

The American Teacher

Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.

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SOME CONSTRUCTIVE IDEAS IN THIS NUMBER

WHEN MEN are equipped with the prophylaxis of knowledge, our social problems will be solved.

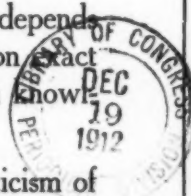
¶ THE STATE of tutelage on the part of teachers is opposed to social progress.

¶ DISCOVERIES in science are most welcome when they clear away some needless impositions of our daily life.

¶ TEACHERS may be represented in educational administration whenever they get ready for it.

¶ PROTECTION of the interests of teachers depends not upon law suits, nor upon "kicks", but upon exact knowledge and upon principles deduced from knowledge.

¶ CRITICISM of individuals is trivial; criticism of systems for the purpose of bringing about readjustment is necessary in order to prevent decay.



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

Editor, *The Fore-runner*

THAT BESTOWAL of information and development of faculty which we call education has long been recognized as important, but few yet realize how important it is.

If we did, if the people of the community rightly appreciated this supreme social function, they would bestow on it the devotion of their noblest minds, the eye-service, and love of their strongest, wisest, and best, and the unstinted supply of public funds.

If the process of education was truly understood and fulfilled it would gradually absorb and eliminate many other social institutions now considered needful, such as a great part of our elaborate legal and punitive systems, of our hospitals, poor-houses and asylums, and the shameful survival of militarism.

A normal social life, such as we may confidently look forward to as soon as we choose to have it, would anticipate and prevent evils which we now submit to with a blind and silly patience. It would equip its people, each and all, with the prophylaxis of knowledge—knowledge as full and thoro as the mind could grasp; it would strengthen them from birth with all the best methods of physical and mental development; and a people so equipped and so strengthened could face and solve our little tangle of political and economic problems without further difficulty or delay.

In the meantime we stand quite a long way up on the rising road of improvement. Behind us lies the remote period when education was wholly parental—as with the animals. The teacher gradually appeared *in loco parentis*, and then, little by little, took not merely the place of the parent, but the place of the state.

In a system of public education such as we have begun upon, the teacher represents society. As the parent, in the dwindling range of family affairs, still claims authority and furnishes instruction, so the teacher, in the constantly extending field of social function, acquires a larger duty and a growing power.

New methods of education are fast developing, but fully as important as these is the new attitude of the teacher, the recognition of the supreme power of that officer. The teacher has had an extended course of evolution like other social functionaries. For a long time he shared in the general degradation of women, the work of teaching being recognized as originally a part of motherhood. He or she shared also in the low esteem accorded to domestic servants, the governess or tutor being a person dependent of the family, and treated as such. Even in schools and colleges, so long as these were privately endowed, the teacher only ranked with other tradesmen; they must sell their wares to live, and cater to the patrons who supported them. Still further, when church or king set up endowed institutions of learning, such establishments were bound to reflect and maintain the views of their benefactors, and teach as they were bid.

Not until democracy began to develop did this great profession of teaching begin to rise above the dragging weight of its long past, and since democracy is as yet by no means fully established, we need not look for perfect freedom on the part of teachers.

So long as women were no part of the democracy, and yet were a large part of the force of instructors, there must needs be a feeling that teachers were somehow not citizens. Even when a more enlightened public opinion began first to teach the teachers, fitting them for their profession in Normal Schools, establishing Chairs of Pedagogy, and journals of education, and when civil service examinations gave at least a semblance of justice to the selection and gradation of teachers, still the profession remains a sort of stepping stone, for women until they marry, for men until they can go into some "better business." Those who stay in it permanently are theoretically honored, but in fact hold only a moderate share of public esteem.

The profession of teaching is of course

a fellow-sufferer with other professions in its dependence upon payment. So long as personal profit is a necessary element of work, so long will all the more primitive personal instincts push in the direction of personal gain, and the higher social instincts operate at a disadvantage.

This profession, however, is under a special disadvantage not shared by others. Our teachers are not merely placed and graded according to their proven merits, but they come under the censorship and dominance of Boards of Education, politically elected or appointed with no civil service examination to prove *their* fitness for the position, and yet able by their arbitrary rulings to seriously interfere with the teachers' progress, achievement, and freedom. The teachers are themselves kept in a state of tutelage, required to maintain a subdued and respectful demeanor, and even in some states prohibited from taking an active part in the election of their own governing force.

This is directly opposed to democratic principles, and to legitimate social progress. It constitutes one of those "vestigial rudiments," highly mischievous, with which society is hampered. We need some drastic operations for this social appendicitis, to rid the body politic once and for all of such discreditable remnants of dark ages long behind us.

The true line of development in all forms of social function is through the specialization of individuals to given

lines of work. Those who choose the teaching profession because of natural fitness and love for the work are the true teachers. They should then have the advantage of the best instruction and practice of their time, and be provided with every facility for their work. Then the greatest and best of them, the most successful with their pupils and the most gifted in power of organization, should be chosen by the teachers themselves for their Principals, and for members of the Educational Councils to administer the general affairs of the schools in city, county, state and nation.

At present our teaching force is of as small importance in the administration of education as the wholly inconsiderable corps of writers who furnish "reading matter" is in the administration of that important moneymaking business, a popular magazine.

Yet who can possibly know the needs of the children, the advantage of new methods, the kind of books and apparatus wanted, as well as the teacher?

Let our entrance examinations be as rigid as the community demands; let years of preliminary practice be required; let the parents, alert and interested, visit and inspect the school and the teacher constantly; let the children too have some voice in the choosing of the teachers they most love and honor; but having chosen the best teachers, we should certainly allow them to teach, with full responsibility and freedom.

GOOD AND SUPERIOR TEACHERS

Word comes from Illinois that a school inspection committee is empowered to place a plate on the front door of a school house when it is found that the school "comes up to the standard." The front door plate says this is "a standard school." Furthermore, the district gets a diploma for its virtue. Among the requirements for "a standard school" we select this highly significant qualification

"The teacher must have a high school education, receive a salary of at least \$300 a year and be ranked by the county superintendent as a good and superior teacher."

Evidently the old New England theory of high thinking and low living is maintained in Illinois. A superior teacher is essentially one with a lean and hungry look,

with a good and superior appetite left unsatisfied. That is as it should be. Psychologists tell us that the best work is done on a semi-filled stomach. And three hundred a year ought to keep even a ravenous professor from being overtrained. A good and superior teacher will not look to wistfully at a porterhouse steak if he wants a "standard" diploma.

If the front door plate says "standard" on three hundred a year, what would it say on the doors of bloated Eastern professors who complain bitterly that they cannot live on \$3,500 a year? Would a county superintendent from Illinois pass these purplehooded nabobs as "good and superior"?—*New York Sun*, Nov. 8, 1912.

NEW IDEAS IN VENTILATION

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THE OLD IDEA that ventilation was needed primarily for the removal of chemical poisonous products has gradually given way before the advance of physiological investigation. We know quite clearly now that the decrease of oxygen and the increase of carbon dioxide in breathed air never goes so far as to affect health under any conditions of normal human occupancy. The prisoners in the Black Hole of Calcutta died of oxygen starvation, but in even the worst ventilated schoolroom the oxygen changes in the air are far too small to be of practical importance. There are of course organic substances in the air, some of which may be detected by their odor, and some of which have recently been studied in delicate physiological experiments by Dr. Rosenau. There is at present, however, no evidence that these organic compounds produce any effect upon the health or comfort of human beings, except for the aesthetic displeasure, excited by odor, in a person entering a badly ventilated room from outside.

On the other hand, the careful and exhaustive physiological studies of Flügge and his associates in Germany, of Haldane and Hill in England and of Benedict in our own country, have shown that all the effects produced upon a human being by "bad air" can be produced by high temperature combined with high humidity, and that the effects of "bad air" can be relieved without changing the air at all by simply cooling the surface of the body. Surprising as they seem, these results are substantiated by a long series of experiments in which men in closed chambers re-breathed again and again the air breathed by themselves and others and were quite comfortable so long as the chamber was kept cool, while if the chamber was allowed to become warm and damp from the body heat and moisture they could not be relieved by breathing fresh air thru a tube from outside. It is of course

possible that chemical poisons may some day be discovered in the air, but it seems certain that the ordinary discomfort we experience in a badly ventilated room is due primarily to heat and moisture.

It is not so much then the air we breathe that is important as the air which bathes our bodies. This by no means indicates that ventilation is unimportant, however, but rather the reverse. We need fresh air but it must be fresh cool air. Mere air quantity to dilute carbon dioxide is not sufficient. We must have air of the proper quality as regards temperature and humidity; and such air has not been supplied by the average school ventilation system in the past. The ordinary schoolroom is ventilated on the principle that the air entering it will be warmer than the room and will gradually be cooled until it leaves. Hence inlets are placed at the ceiling and outlets at the floor. As soon as the room becomes too warm, just when ventilation is most needed, the system ceases to operate efficiently. The hot air in the room rises and tends to shut off the supply entirely, while the air which is forced in by the fans is now cooler than that in the room and drops to the floor outlet without mixing with the general atmosphere.

Since many ventilating systems have thus been designed without any conception of the modern physiological standards, and since many of them are operated so unintelligently as not to give even the results they were designed for, there has been profound dissatisfaction with the whole art of ventilation and a tendency in many quarters to throw aside "artificial" ventilation entirely and rely upon open windows. I cannot myself feel that this is the ultimate solution of our difficulties. I am familiar with the results attained by maintaining open air classes for special groups of children, but I doubt whether the whole body of children in our public schools would maintain their maximum level of health and

efficiency if they were kept all winter in outdoor air combined in the case of city children with the noise and dust of the city street. Or, if the attempt is made to maintain an ordinary indoor temperature while ventilating by means of windows we meet the difficulty arising from unequal distribution of cold air. The children near the windows will be too cold or the children away from the windows will be too hot, usually the latter:

The hope of the future lies in "artificial" ventilation, but ventilation on newer and more rational lines. In order to avoid any possibility of overheating, which is the prime danger, the air supplied must be always cooler than the air in the room, and its quantity and temperature must be so adjusted that it is always sufficient to remove the excess heat produced by human beings and illuminants. If cool air is to be supplied, the place to introduce it is at the bottom, not the top of the room, and ceiling outlets should be provided for the removal of hot vitiated air. Both inlets and outlets should be of such a number and so placed as to give adequate distribution of the fresh air in all occupied parts of the room.

While we are waiting for such ventilating systems, what can the teacher do? Two things, I think. First she should know what the conditions are in her schoolroom. This does not require any elaborate chemical apparatus but

just a plain thermometer, altho a wet and dry bulb thermometer, giving the humidity as well as the temperature, would be still more helpful. The main thing, however, is to avoid excessive temperatures, for with a low temperature neither dryness nor moisture are likely to be objectionable in a schoolroom. Yet I suppose nearly half the public schoolrooms to-day have no thermometers, or only broken ones. The teacher should keep one in her own desk if the school cannot keep one on the walls; and as soon as it passes 70 degrees, she owes it to her children to act. Very often it is not the design of the system that is at fault so much as the operation, and by less violent heating of incoming air or by some change in dampers the worst conditions may be relieved. If remonstrances are useless there remain the windows; and the crudest window ventilation, with all its defects, is better than elaborate systems of fans and ducts that keep the schoolroom hot. The thermometer should be as essential to the teacher as its clinical form is to the physician, for every time that the temperature passes 70 degrees she may know that the children are being hampered in their work and injured in their health, and she owes it to her work and to the children under her care to secure in some way a mitigation of the evil.

IN HIS ANNUAL address to the principals, Superintendent Maxwell of New York referred to Thorndike's *Education*, a good and helpful book from which we have printed several selections. Within one week the public libraries of Manhattan alone received over one thousand requests for this book from the readers. This might show that teachers (and principals) are anxious to improve themselves professionally, and take every

opportunity to utilize competent counsel. But we are informed that for five years certain branches of the public library had been supplied with carefully selected pedagogical periodicals—American, English, French, German, Scandinavian, South American, Italian and others. These received practically no use and were withdrawn this year. The teachers have not yet clamored for the restoration of the privilege of becoming acquainted with the thot abroad.

THE LEAVEN IS WORKING

HENRY R. LINVILLE

UP AT ITHACA, New York, they have a college president who is breaking away from the wellnigh firmly established traditions of the "presidential boss." It will be to the advantage of every elementary and high school teacher to keep in touch with what becomes of some important recommendations of President J. G. Schurman, of Cornell.

Dr. Schurman reports to the trustees of Cornell University that, altho the professors in American colleges are in most institutions fairly secure in their positions and in the right to freedom of thought and speech, yet they are much dissatisfied with other conditions under which they are compelled to work. These conditions our professors are unable to remedy because of their having no part in administration.

The President calls attention to the fact that the legal corporation of an Oxford or a Cambridge college is composed of the head and the fellows, who are the teachers of the institution. This body fills all its vacancies, and in other ways controls the college. In Germany the state furnishes the funds, but, except for the light touch of a minister of education, the government of the university is in the hands of the faculty.

The American professor "wants the same status, the same authority, the same participation in the government of his university as his colleague in England, in Germany and in other European countries already enjoys." Dr. Schurman says that what is needed in American universities to-day is a new application of the principle of representative gov-

ernment. He therefore recommends to the trustees of Cornell that they grant to the professorate the power to elect from their number representatives to the extent of one-third of the membership of the Board of Trustees.

The idea of President Schurman is not new. But it has never been seriously entertained by trustees or other educational administrators in America. On the contrary, it has been ridiculed on the ground that it is nonsense to think of an inferior officer being elevated to a position where he may judge his own acts as a subordinate, beside questioning the acts of his natural official superior. If one spent any time in meeting that argument, it would be to remark that the feudal system has long been discredited where it once existed, and that officially it never existed in America at all.

But in educational administration we are indeed living under feudal conditions. The feudal lord might have thanked his stars if he could have that of all the clever maneuvers that we know for keeping vassals in their proper places. However, the new day is dawning. If anyone who has seen a glimmer of the light, or has seen the rising of the new educational philosophy, wants to know how teachers are to go about it to claim a part in educational administration, let him be told that teachers can be represented on boards of education, if they want to be. Neither President Schurman nor any other college president would think of offering to professors the right of "a voice and a vote" if the professors had not been demanding it. There is the lesson for the rest of us.

TO BE GUIDED in elementary education by the promptings of the very natures that are to be trained, sounds quite illogical to the adult mind accustomed to look with complacent adulation upon its deliverances. We are still greatly, even if unconsciously, influenced by the old idea that the nature of children is intrinsically bad. They must be made over, remodeled on

a better plan—the adult plan—with large parts of them left out. And so we set up a psychical operating-table in every school-room, and proceed to cut each child according to our measure, forgetful of our own deficiencies, lopping off one individual trait after another, until we have made him commonplace enough to fit him into the traditional pedagogical mould.—Edgar J. Swift, "Mind in the Making."

IN RUSSIA, TOO

A. B.

IT WAS GETTING CLOSE. The air was sticky and stifling. Spring had come so suddenly that there was not time to shut off the ventilation system. The children were becoming uncomfortable. The teacher knew what the trouble was, and she knew how to remedy the trouble. But she had been instructed not to open the windows and as a loyal teacher, she followed instructions. How could she presume to teach order and loyalty and several other virtues if she did not practise as she preached? The windows remained closed. The children were showing signs of distress; but the windows remained closed. When the rescue party arrived, three children had stopped breathing and five others were unconscious. All but one were revived.

* * *

It rained on Monday—not very hard, but it rained. The principal looked at his calendar and remarked casually to the clerk, "We must have a fire drill before Thursday." Of course they must; it would be two weeks Thursday since the last fire drill and the regulations required that there be one at least every two weeks. It rained again on Tuesday—and on Wednesday. Thursday morning the principal said to himself, "We must have that fire drill to-day, rain or shine." Of course he must; how was he to expect loyalty and obedience from his subordinates if he did not himself set the example of strict and faithful compliance with directions received from his superiors? On Thursday it was pouring a whole menagery. However, true to his duty, the principal put his hand to the switch and emptied the building in two minutes and fourteen seconds. The children were drenched; on Friday many were absent—many more than on ordinary Fridays. But the experience was of great educational value to them all; we need not only exhortations to virtue, not only good models, but also practice in the disciplines of life.

We Americans are inclined to assume that only in our great country do the graces flourish and the virtues thrive. It is well that we should have brought to our attention examples of loyalty—and of other virtues—from lands across the sea: we need these things to broaden our outlook. A story just reaches us from Russia—that land we are taught to think of as backward and benighted, disorderly, chaotic, treacherous. A police officer was instructed by his sergeant to open the faucet in a bath-tub, as the sergeant wanted to bathe. Before he could get to the tub an emergency called him away, and he did not return to the palace for several hours. In the meantime the water ran into the tub—and out again, for the policeman had received no instructions about shutting off the water. He stuck to his post with the water rushing about him. The water ran thru the floor, thru the ceiling of the rooms below, soaked the furniture, ruined the wall decorations and the plastering. Ordinary officials in the building protested and shouted and cursed, but the policeman, loyal to his superior officer, stood fast and let no one touch the sacred spigot. Every loyal heart must accelerate its beat in response to the heroic action—or inaction—of this ignorant but noble soldier.

SABBATICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

INTEREST in sabbatical leave of absence is growing among teachers. Our readers will recall the table on this subject published in the last May number, and the further notes in the June number. A committee of principals in Denver has sent out a questionnaire with eleven questions to those who have taken advantage of the leave of absence under the Boston plan. A summary of the answers appears in *The Elementary Teacher* (Baltimore), for November. The most valuable result of the experiment appears to be the improvement of the schools thru the increased efficiency of the teacher.

AN OUTSIDER'S VIEW OF THE SITUATION

THE FOLLOWING are the main recommendations for reform in the common schools that Mr. James Phinney Munroe makes in his recent book, "New Demands in Education":

Much larger school appropriations, together with better systems of business management.

Much smaller classes—not to exceed twenty-five.

Higher salaries to competent teachers.

Better training for teachers.

A reorganization of most normal schools in order to bring about that better training.

The organization of the teaching profession (like that of law, medicine, and of engineering) for the purpose of promoting higher professional standards.

Limitation of the authority of school boards to matters non-educational.

Establishing of school "faculties" with authority, under the superintendent, over all educational questions.

Development of a rational and diversified school program to meet the life-needs of the average pupil, not the artificial examination standards of the college.

School buildings simply planned and furnished, but properly ventilated, heated and lighted.

Ample provision for physical training and for health teaching.

Education of each child as an individual, with due regard to his present aptitudes and future prospects.

"Social education"—that is, the training of the child to live usefully and happily with and for his fellows.

Wise development of manual and industrial education, leading to vocational training.

CREDIMUS

WE BELIEVE that the hope of educational regeneration for the schools lies in the possibility of arousing the teachers themselves to realize that their professional and social standing is far too low to enable them to produce effective results in teaching.

WE BELIEVE that teachers owe it to themselves, as well as to the public, to study the relation of education to social progress, and to understand some of the important social and economic movements going on in the present-day world.

WE BELIEVE that with an intelligent outlook upon life, teachers will be able to contribute from their experience in teaching the best ideas for the adjustment of education to the needs of human living.

WE BELIEVE that the work of teaching must be done by men and women of high purpose, without narrowness and without sex-antagonism.

WE BELIEVE that unless some tangible and important function in educational management and control is granted to teachers, it will be useless to expect much improvement in education from within, and useless to expect much improvement in the professional and social spirit of teachers.

WE BELIEVE that teachers will never get the right to a "voice and a vote" in the work for which they are especially trained, until a considerable number of them demand it themselves.

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It is the aim of this paper to better the working conditions of the teacher, thru sober criticisms of present educational administration, and thru discussions tending toward a general realization of the democratic ideal in all matters affecting the schools.

OUR FIRST YEAR

THERE IS NO simple rule of thumb by which we might compute the results of the first year's work of THE AMERICAN TEACHER. Subscribers have not flocked to our support by the thousands; neither has any educational system materially changed its methods because of our criticism. No organization of teachers in the city of the paper's birth has approved our policy; neither has any disapproved it. No educational autocrat has smiled the smile of indulgence upon us; neither has any lifted the mailed fist to crush us. Altho the color of our hopes, our convictions, is rose, the unlit horizon is slate or lead or drab.

The paper stands for certain *ideals*, "up in the air" to be sure, but placed there on purpose, so that they could be seen of all men and women. It has not

been expected that machine-operating educational officials or machine-made teachers would give up their "busy" work at once, to peep over the tops of their grooves. We have flashed small, but penetrating lights under their eyes, and on occasion have flicked their skins a bit. Once in a while some one looks up, and we think we see a gleam of hope illumine the careworn face. For the rest we wait patiently, but it will not be forever.

Socially and politically the old world is not only looking up, but it is busily engaged in climbing out of its grooves and ruts. Altho teachers should be of great power in facilitating the evolution of men, they are taking very little part in that wonderful process. If they do not arouse themselves soon, they may be aroused by the rest of society.

The policy of this paper has been to point out that teachers may bring about their own awakening and professional development, by taking an interest in educational and social problems of the day. In concrete detail we have advocated the plan of teachers becoming actively interested in the problems of their own teaching and in the administration of their own schools, to the end that they may in time be prepared to help, and to demand the opportunity to help, in the management of education itself. Only thru discipline of this kind does it seem that teaching can be lifted to the plane of a true profession that other men and women will respect.

Naturally, it is difficult to estimate the extent to which our efforts for our fellow teachers and for teaching has been attended with success. But this we know: A high ideal will make its way thru all kinds of opposition and neglect to the very hearts of men.

DEMOCRACY in school administration would not mean the soft rule of "flanneled fools." When occasion arose, the "iron hand" might descend with greater force than ever it has descended under one-man power. Every educational rascal or proven incompetent would have good cause to respect the might of the people's will.

AGAINST THE SYSTEM

THE PRESIDENT of the school board of a large city told us the other day that he had but one criticism to make against a certain report presented by a committee of principals. The committee recommended so many changes, and such radical changes, that the city's financial resources were being strained, the routine work of the schools was interfered with, and the children were suffering as a result. The president admitted that the changes recommended were for the most part good, and should be adopted—but, there were too many of them. We called his attention to the fact that his criticism had two edges to it: the changes demanded by the committee were so numerous because the school system had not been kept up to date; the farther behind it falls, the more radical and the more numerous will be the changes necessary at any time to make the system adequate. And this point any person of common intelligence can grasp.

In criticising the shortcomings of a system we must avoid attributing the "fault" to any person or persons. It is in the nature of *institutions* to *stand*; but it is in the nature of a living being to move on and on. Now a school system, or a business establishment, or a statute is planned for a specific purpose that has its limitations in time and space. But the human beings for whom the school system, or the business, or the statute is designed are constantly changing; the population of to-day is different to-morrow, the old die off and the unborn soon take their places. And with the new day and the new generation come new problems, new relations, new deeds—for meeting which the old system of schools or business routine or legal procedure is utterly inadequate, or at best but partially adequate.

We throw off our skins gradually, day by day, and our growth is never hampered by the skin. The lobster's growth is made possible only by periodical moults. An artificial embodiment of human ideas and ideals must necessarily

hamper the growth of these essentially spiritual categories, if provision is not made for facile and orderly readjustment. You may crowd the bedrooms as the family grows—but there is a limit. There seems, however, to be no limit to the crowding of class rooms as the city's population grows. When we cry out against placing eighty-five, or even sixty-five, children in one class room, we are not "finding fault" with anyone; we are pointing out that it is time to take counsel of the lobster, or the snail.

It is the business of a system to facilitate the functions of the human beings that compose it. When routine saves making hundreds of decisions in situations that arise with practical uniformity day after day, routine is a blessing. When we protest against the imposition of routine in situations that call essentially for that, it is not to find fault with the principle of supervision or with the supervisors, but to point out the danger in following the rules of yesterday with the children of to-morrow. The business of teaching must be carried on in buildings, apparently, and with books that are already stale when they come from the press; but it seems fair to ask whether it must be carried on in time divisions as rigid and as old as the buildings, whether it must be carried on by teachers and rules as stale as the books. Should not the teacher come fresh to her work, alert, open-minded, enthusiastic? And if the system petrifies, or takes too long to find out to-day what was needed yesterday, how is the teacher to do her work? That there is real danger in too must system, or rather too rigid system, seems to have been realized by the best educational thinkers. In this connection the following quotation from the 1892 report of Superintendent Maxwell, at that time in charge of the Brooklyn schools, may be of interest:

There is no more serious obstacle to progress than the principal who insists on teachers doing everything exactly in the way he prescribes; who will not permit a teacher to think for herself. Against this peril he must be constantly

on his guard. When it becomes or threatens to become a real peril, it is one of the first duties of the superintendent to step in and secure to the class teacher that reasonable liberty of thought and action, without which no teaching can be effective, no system of schools can be progressive.

We may ask in conclusion, without prejudice, whether this idea of protecting the progress of a system by protecting the liberty of the teacher is being effectively carried out anywhere thru reliance upon the vague duty of the superintendent. We cannot see how, taking Dr. Maxwell's case, a system which depends for its progress upon the oldest heads casually protecting the very sources of progress, instead of deliberately nurturing them, is going to adjust itself smoothly day by day to the new problems. Nothing is to be gained by fighting "against the system"; teachers will find their salvation in adjusting systems and in readjusting them.

There is something distinctly histrionic about the teacher's art, which is one reason why it is so exciting to those who love it. Every recitation should be an event. Many people think a teacher's life must be monotonous, made up of dull routine, because he teaches the same subject and the same lessons over and over again. Nothing could be farther from the truth. I know of no profession more exciting, more stirring, more thrilling than teaching. No one believes that an actor who acts Hamlet finds it monotonous, altho he repeats not only the same words, but the same gestures, the same attitudes, the same intonations. There is no monotony in teaching the same lessons to different pupils, not if the teacher is a good actor.—William Lyon Phelps, in "Teaching in School and College."

A PRINCIPAL who reports against a teacher without having first made himself thoroly familiar with the defects in her work and, secondly, having given her abundant warning, criticism and assistance, fails utterly in his duty. William H. Maxwell, in "Report of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Brooklyn, 1892."

SOMETHING MORE ABOUT SUPERVISION

A PROMINENT high school principal of New York City said recently to a member of the staff of THE AMERICAN TEACHER that if teachers object to the way they are treated in the judgments on "superior merit," they must take some positive stand on what they consider the elements and conditions of a fair and exact estimate of their work in the class room. This they must do, he said, *for their own protection*. We take it the principal did not mean to imply that superintendents or principals would consciously take unfair advantage of teachers. He meant, and it is a fact (as we have pointed out before), that the teachers must begin to do the thinking that is being done for them, on too little material evidence, by principals and superintendents. The evidence and the facts of teaching can be supplied only by the teachers themselves. All progressive people interested in education will agree that we must have supervision of teaching, but it must be intelligent, helpful and constructive supervision.

We offer again the suggestions presented in a recent issue of this paper. They may be considered the beginning of some constructive thinking by teachers.

Supervisors must be qualified to judge the value of the facts and principles developed in the recitation. They must understand the ideals of the teaching of the subject-matter itself. They must visit the teacher in the class room several times. They must present a duplicate copy of their criticisms, favorable and unfavorable, to the teacher. They must give immediate and abundant opportunity to the teacher to meet any unfavorable criticism. They must be able to show in their criticisms that they have constructive ideas of their own which may give their judgments value.

If you want to know why these elements have never been recognized adequately by school authorities, you

must be informed that it is because teachers have preferred to play the lazy man's part of going to law, or to kick out blindly against "unfair treatment" in the safe security of the company of one another. They have done extremely little constructive thinking on the matter of what kind of supervision would be useful to them in making their teaching effective. Let them now see their mistake, and get to work! The way is open.

If these paragraphs hit you, "come back at us" with a subscription and a letter. Go to your principal and ask him for teachers' meetings in which school and teacher problems are discussed openly by teachers themselves. Let the teachers' meetings and *THE AMERICAN TEACHER* be your forums, and before you realize it things will begin to move.

As every teacher must have interests that carry the thots beyond the limits of the village and beyond the vocabulary of the street, we are glad to call to the attention of our readers the following notice, and to urge them the action called for:

An inquiry is to be undertaken by the United States Bureau of Education as to the desirability and practicability of an international agreement on a universal alphabet for use in dictionaries, language manuals, geographical treatises and various text-books, to indicate, where necessary, the pronunciation. In view of the chaos which prevails in the notations employed in this country, it is to be hoped that all teachers who can will express to the Secretary of the Bureau their approval of the plan. Further information can be obtained from the undersigned.

Raymond Weeks,
Columbia University, New York.

IF YOU WANT respect for your profession, if you want pay for leaves of absence devoted to professional improvement, if you want pensions which you do not extract from your own left-hand pocket—then help to promote a movement which has for its purpose the winning and deserving of these things, and more.

GOOD WILL AND GRAFT

THAT NOBLE impulse of man to be kind to those about him, to befriend those who have been kind to him, to help where the need for help is evident, is an impulse not to be rudely inhibited. But it frequently develops into forms that can not be tolerated. This good will is of course a good trait, to be encouraged and increased; but when it takes the form of doing favors for the principal who has been so kind as to give you a satisfactory rating last term, it is time to put up the danger signal. A candidate for appointment to a certain school invites a member of the school committee to an automobile ride, or casually sends him a basket of fruit from his brother's garden; these are obviously manifestations of good will, but a rival candidate might misinterpret the act. If you have a couple of tickets for the opera next Friday, that you will not be able to use, it is kind of you to offer them to the head of your department; but if it is anywhere near rating time, better give them to a colleague whose good will may not mean quite so much to you.

At the same time, there is every reason why the members of our calling should live in friendship and kindness with one another. We need free intercourse for relaxation and for breadth; principals have much to learn from teachers, and teachers should have larger opportunity to learn from principals, outside the school building. Let us not begin during this season of good will to inhibit our impulses to kindness; let us merely guard ourselves in the distribution of our favors. To those with whom we deal on a plane of equality we may freely give; and from them we may freely take. When our relations are quite frank and all have faith in our fairness, we have nothing to fear. Where there is the need for justice—and where is there not?—there is no place for special favors or for charity. It is but a short step from good-will to graft.

The average length of service of teachers in the rural schools of Wisconsin is only three years.

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

ONE OF THE nineteen recommendations that Dr. Maxwell makes for the improvement of the school system of the City of New York is:

"The method of compiling the eligible list of principals of elementary schools should be changed. Instead of placing on the eligible list the names of all those who reach a certain passing mark, we should place on the next list only a sufficient number of names to provide for the estimated number of vacancies during the succeeding two years, and these names should be the names of those who stood highest at the examination without regard to a passing mark. In this way examinations would be held more frequently and the schools would have the advantage of always obtaining the services of the best among the applicants; while unfit for applicants (who now appear in large numbers) would be discouraged from competing, and all candidates would be relieved from the ignominy of failure to reach a fixed passing mark. The chief argument, however, in favor of the change is that under the proposed system none but the fittest principals would be appointed." Thirteenth Annual Report. P. 230.

Now read these questions and let us know what you think of the above recommendation.

1. Is this an admission of the fact that the present system is a poor one?
2. If it is a poor one, is the proposed remedy desirable?
3. How is the estimate of the number of vacancies during the next two years to be made? Isn't it a fact that the Department of Education has erred many times before in making estimates for only one year in advance?
4. If a definite number of "desirables" is not agreed upon in advance, is it fair to keep the "near-desirables" in a state of suspense, and thus keep them from preparing for the next "slaughter"?
5. Are the persons who usually head eligible lists "book-worms" or practical school men and women?
6. If the former, are they desirable supervisory officers?
7. If the latter, how is it proposed to test their practicability?
8. What is meant by "best applicants"? "Unfit applicants"?
9. Is the excruciating hard labor entailed in repeated preparation for the Principal's examination beneficial to the school children?
10. Will this plan increase or decrease the coaching evil?
11. What suggestions do you make?

WHILE it has to be admitted that mere labor, as labor has no culture value, it is not at all necessary to concede that there is no culture value to be found in certain aspects of labor. It is only when the devotee of scientific research loses himself in the more or less mechanical details of his work that it ceases to be cultural. It surely goes without saying that an atomic theory is as cultural in the hands of Dalton as in those of Lucretius. But that there is culture in other than purely literary or artistic work is coming to be gradually recognized. The engineer and the skilled craftsman generally are now recognized to be not altogether empty of culture, even if they make no great display of book lore. One probable result of educational development in the near future will be the increase of an important non-reading (or perhaps more accurately *LITTLE-READING*), but not on that account non-intellectual class. John Adams, in "The Evolution of Educational Theory."

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(Signed) MARK HOFFMAN, Business Manager.

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BOOK REVIEWS

A BRIEF COURSE IN THE TEACHING PROCESS, by George Drayton Strayer, Professor of Educational Administration, Teachers' College, Columbia University. 12mo, pp. xiv + 315. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1912. \$1.25 net.

THE LEARNING PROCESS, by Stephen Sheldon Colvin, Professor of Psychology, at the University of Illinois. 12mo, pp. xxv + 336. New York, The Macmillan Co. 1912. \$1.25 net.

These two books may well be used to supplement each other, for they both deal directly with the work of the teacher, the first from the point of view of what the teacher does, the second from the point of view of how the pupil reacts. The first is more than a manual of method; the second is more than a manual of psychology.

Dr. Strayer conceives of education in a broad, comprehensive view that refuses to educate particular fractions of human beings; education has to do with physical, intellectual, moral and economic processes—and with the enjoyment of life. Where education was formerly concerned chiefly with the leisure pursuits of the leisure class, it must now concern itself with all the activities of all the people, and we can no longer leave to chance the acquirement of health habits, or honor habits, or efficiency habits. Democracy demands that each child be guided in the acquisition of all desirable habits to the extent that its capacity will allow. Hence the teacher must be more than a hearer of lessons or a maintainer of discipline. In addition to the chapters on the topics usually found in books of this general class are excellent chapters on the teacher in relation to supervision, the teacher in relation to the course of study and on measuring results of education. The author lays emphasis on the importance of cultivating the power of independent thought, or the spirit of investigation; this end can never be adequately attained unless the teacher herself is imbued with the spirit, and this spirit can thrive only where the relation of the teacher to the supervision is of the right kind, and where the teacher is

the master of the course of study, not its slave.

Dr. Colvin presents the facts of psychology not as science or philosophy, but as the basis for the practical work of an expert **doer**. The teacher finds here not a bald summary of definitions and principles from which to be unburdened in an examination, but a closely reasoned, well illustrated body of usable knowledge to be applied every day in the class room. The experienced teacher can well afford to go thru this book carefully for the purpose of measuring his own habits of work against the standards obtained by the scientific study of the instrument upon which he seeks to perform—the mind of the child. Those who have not kept in touch with recent advances in psychological research will find the chapters on the association methods of Jung and Freud, and on the transfer of training especially valuable. One is compelled to realize the futility of considering instruction the essential thing in the education of young children when he considers on the one hand how little of what the child learns is remembered, and on the other hand, how imperishable are the impressions of this period, and how little is without some effect. If the younger teachers apply these principles to the management of schools in the years to come we shall witness a violent reaction against the stupidity of placing the inexperienced teachers in charge of the youngest children.

An analytical table of contents and a good index makes of each of these books a valuable help for reference as well as for study.

A QUARTER CENTURY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT, by William H. Maxwell, Superintendent of Schools of the City of New York. 12mo, pp. xii + 417. New York, The American Book Company. \$1.

The pessimist may find misery in this volume, for it is without doubt a record of progress. The teacher who lives by the gospel of inertia may point to the fact that current educational problems were discussed years ago, and may draw from this fact the conclusion that "there is nothing new under the sun"; but this book is still a record of progress. There are thirty-four

chapters, made up of selections from addresses, reports and special articles; the selection was made by a committee of New York school men, who were also in charge of the arrangements for the recent celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Dr. Maxwell's service as school superintendent.

Some of the problems of earlier years have been solved; some of the tentative proposals have in the course of the years merged into accomplished facts. Thus the formation of parents' societies to co-operate with the teachers and principals, the establishment of vacation schools, the extension of the school plant to function as a social or neighborhood center, the instruction in sewing and cooking in elementary schools, and many other "reforms" are to-day matters of course. Valuable sidelights upon the history of these factors in education is to be found in the extracts from Superintendent Maxwell's reports here reprinted. In 1887, we learn, he urged the establishment of manual training high schools; in 1888 he urged the introduction of physical training into the schools; and for many years he has maintained a running fight against the reactionaries who would save the tax-payers all the money that is spent on what they are pleased to call "fads and frills," or the special branches that have proved of such great value to the mass of children.

Years ago the superintendent recommended specialized schools; and the High School of Commerce established in New York was the first one in this country devoted exclusively to commercial education. He recommended the establishment of trade schools in the administration of which employers and organized workers could co-operate with the school officials; this year classes in patternmaking were established in accordance with this idea. Schools for defective children, special classes for backward or exceptionally bright children, truant schools, continuation and evening schools, medical inspection and a department of school hygiene, school luncheons and school libraries, school playgrounds and a dozen other problems were considered by Dr. Maxwell years before the city had anything to show in accomplished reality, or before the public realized the concrete needs.

It is interesting to see the uniformly high ideals that Dr. Maxwell has maintained for the teaching profession, his insistence upon adequate compensation for worthy service, and his firm struggle to eliminate politics and patronage from the administration of the people's chief business. The temptation to quote passages arises constantly as one goes thru the book. One citation must suffice. Speaking of the duties of principals. Dr. Maxwell said twenty years ago that among other functions was that of improving the teaching thru private criticism, thru model lessons and thru teachers' meetings. For these meetings there was recommended the thoro discussion of sound works on pedagogy and psychology, to the end that each teacher may become a thinker and a discoverer of truth. "Until a teacher has learned to think for herself and to discover truth for herself, she will not be able to teach her pupils to think and discover truth for themselves."

The book gives a better perspective on the man and his aims that can be gathered from current discussion and criticism, and would be worth reading if for this alone. An index would have enhanced the value of the book considerably, and its omission is unfortunate.

DEMOCRACY DOES not consist of letting alone, as so many people suppose. There are too many teachers who know of no better praise for their principals than the fact that they are let alone; and too often the best that can be said of a superintendent is that he lets the principals alone. Of course, if you have a competent teacher you should not interfere with her doing her best work; and if you have a good principal you should not obstruct his plans for developing his school in accordance with his ideas. But no person can live efficiently alone, and no teacher can grow to full capacity when left altogether to herself. If the principal cannot help the teacher—get another principal. If the supervisor cannot help the teacher and the principal—get another supervisor.

A FEW QUESTIONS ON THINKING

- Am I teaching the same lessons that I taught last year, in the same old way?
- If so, is it because I have reached perfection?
- Or because there is nothing new to be taught in the subject?
- Do I insist upon clear thinking, or do I accept good words as a substitute?
- Do I make pupils repeat words and phrases without thought and attention?
- Or do I merely allow such repetition?
- Or because I am too tired to move?
- Do my lessons raise new problems in the minds of the children?
- Do I encourage my pupils to make intelligent guesses to explain their experiences?

- Or do I teach them that there is no use wondering about anything?
- Do I encourage dogmatism, or a healthy skepticism?
- Do I develop a love of truth, or a faith in sound doctrine?
- Do I teach my pupils indiscriminate respect for all who claim authority, or do I teach them to seek to distinguish the charlatan from the expert?
- Do I emphasize the correctness of the pupils' conclusions, or the methods by which the conclusions are reached?
- Do I try to make a concept out of nothing?
- Do my lessons end with the learning of isolated facts?

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