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FACTS VERSUS OPINION IN EFFICIENT SCHOOL WORK

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Scientific Management in School Work

THE TERM "scientific management" has come into prominence within the last few years. "Scientific management" as employed in current literature has to do with business. In the field of affairs where efficiency and economy were supposed to exist, need has been found of radical reformation in methods. Serious study of what is involved in a given product, of how to inspire workmen to do their best, and of how to select men for given tasks, is bringing about a revolution in the business world.

Workmen in quite every line of activity are subjected to definite measures of efficiency. This is true whether in handling pig iron, or in the production of articles involving skill, intelligence and taste. But school people, as a rule, have resented the thought that their efficiency can be measured by any of the criteria or checks of business, or by any definite standards. The teacher attempts to measure the efficiency of the child, but she demurs at the idea that her efficiency may at least be relatively determined by the regularity of the attendance of her pupils, by the amount of absence, or by the number of withdrawals, failures in studies or non-promotions.

In a word, both superintendents and teachers have to a large degree held themselves aloof from any definite tests, and from any measures of efficiency. The day is however near at hand when school administrators and teachers must come to appreciate that they are not a chosen class of workers, but that their work, like the work of all others, must be judged in view of relative standards. We must come to accept the fact that the school is a machine organized and supported by society to do a specific type of work, and that as a machine or tool it is subject to definite tests of efficiency. We must come to appreciate that the spirit of scientific management

as now applied to business must be carried over into the field of education to do for the school what it is now doing for business.

Present Place of Opinion in School Work

Not only have superintendents and teachers been more or less free from the exacting tests of other activities, but administrators have been guided in their work by opinion rather than by facts. In no other field does personal opinion play so prominent a part. The business of the school is carried on in a given way to-day because this was the practise yesterday; the school year is of a given length because this was its length a decade ago; given methods of promotion are continued because these were the methods of the past; classes are organized in a given way because they were organized the same way one hundred years ago; our attitude toward foreign languages, toward science, toward formal grammar, toward the time and place given to arithmetic; our ideas of where to begin the teaching of formal spelling, or of writing or of geography, of how much to require in a given grade rest, not upon facts, but upon opinions—opinions which in turn are determined to a considerable extent by education and temperament.

Not only in the work of administration are our policies a reflection to a greater or less extent of personal bias, but even in similar matters—if they may be so called—the personal point of view dominates. We all arbitrarily assume that the elementary school and the high school are doing all they should for their pupils; that pupils are efficient in reading; that this style and type of writing is preferable; that our children are good or poor in spelling; that the work in history and geography is effective; that the proper emphasis is placed upon

each of the studies, and that these are given their proper time value and their proper emphasis in the advancement of children thru the school. Seldom if ever, in the past have school men proved by systematic investigation any of the above assumptions.

If the public school is to be scientifically managed; if school administration is to be elevated above the plane of personal opinion; if the work of the superintendent as well as of the teacher is to be measured by definite criteria; if our theories are to be given foundation; if our assumptions with reference to lines of work, methods of instruction, mastery of subject matter and skill in manipulation are to be displaced by positive knowledge, scientific and systematic study must be made of school methods and of school results. For only as *facts* take the place of opinion, assumption gives way to definite knowledge, mere personal opinion yields to established principles will the administration of our schools and the instruction in them be placed upon a firm footing and become efficient.

Facts Versus Opinion in Determining Methods of Instruction

An illustration or two will make clear the mode of procedure, as we take it, which must be pursued at least in spirit if the management of our schools is to become scientific.

The objective purpose of teaching reading in the primary grades is to enable the child to master the mechanics of reading. There are a number of well known methods: The natural method, the sentence method, the word method, and the Ward method. What is the ordinary way of determining which of these methods is preferable? The following method of selection is more or less representative.

A given primary teacher may be using, for example, the "natural method." She attends a summer session in some reputable college and takes a course in the "sentence method." At the beginning of the new year she discards the method previously used, the "natural

method," and teaches primary reading according to the sentence method. The following summer she again attends summer school, this time taking a course in the "Ward method." In turn the "sentence method" is discarded and the Ward method introduced. No attempt whatever is made to test the efficiency of the methods adopted. Indeed, the average teacher feels under no constraint to measure results. If the given method of instruction appeals to her fancy, if the children seem to be happy and there is no objection from above, the teacher as a rule is content. Methods of teaching in general are thus adopted and rejected much like spring fashions. So long, however, as the acceptance and rejection of methods of instruction rest upon mere personal preference, so long as no test is made of the results derived therefrom, so long will school teaching be school keeping, and the work of the school more or less haphazard. Only as methods of teaching are subjected to severe quantitative measurements, will teachers be in a position to determine the worth of given methods of instruction, and the school thereby rendered efficient.

Facts Versus Opinion in Standardizing Subjects, Departments and Schools

The value of studies is fixed by the time allotted in the daily program. Study requirements and practise seemingly have little relation to the value ascribed. Reading, for example, was given in the time schedule of the Cleveland Public Schools in 1909 and 1910, 25 per cent. of the total time of the elementary schools, language and grammar 15 per cent., arithmetic 16 per cent. and history 4 per cent. In the first year of the Cleveland High Schools an equal allotment of time is provided for in Latin, English, algebra and natural history. Nevertheless, the failures in language and grammar at the end of the year 1910 were, in view of the time value ascribed, almost four times as many as in reading, those in arithmetic three times larger than in reading, while those in history were six times larger.

In the high schools 26 per cent. of the children drop out or fail in Latin, 15 per cent. in English, 13 per cent. in algebra and 22 per cent. in natural history. In one elementary school the failures in arithmetic amounted to 25 per cent. In another doing the same work there were no failures. In the high schools those dropping out and failing in first year Latin, ranged in the several schools from 26 per cent to 41 per cent., in algebra from 26 per cent. to 46 per cent., in geometry (second year study) from 23 per cent. to 45 per cent.

Such variations in failures in studies reveal a need for standardization. Standards for completing a study of great value should be such as actually to put the emphasis on that study, rather than, as is now the case that the pressure on a study of small worth when measured by the time allotted, should be from two to twenty times greater than the pressure upon a study of great importance. Yet until positive data are collected with reference to failures by studies in the various grades, and these data made the basis of administrative action, little can be accomplished in equalizing and standardizing study requirements.

There is a similar need with regard to standardizing individual schools. That schools should be rightly judged with re-

gard to their work and that there should be reasonable uniformity in the requirements of different schools working under similar conditions, there can be little doubt. Yet, before this can be done data must be collected with reference to failures by studies, non-promotions in different schools; city-wide standards fixed upon the basis of these data and the requirements of individual schools equalized.

Conclusion

The above will suffice to illustrate how facts may be gathered and employed. In the collection and use of such data a mere beginning has been made. Yet if the spirit of scientific management is to pervade the school, and if the effectiveness of the school as an institution is to be definitely measured, if the work of the teacher, as well as that of the administrator, is to be subjected to fixed tests, if personal bias and mere unsubstantiated opinion are to give way to positive knowledge and the school rendered effective, data similar to the above with reference to all problems of instruction and administration must be collected and employed in directing educational activities, to the end that the modern school may be made to serve all the children and all the people of the community.

STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

[In commenting on the results of the School Inquiry in New York City, City Superintendent William H. Maxwell observed among other things that the "standards by which we are tested are new and untried."

In reply to this criticism papers were written by educators in various parts of the country. The following are selected from among a large number—Ed.]

I

GUY C. WILSON

Director, State Agricultural College, Ames, Iowa

THE STANDARDS for judging instruction, as formulated by Dr. McMurry, are not new and untried except in their definiteness and order. The lack of such standards definitely stated is chiefly responsible for the desultory and haphazard work in the schools of the past.

1. It has been clearly shown in every department of human endeavor that better progress is made if the energy expended is directed toward the accomplishment of a *definite and desired end*.
2. In all growth involving the use of material (whether mental or physical)

there is need for the *organization* of that material.

3. This organization is naturally impossible without a consideration of *relative values*.

4. Relative values must be considered from the viewpoint of the individual concerned, as they apply to individual *aperceptive* needs. Hence the necessity in all real education, whether within school or without, of provision for the development of *individuality*.

5. In all affairs of life, if we are to profit by the experience of the race, we

must be able to interpret the experience of others in terms of our own needs; hence the need of providing means for supplementing with the *shots* of others.

6. Nothing is definitely known to be true until it is tried and found to "make good"; hence the need of provision for *use*.

While these standards in this form are to some extent "new and untried," experience in every phase of life emphasizes their necessity; hence it is quite right to apply them to instruction, even tho there they are "new and untried."

II

CLINTON EMMETT ROSE

Principal High School, Boise, Idaho

These standards for judging instruction are not new and untried. They aim to accomplish in instruction the very things that society demands of the product of the school.

Specific purpose. When the boy or girl leaves the school and enters "practical" life, nearly every action and every shot will be called forth by a specific purpose. The banker is controlled in every action during his working day by the interests of his institution, and those interests demand careful adjustment of means to ends. In no line of work is it conceivable that the individual should proceed in his shot and action without a controlling motive. Specific purpose merely means motive; and motive controls action and the quality of action all thru life.

Relative values. Success in life depends upon the ability to select the things worth while and to discard all others. The successful lawyer or doctor owes his success to this very ability. The time when it was shot possible for any individual to get all knowledge is past; the time is past when one kind of knowledge was considered as good as any other. This is an age of specialization. It is therefore one of the principal functions of the school to train in the distinction of relative worths.

Organization. Success depends more-over upon ability to organize the knowl-

edge that one has around the problem one needs to solve. It means "thinking" or "reasoning power," rather than the old idea of cramming the mind with unrelated facts, hoping that they will result in power. The ability to organize or to think or reason is the factor that separates the professional man, the banker, the merchant, the successful salesman from the ditch digger, the machine tender and so forth. The ability to organize is rightfully demanded of the school.

Use. This leads directly to that standard of instruction which calls for the *immediate using* of the knowledge. Proper organization in all lines of business demands a conservation of energies. This means a provision for the use of products rather than their storing away. The only sure way to provide for the right use of the knowledge acquired is to make such knowledge a part of self by practise. The new psychology hits hard at the *ideo-motor* activity. The surest way to have a thing done right is in repetition of a thing once done right with pleasurable after effects.

Individuality. There are two kinds of occupations: the energizing and the enervating. Society demands efficient citizens, and it is the business of the school to prepare only for the energizing occupations, those that demand more than a machine-like activity. In other words, the world is demanding more and

more that the school turn out men and women who are able to do things on their own initiative. Therefore, the kind of instruction which does not provide for the individuality of the child is violating the greatest demand of society. In fact, the only way in which we can be sure of any development at all is

thru applying the elements of an environment to the *individual*.

Thus we may see that these standards meet the greatest demands which all must admit that society makes upon the individual; they are therefore both old and "tried."

ABSTRACT OF REPORT OF NEW YORK CITY SCHOOL INQUIRY

I

THE QUALITY OF CLASS ROOM INSTRUCTION

Professor FRANK M. McMURRY
Teachers' College, Columbia University

IN INVESTIGATING the quality of classroom instruction in the elementary schools, Prof. McMurry set up four standards: (1) the purpose inculcated in pupils; (2) the consideration of values; (3) the attention to organization; and (4) the exercise of initiative by the pupils. The first standard (motivation) requires that all teaching be related to life. Pupils should be led to know, to do and to be; and this is only possible when the pupils feel that their studies are helping them to satisfy a need, or to overcome a difficulty, or to solve a problem. The second standard (judgment of values) calls for the constant use of discrimination and comparison on the part of the pupils. In all lessons, pupils should be led to select the most important items, the most beautiful passages and the most significant facts. In this way a proper appreciation of relative values may be developed.

The third standard (organization) demands that the facts and ideas presented in a lesson should be so organized by the pupils that they will form a complete unity. They must learn to select the central idea, and bring all the subordinate facts into close relation to it; otherwise there is danger that they will fail "to see the forest for the trees."

The fourth standard (initiative) insists on the development of the power of self-direction in the pupils. In all school tasks it is wrong for the teacher to assume full leadership; but from the

kindergarten class pupils should be accustomed to share the responsibility in planning and executing work. In this way a spirit of independence and self-reliance may be fostered.

These standards are also valuable from the point of view of habit formation. Instruction may easily accustom young people to work in a listless way, without reference to the relative values of ideas, on scattered facts entirely, and in helpless dependence upon the teacher. Or it may habituate them to the opposite way of working, and lead to the formation of the leading habits of thinking, particularly those touching motive, value, system and independence.

Again, the first ideal of instruction is thoroughness of knowledge, and the second is the ability to use the knowledge. These four standards make it possible to approximate these ideals. The weighing of values and the organization of facts lead to thoroughness, while motivation and training in initiative lead to the ability to use the knowledge gained.

From these remarks it may therefore be concluded that these four standards are valuable in judging the quality of teaching. Where the comprehension and retention of facts and mechanical skill are the acknowledged goal rather than certain effects upon the more important habits of the pupil, instruction is on a low plane. But where efficiency on the part of the pupil is the goal, where facts are selected and presented with the ob-

ject of making the pupils energetic, high-minded, judicious, forceful and self-reliant, instruction is on a high plane.

After a thoro investigation of the teaching in the elementary schools, in which not less than three hundred classrooms were visited, Prof. McMurry concludes that—

according to the standards proposed for judging instruction, that now given in the New York City elementary schools is—in spite of many exceptions—on a low plane, poor in quality, and discouraging for the future.

Partly accountable for these adverse findings are the following principles which constitute the educational theory of the elementary schools:

(a) On account of the size of the system there is scarcely a limit to the extent to which uniformity is necessary.

(b) The principal subject matter of instruction is what is automatically usable.

(c) The leading element in scholarship is accuracy in details.

(d) The time for the pupil to use his knowledge acquired in school is the distant future—not now.

Another reason for the low plane of instruction is found in the unsatisfactory attitude of the teachers. This is due to the fact that they have no authority

(1) to punish unusually troublesome children,

(2) no voice in the administration of the school, and

(3) no persons of inspiring leadership in authority over them.

A third and perhaps the most important reason for the poor results found everywhere is the curriculum and syllabi adopted by the Board of Superintendents.

(a) With the exception of the course

in literature and cooking there is no provision for motive. Geography is not organized about human problems; nature study, science and grammar are approached from a scientific point of view. English history has no connection with present life, and most of the other subjects emphasize technical efficiency.

(b) As for attention to relative values, many topics that have little worth are included, especially in geography, composition, arithmetic, English history and drawing; and many others that are a very source of life are omitted.

(c) There is a great lack of organization. There is practically no attempt to correlate the different subjects of study, nor to interrelate the ideas within each study.

(d) No provision is made for preserving and developing the individuality of the children; in fact the influence of the curriculum and the syllabi tends somewhat in the opposite direction.

A fourth item which must be considered in accounting for the poor quality of instruction is the supervision of schools by the principals. This is generally of a low type. On account of the overemphasis of administrative duties, the great size of many schools, the want of authority among principals, the prominence of examination of teachers, together with the poor basis on which they are conducted, and the lack of theory as to method of supervising the supervision by the principals is by no means helpful to the teacher. In most schools, therefore, the principal as an educational leader is a failure.

For all these reasons the actual work of the schools, in large part, both in its spirit and its details, cannot be commended.

II

THE COURSE OF STUDY IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Professor CALVIN O. DAVIS
University of Michigan

THIS SECTION of the School Inquiry Report is given over to the discussion of the organization and the administration

of the "general" and certain "special" courses of study in the New York City high schools.

In order to arrive at some notion of whether educational practise in New York City high schools is in harmony with modern tendencies in the United States, comparisons are made with corresponding features in the educational systems of ten representative cities in the nation. They are: Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Newark and St. Louis.

The scope or range of the work offered in the general courses of the general high schools of the cities compared varies appreciably. Each provides the conventional academic branches—English, foreign languages, history, civics, economics, mathematics, and natural science. There are also found in practically all of the ten cities considered many new subjects taught in general schools side by side with the older subjects. Among these are, manual training, cooking, sewing, applied art, various commercial branches, industrial and commercial aspects of history and geography, and differentiated courses in English, science, and mathematics.

In comparison with the offerings in the ten cities analyzed the general course in New York City is decidedly narrow. The statement is made that in respect to the newer and more practical subjects, the course in New York City is in the state of organization which is already outgrown by most other cities.

A comparison of the number of periods given to the subjects in all the cities brings out the fact that New York offers fewer periods of work in English than do seven of the cities, but more than three. In foreign languages New York is at the head of the list in the number of periods offered. In history, mathematics, commercial subjects and industrial subjects New York offers fewer periods per week than do most of the other cities. The conclusion on that point is that the work of the New York City high schools is pursued with less intensiveness than is common in the other cities.

• Only one city, St. Louis, prescribes a higher percentage of the studies offered

than does New York. St. Louis prescribes 75 per cent. of the total amount of work required for graduation. New York prescribes 70 per cent. This is taken to mean that New York administers the general course with less regard to the special interests and aptitudes of the students than any other of the ten cities except St. Louis.

The first year of the general course must be taken in its entirety by every pupil. The option of Latin, German or French is not regarded by Prof. Davis as a real opportunity for a choice, since all are foreign languages. In practise in many New York high schools custom has decided that Latin must be taken anyway. Thus even the appearance of option disappears. No other of the eleven cities presents a similar situation. In the second year New York City stands second to Cincinnati in the percentage of second year subjects prescribed; in the third year, third; and in the fourth year ties with Cleveland for second place.

The material at the disposal of the School Inquiry Committee did not enable it to determine the manner in which the published courses in the ten other cities were administered in practise. In New York City, however, numerous and in some instances very great divergences from the published courses were discovered. The divergences are all within the restricted fields laid out; in some cases they mean *minimized* work, but not work *differentiated* to meet special needs of pupils.

In Prof. Davis' study of the offerings of special and technical courses in the eleven cities he finds that New York is far from being abreast of the times.

Considering the size of the city, the various nationalities represented, and the different intellectual, artistic and vocational aptitudes among the students, the provisions for special courses or special schools of other types in New York City fall far short of what is being undertaken in several other places.

In nearly every one of the ten cities many special courses are available to the boys and girls in the general high schools. This arrangement makes it possible for the pupils to test their interest

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This paper seeks to advance the status of the teacher to the dignity and the influence of a profession, by advocating high standards of admission to the calling; by urging an extension of the opportunities for the participation of teachers in the direction of educational affairs; and by supporting the organization of teachers for all legitimate professional purposes.

UNASHAMED

WE HAVE BEEN TOLD that school teachers, when among strangers, make frequently desperate efforts to conceal the fact that they are school teachers. There are undoubtedly reasons for being ashamed of some of our colleagues; yet that would be equally true if we were lawyers or merchants or senators. But being ashamed of some of our colleagues

is no reason for being ashamed of our calling. We have among us very many who do not earn what they receive; but we have also a large number who earn more than they can ever expect to receive. We have not, on the whole, the social recognition that some of us think we should have; but perhaps we shall get more as fast as we succeed in bringing up a generation of young men and women with a new standard of values. It will hardly do to rail at the public's lack of appreciation; the public has been influenced by its teachers, and we must be prepared to accept the consequences. We do not need to match our garments and jewels against those worn by members of the leisure class, nor need we be ashamed that our equipages are not in the style of those displayed by the exploiting classes. We do not, on the whole, occupy so large a space on the front page of the newspaper as we think we should; but that is not a serious grievance, nor is it anything to be ashamed of—and perhaps the remedy is in our own hands after all.

If we do our work as well as we can day by day, if we look forward to improving the condition of the work for ourselves and for our less energetic colleagues, we do worthily. If we do these things conscientiously, we know too well how far short we come of doing what should be done. But we know also that none serve more faithfully; and in all due modesty we may look the salesman and the banker in the face—UNASHAMED.

When you go on your vacation this summer, do not try to hide your place in society, or in the history of modern man. You have made many blunders, as have all of us, but you are resolved to avoid similar blunders in the future. You have submitted to many indignities, as have all of us, but you are resolved to raise your work to a human plane next year. Think faith in your calling as the one best worth following; think faith in yourself as one worthy of the calling—or get out of it.

On board the ocean steamer, you cannot hide your calling—unless you are

exceptionally clever, in which case you should not want to. You cannot hide your calling—we are marked for life. Make up your mind that the mark shall be not a Blot, but a Star.

* * *

THE AMERICAN TEACHER has been working from its inception in the pride of our profession. This is not a commercial enterprise—on the contrary. We have asked our friends to subscribe; and we have urged our readers to renew their subscriptions. We believe that we have demonstrated the need for an organ devoted to the ideals and the principles for which this magazine strives. We find encouragement in the growing volume of opinion in harmony with the views which we have put forth. We observe with great satisfaction the emergence of teachers in all parts of the country into the consciousness of the need for an improved status. We feel that we are contributing to this educational and professional rebirth, while we realize that we are but part of a larger movement that is carrying us all along with it. Under these circumstances we no longer hesitate to call upon our readers to do what they can to assist in carrying forward the work we have undertaken. Get readers, even if they can't afford to subscribe. Tell THE AMERICAN TEACHER every chance you find; get subscribers and send us the money.

GOOD PLANS

HERE IS a suggestion of constructive work undertaken by The Teachers' League of New York. It is a good beginning. Now let the investigations be actually carried out. If that is done successfully, we shall not need to worry much about the professional spirit and understanding of this particular teachers' organization.

THE TEACHERS' LEAGUE COMMITTEE BULLETIN

The following is a brief outline of the work which the Teachers' League of New York will undertake in the present school year and in the year 1913-14:

I. Teachers' Interests Committees

1. Committee on Professional Improvement
 - a Free Courses
 - b Opportunities for Visiting
 - c Sabbatical Years
 - d Constructive Supervision
 - e Pedagogical Experimentation
2. Committee on Ratings, Promotions and Salaries
3. Committee on Pensions, Retirement and Compensation for Disability
4. Committee on the Status of Married Women Teachers

II. Pupils' Interests Committees

1. Committee on the Course of Study
 - a Elementary Schools
 - b High Schools
(Considered with reference to the social efficiency of the school)
2. Committee on Textbooks and Supplies
(Considered with reference to their usefulness for the purpose for which intended, and with reference to economy)
3. Committee on School Hygiene

III. Organization and Efficiency Committees

1. Committee on School Organization and Management
 - a Teachers Initiative
 - b Size of Schools
 - c Size of Classes
 - d Clerical Work
 - e Programs
 - f Provision for Exceptional Children
2. Committee on Reports and Statistics
(With the duty of inquiring into accurate methods of systematizing facts)
3. Committee on Legislation
(With the duty of keeping in touch with legislation affecting education in this and other states, and with the duty of making suggestions for laws needed to carry out the purposes of the League)

IV. General Committees

1. Committee on Membership
(With the duty of informing small or large bodies of teachers throughout the city about the purposes and the work of the League)
 2. Committee on the Press
 3. Committee on Publications (Library Committee)
 4. Committee on Finance
- Teachers are invited to become members of any one of these committees

No, GRACIE, Democracy does *not* mean being disrespectful to the authorities. It means making yourself worthy of respect.

THE COURSE OF STUDY IN HIGH SCHOOLS

(Continued from page 88)

in other subjects than those available to the boys and girls of New York who happen to have cast their lots with the general schools. To the extent to which a school system offers courses that meet the tastes and aptitudes of the pupils, they have "equal educational opportunities," but equal opportunities cannot mean the same opportunities.

Large numbers of children enter the high schools without knowing what they want to do. Some enter who think they know what they want to do, but sometimes a short experience shows them that they were mistaken. Ideas of children change just as the ideas of adults change with experience. For those who do not know what they want, and for those who change their minds, the inflexible course of study offers no hope. The school which provides for all has far more opportunity to keep them all. Proof is available that one of the most important causes for pupils leaving the high school in the first year is the repellent attitude which the inflexible course makes the school assume toward the children who do not happen to be adapted to the work as presented.

The solution of the problem of how to find out what kind of courses would make the school more useful to the children and to the community, Prof. Davis thinks can best be worked out by the high school principal in conjunction with the teachers of the school. He recommends that every five years the school reanalyze the entire local situation anew. He says:

Only by adopting some such procedure can a course of study be kept in touch with the real needs of the community it is designed to serve and in harmony with contemporary educational principles.

The Committee takes the ground that whatever may be the intrinsic values of certain prescribed subjects, those values are not realizable to any satisfactory degree unless the subjects can be made to relate themselves to the past, the present, or the prospective

future experiences of the individual pupils pursuing them.

The analysis offered by the Committee of the factors of universal importance in the lives of people establishes the basis for the choice of subjects that the schools may reasonably require of the pupils. The percentage of the subjects thus demanded is much less than required now in New York City. Moreover, many of the old subjects are offered as subcourses, to be taken up as taste for them develops, or as their connection with the future plans of the pupil can be demonstrated.

The paragraph outlining the Committee's recommendations for a reconstructed course in so significant that it is presented here in complete form:

In the light of practise elsewhere, and in keeping with current educational opinion, as voiced in associational resolutions, in magazine articles, and in public discussions, we feel justified in making the following recommendations, namely:

(1) In English, including language study, composition, literature, and oral expression, three years of work, with five recitation periods per week.

(2) In the social sciences, two years of work, including a year's work in introductory social science (based on municipal activities, civic, industrial, and commercial, and including vocational guidance), and a year's work in American history and civics. The first course may be assigned (three or) four periods per week; the last should be assigned five periods per week.

(3) In natural science, a year of work in introductory natural science, covering four (or five) periods per week, based on biology, and including much instruction in bacteriology, physiology, and hygiene.

(4) In manual training for boys and domestic science and art for girls, four double periods per week thruout one year.

(5) In physical training and games, two periods per week thruout four years, the work being conducted so as to give relaxation and pleasure, and to develop useful habits of exercise; and not so much as is often noticed at present to secure approximation to theoretical ideals of grace and beauty of form.

(6) In "Assembly" talks, readings, and addresses, one period per week during the entire four years, the material presented to call for pupil reactions in some definite form each week.

(7) In music, one period per week for two years; and

(8) In drawing, one period per week for two years.

III

GENERAL SUPERVISION

Professor EDWARD C. ELLIOTT

University of Wisconsin

In the prefatory statement, Prof. Elliott, after pointing out and defining the various kinds of school control—legislative, administrative, supervisory and inspectorial—comes to the conclusion that there seems to be nowhere, at least within the school system, a clear and conscious discrimination between those activities of control that are administrative in character, and those that are supervisory or inspectorial. The absence of this distinction in the minds of those charged with the main responsibility has been, it is believed, an important factor in retarding the progress and complicating the development of the public school system.

Under the heading *The System of General Supervision* the findings are that the schools are controlled too largely on the external administrative side, and too little by constructive and expert supervision; that the major energies of all the supervising staff are consumed by the general administrative and routine clerical duties. There is too little progressive leadership. The mechanical side of the educative process is emphasized.

There is a striking lack of consciousness within the school system of the radical difference between merely keeping the schools in operation, and keeping the schools in operation so as to produce tangible results of high quality. The organization of the school system has been from the top down, rather than from the bottom up; a procedure as obstructive to progress and real growth in education as it is in other human institutions.

Prof. Elliott divides principals into two general classes: (a) those who are competent to act as supervisors and make a conscious effort to subordinate the routine administrative tasks, and (b) those who are content to confine their activities to the mechanics of school operation and control.

Before the elementary schools of the city are individually properly supervised, there must be a considerable increase in the number of the first group, and the chief educational authorities must find a way of placing a prem-

ium on supervisory capacity by providing freedom of action to every principal in accordance with his competency. That supervision is best which controls and is controlled least.

On the basis of the ratings given principals during the year 1910-1911, there was but one inferior principal in the elementary schools of the city and ninety-one per cent. of the principals possessed meritorious competency. The investigator believes that an inflated value has been given to the judgment of principals and that the wide variation in ratings between the different supervisory districts is due to the wide variability of standard. "The work of principals is not subjected to that cautious, objective examination that should constitute the foundation of the ratings, if the ratings are worth making at all." Vague general impressions should not be, as they undoubtedly are, the chief elements of these ratings. The rating of principals seems to be generally regarded as a merely formal procedure. The ratings of one year are very often merely copied from the ratings of the preceding year. On the whole "the system of rating the efficiency of principals is not such as to distinguish the competent from the incompetent."

Of *The District Superintendents* Prof. Elliott says that they are noticeably inert. There are no well-established standards of qualifications for nomination of district superintendents. Prof. Elliott here suggests that the recently established standard of "superior merit" would be more valid with reference to the staff of district superintendents, as a condition for appointment and retention. The district superintendents have little or no freedom, initiative or responsibility. They have but slight influence upon the determination of educational policies. As at present constituted, the office of district superintendent cannot be an altogether satisfactory position for the energetic, progressive, and construc-

tive individual, whose primary interests are in education and its adaptation to the needs of children.

Under the heading *The City Superintendent, The Board of Superintendents, and The Associate Superintendents*, the Report states that criticisms of the schools have been discouraged and repressed by the authorities. None of the teachers who offered information were willing to permit their names to appear as witnesses of record. "The explanation for this disinclination invariably given was, that the expression of critical judgments militated seriously against their professional standing and advancement." This circumstance

"reflects a condition of affairs wholly detrimental to the progressive development of the best interests of the schools. Those primarily responsible for the school organization and its operation appear, intentionally or unintentionally, to have discouraged competent criticism and to have permitted incompetent criticism to undermine an intelligent public confidence."

Praise is given to the city superintendent for having during the past decade consolidated the school system into a coherent whole. Prof. Elliott thinks, however, that the policy of centralization has now gone far enough.

Mechanical consolidation, with the resulting standardization of aims and values, has been effected. The next epoch of educational control will need to be dominated by the idea of establishing a scheme of decentralized, co-operative, expert supervision. Military standards of authority and organization cannot be permanently adapted to the enterprise of education. Education, particularly public education, is a great undertaking, and therefore, must make provision for the initiative, independence, and creative activity of every individual charged with responsibility. The administrative efficiency of a great, complex school system demands a high degree of centralization of administrative power. On the other hand, the supervisory efficiency of the school system is conditioned by a degree of co-operation which has not yet been fully comprehended by the City Superintendent. Machinery stifles individuality; co-operative effort expands individuality. The teaching of children and the direction of their education are dependent, ultimately, upon freedom, not repression.

The Board of Examiners.—Prof. Elliott, on the whole, commends the work of the Board of Examiners. The ques-

tions used in the recent examinations, he regards as fair tests of professional preparation. But he does not think the class-room tests are highly efficient. These tests are generally conducted under abnormal teaching conditions, and the standards of judgments applied are wholly unreliable.

With regard to the regular oral tests, Prof. Elliott believes that the Board has been too lenient in passing persons of doubtful personal and linguistic qualifications. On the whole, while the Board has made mistakes in individual cases, "it has exercised its functions in a singularly effective and progressive manner."

The Report recommends that the size of the Board of Examiners be increased to nine members and that a rotating plan of membership be adopted. A plan by which some of the Board would be engaged in active supervision would enable the Board as a whole to keep itself in closer touch with the schools and their needs.

Methods and Standards for Determining Teaching Efficiency.—According to the ratings of teachers, there are very few teachers who are regarded by principals and superintendents as rendering non-meritorious service. Only one elementary school teacher out of 2217 was rated as wholly deficient in discipline in June, 1911. There is also a wide variation between the ratings of principals and the ratings of district superintendents.

The distinction between "instruction" and "discipline" is purely arbitrary and artificial. To an impartial judge the founding of a rating scheme for the teaching force of a metropolitan school system upon such a traditional convention as this is ample evidence that the supervisory authorities have not assumed a scientific attitude of mind toward the complicated teaching process. . . .

The general conclusions as to the existing methods and standards for determining "fit and meritorious" service are that there is no method other than that of the personal idiosyncrasy of supervisors, and that there are no standards that bear intimate and valid relation to the quality of service rendered.

The recommendations for the reorganization of the supervisory staff were discussed by Prof. Elliott in the May number of *THE AMERICAN TEACHER*.

CORRESPONDENCE

MARRIAGE VERSUS TEACHING

Editor, THE AMERICAN TEACHER:

In your children ye shall make amends for being your father's children. Thus ye shall redeem all that is past.—Friedrich Nietzsche.

***** Shall a woman school teacher marry and remain in her position in the schools? The answer, as I see it, is a clear and unqualified "No!" And this flat-footed opposition comes not as a result of a belief that sexual life is something unholy and to be shunned, or that the schools are for the purpose of offering a means of livelihood to refined spinsters, or that girls make better teachers, or that motherhood impairs the teaching ability of women. Nay, it results rather from the deepest conviction of the writer that motherhood (and hence by implication marriage) is of such profound significance to the welfare of the race, carries with it such weighty duties and responsibilities is so fraught with infinite possibilities and failures equally infinite, is of all things earthly so nearest God that the profession of motherhood is once and for all time incompatible with, and inevitably antagonistic to, every other profession—be it teaching, or music, or art, or money making. She who looks forward to the divine event of being a mother is separated from all the ordinary pursuits of humanity, from all the hurly-burly of the workaday world.

***** The absurdity of these well meaning folk who advocate a leave of absence for two months, or four or six or a year even, thinking thus to have made a step in advance, would be provocative of the laughter of the gods were it not so tragically conducive to danger for the future of the race. What a woman thus circumstanced needs really, is a leave of absence for twenty-five years, and then some, to use a vulgar locution.

***** How can any woman who dares to assume the name of mother think that she is entitled to all the privileges of motherhood if she considers her duties satisfactorily completed by staying away from her work for a short period before and after the birth of her child? And those who prate so glibly about the wealth of rich and new experiences, that flood the mother soul, as a result of the close communion that exists between the mother and child, lose sight of the fact that nature never meant this most wonderful efflorescence of the human heart should be coined into dollars and cents, or sold at so much per month.

***** A woman who truly desires to be a mother, whose heart yearns for the miracle of motherhood, who has prepared her-

self in a most thoro manner physically and spiritually for the great mission of bearing and nurturing a new life, will never for a moment entertain the idea that she wants to teach, or paint, or sing, or write as soon as she physically can. And she will never marry a man who does not esteem it the greatest privilege of his life to provide for her and her children in every way he can, and to the best of his power and strength. A woman who marries a man less than that, one whom she supports partly or wholly, proclaims by this act to have excluded herself from the sanctified group of mothers and therefore as such has no right to consider herself specially qualified as a teacher.

A. Kovar.

IF, THEN, the public school must be charged, as I believe it must, with the ethical as well as the intellectual training of the vast majority of American youth; and if it is admitted, as it must be, that the welfare of society and the preservation of republican institutions depend in very large measure on the intellectual and ethical training given in the schools,—surely it follows that it is the business of the state to see to it that the teacher's life is lived under such conditions that he can render society his most efficient service.—William H. Maxwell, in "The American Teacher—A Code of Ethics." Address delivered at the University of Chicago, December 16, 1902.

SOMETIMES in educational circles we hear the pessimist crying out, "We shall never have a chance to set things right until we can get rid of that tyrant official." Then he seizes an easy opportunity to benefit the state by joining hands with some corrupt politician, who never fails to add to the strength of his own "system" for every good turn he does in improving some other "system."

IT IS ONE of the marks of the inefficiency of our present system of educational management that the amicable transaction of necessary business for one or several schools should be absolutely dependent on the state of one person's digestion.

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Louis P. Goldberg, Notary Public.
Notary Public, Kings County. (My commission expires March 30, 1914.)
(Seal)

CO-OPERATION FOR HEALTH

THE PERSON who refrains from spitting indiscriminately because he has learned that spitting serves to disseminate germs of tuberculosis and of other diseases, is not likely to profit much from his precautions. In this matter we must "all hang together or hang separately." The same may be said, however, of nearly all applications of scientific discoveries to the protection of health: the problems are essentially community or group problems, rather than individual problems. For this reason the teacher, as the community's agent in molding the thought of the community of tomorrow, has concerns with health problems different from the concern of the printer or the manufacturer. In the last analysis the teacher will be responsible for the character and the amount of co-operation for health that the children will practise when they grow up.

In the call for the Fourth International Congress on School Hygiene, to be held in Buffalo August 25 to 30, the need for the widest kind of co-operation is recognized. Invitations are is-

sued not merely to representatives of the schools and of the health officials, but to those interested in home problems, in the administration of cities and towns, and in the governments of states. Adequate co-operation may be expected to yield returns not for the agents—which is the characteristic test of efficient commercial enterprises—but for such abstractions as the following:

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For the HOME: Less anxiety, less apprehension, fewer doctor bills, less work, more health, happiness, and prosperity.

For the TAXPAYER: A saving by more efficient methods in school work, and also a larger product of active, intelligent, capable individuals, whose influence will be toward the improvement of every phase of community life.

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