employees in attempts to discover

1. Dickson, Julia, The Place of Humane Education in the Total Education Program, p. 2.

the best medium for the fostering of humane education, by a survey of the various methods used by the different societies together with a brief account of their reasons, and by the paralleling of these methods with the latest and most advanced tools used by the schools themselves.

In organizing programs of humane education the cooperation of school heads and teachers is essential. It has been shown that the failure of a humane educational program may depend directly upon the lack of cooperation either through failure to secure permission for a program in the schools or lack of follow-up work by the teachers.

Work in humane education can be divided into four divisions: a. prepared programs, given by humane society workers to the children in the schools; b. prepared programs given by humane society workers to the child as a member of an organized group other than the school; c. broad general programs (including contests, exhibits, Kindness Week activities, etc.) prepared by the societies and designed to reach the whole population; and d. formal school programs prepared by the teachers and planned to correlate humane education with the other subjects of the curriculum.

A growing tendency to regard humane education not as the peculiar property and particular duty of the humane societies but as an integral part of the whole educational program is evident. This has been shown by the reports of various individual teachers telling of their experiences along practical lines, by studies made by leaders of educational thought, by the adoption by numerous cities and towns of a correlated curriculum and by the attitude of humane workers.

The effort is made to have classwork in humane education centered about the children's actual experiences with animals and based upon their natural interest in animal life. It is felt that this approach will leave lasting impressions and develop permanent attitudes, whereas a textbook study may have little permanent effect.

Classroom methods have their place in the form of discussion of problems, demonstration talks, literature centering around animals, special units devoted to study of particular animals. However, there is insistence that these should be supplemented by first hand experiences with animals, nature walks, visits to shelters, visits to museums and parks, ownership of a pet, a school aquarium, and similar projects.

There is recognition of the need of providing definite training for teachers in the field of humane education. Miss Dickson lists the following requirements for the

teacher who will successfully integrate humane education in her teaching program. She writes, "A teacher should, therefore, (1) have an understanding of the breadth and scope of humane education; (2) be able to determine the place of humane education in the curriculum with which she deals; (3) have specific knowledge or information necessary for her special teaching level; (4) have an understanding of the patterns of child growth; (5) have an awareness of or sensitivity to every possible opportunity for aligning the work or humane education with the activities or the curriculum; (6) understand how to provide a continuity of interest through unit activities; (7) have an earnest and sincere appreciation of the work she is undertaking to do in the field of humane education." ¹

From these conclusions it seems reasonable to suggest that the most important lines which humane education can and should follow in the future are:

Humane education should be recognized as an appreciable part of general education and incorporated in the curriculum of the schools of the country. However, it should not be treated as a distinct and separate subject but should be correlated with the materials of other subjects especially in the elementary school. Humane education can be used advantageously as the incentive or stimulus for learning various subjects. It is important as a basis for an educational program centering around the natural interests of the child.

The programs of the humane societies can be used as sources of supplementary aids to the school humane education units. The advantages of formal assembly programs have been emphasized in the teaching of any subject whether it be civics, science, history or humane education. The societies have a wealth of illustrative material, such as moving pictures, literature, and practical examples of humane work like shelters and hospitals for animals, which is suitable for use in building classroom projects.

The societies should continue to develop programs designed to provide educational experience in the humane field in the child's out-of-school time. It is a definite aim of education to provide for worthy use or leisure. These humane educational programs given to the school child during the summer months serve as a means of attracting children to worthwhile pursuits.

1. "The Place of Humane Education in the Total Education Program", Educational Service Quarterly, The Alpha Circle of the City of Boston, Vol. 6, p. 2.

The fostering of humane education courses for teachers by the inclusion of such courses in the normal schools and by the establishment of summer schools similar to the Amrita Island Conference should continue to be an important phase of the work of the humane society.