

The American Teacher

Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.

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Measuring Efficiency

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U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION
- Not by the number of words per hour—
By the expansion of the childrens' concepts
- Not by the scores of children promoted—
By the soundness of convictions formed
- Not by the stiffness of children's backs—
By the hearts resolved to fight the fight
- Not by the yards of dry red tape—
By the feet that hasten to meet the dawn
- Not by the acres of compositions marked—
By the diameter of broadened horizon
- Not by the ancient tales retold—
By the dreams of youth come true

THE TEACHING OF PRACTICAL ETHICS

HENRIETTA RODMAN
Wadleigh High School, New York.

WE ALL KNOW that ethics is the study of human relations. We are all agreed of course that it is an important subject; but we are by no means agreed that it should be taught in the schools. Its subject matter is emotional rather than intellectual; it is incomplete, vague, and inexact. Most of us are convinced that the moral natures of children may be most satisfactorily based on the dead certainties of the classics and Euclid. I say Euclid rather than mathematics for a new school of non-Euclidean is promulgating the disconcerting hypothesis that a straight line may not be the shortest distance between two points. If that is not true, what is? On what shall we base our moral teachings if not on the eternal verities of geometry?

As we look about us with the despair of San Franciscans after the earthquake, all the works of man destroyed, we find, as they did, man himself. A considerable discovery! Will Irwin tells of the first week in San Francisco after the earthquake. "It was the millennium," he said. "People were so glad to be alive and to find other people alive that nobody did a mean thing for a week." Those 55 minutes when the earth shook had destroyed for a time all traditions of antagonism and uncovered the essential humanity of man, his child-like dependence upon the help of others in securing food and shelter, and his child-like need of love and response to it.

It is upon these eternal verities of human nature that we must base our teaching of ethics, or the study of human relations—upon our actual material and spiritual needs of one another. We must learn to appreciate these needs and to respond to them, not as we do now, crudely and often cruelly because of our ignorance and clumsiness, but like an artist with a high ideal and a fine control of his medium.

We teach ethics now in the schools, but it is the primitive ethics of an earlier society, only truth and obedience to su-

periors, impossible in spite of its apparent simplicity, for truth develops in democracy, not in subordination. Even if it were possible, this old ethics would be inadequate. Truth and obedience alone would not have rebuilt San Francisco in a generation. But love (think me a sentimentalist if you like) and co-operation sustained, would have built in a year such a city as the world has never seen, a city built for the delight of the people in their work and in their play, their homes, their friendships and their citizenships.

Truth and obedience alone would not build any thing and therefore our school room ethics should be altered and adapted to our needs. All important social action is group action, and group action is necessarily based upon group thinking. Our school room activities are exclusively individualistic. Team work is frowned upon until school hours are over. Fancy a community in which the required virtues were silence, lack of initiative, purely individual action and that only in response to command!

There are four main types of people in the world: Heroes, Tommies, Sponges, and Dubs. The heroes are, of course, those who are conscious of social needs and respond to them—if necessary, at the expense of their individual welfare. The Tommies, like Barrie's hero, give only in personal relations. The sponges do not give at all, but only take. And the dubs neither give nor take; they simply exist.

None of us probably are pure types; most of us have a little of the hero in us, a good deal of the Tommy and at least a trace of Sponge and Dub. I asked a class to analyze themselves and suggested this classification of traits. One girl wrote: "I'm a Tommy outside of school. Here, I ought to be a Sponge, but I'm really a Dub. I suppose you want me to be a Hero."

I not only want my pupils to be heroes, but I expect them to be and I have had to discard the usual school room

practises, in order to develop group consciousness and initiative.

The class is conducted as nearly as possible like a club. Different girls act as chairmen and conduct the work of the class and of its various committees. The subject to be studied is divided among the girls and each one is responsible for presenting her part. If she fails, the recorder, a pupil, marks her "U," unco-operative; the chairman of make-up work takes her name, and she is called on the next day. If she fails again the welfare committee takes up her case. If they find that she has a tendency to shirk, her name is given to all chairmen and for a week she is called

on every day for each kind of work, grammar, current topics, literature.

Our current events deal with social topics, and are taken principally from the *Survey*. Our supplementary reading is of and by the Heroes of our time, such as Jane Addams, Jacob Riis, Booker T. Washington and Helen Keller.

As nearly as possible, we work like a camping party. We note the amount of work to be done and apportion it among the members of the group. We do it as quickly, as easily and as well as we can, and have as much time as possible for fun. That is for free self-expression.

TEACHERS IN ADMINISTRATION

ARTHUR A. BRYANT

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IT IS PRETTY generally recognized that the public school system of New York is not the best of all possible systems—if we judge it by the results it gives in training to the boys and girls. We may grant freely that many if not most other school systems would fail to meet the standard by which the recent school inquiry measured our New York schools. But that is surely little comfort to honest persons. Just where the remedy should be applied—what alterations and improvements of method or equipment are necessary and feasible at present is a subject too large to be discussed briefly. Realizing, however, the progressive spirit of the present Board of Education and taking in good faith their expressed desire for suggestions that may help to solve our common problem, we urge that no small share of the shortcomings of our school system is traceable not to any defects in equipment—tho these exist—nor to lack of adjustment in the course of study, or faulty methods of teaching—tho improvement is needed in these respects—but to a lack of co-operation between the supervising officers and the teaching body who do the work of in-

struction. We submit that the first step in any useful reform of the schools must be the re-creation of this spirit. It is surely absurd to suppose that a quasi-military regime can bring forth fruits of co-operation—or that a teaching body which has absolutely no determining voice in matters which vitally concern teachers and taught should be effectively inspired to teach the children of a democracy to be democratic.

At this point it is well to emphasize the fact that democracy does not mean government by mass-meeting—as some have insinuated. Nor are the needs of the situation to be met by advisory councils of teachers without power to see that their suggestions are heeded.

Professor Elliott has well emphasized the fact that just as the boys and girls work more vigorously when they know they are making things for use—so the teaching body have little inspiration to expend thought and energy on investigations for the cavernous files of the Board of Education. It is therefore with the utmost seriousness that we urge the delegation to the teaching body of the real supervision of the work of the

several schools—not as a cure for all educational ills, but as an essential preliminary to real progress.

To an executive committee elected by the regular teachers of each school could well be submitted the powers at present vested in the principal of the school—while that official, freed from irksome responsibilities, would have an opportunity to develop the qualities of real leadership which it is the aim of the Board to secure in its principals. The drudgery of school-work undertaken by common consent and co-operatively distributed would be performed in a far different spirit from that in which even the best teacher meets such tasks today. There would, it seems necessary to repeat, be no attempt to make programs or do other expert work in parliamentary meeting. But every teacher delegated to use special skill in the common service would feel at every moment that he was the servant, not of an individual, but of the school community. So far as the administration of the school problems now in the principal's hands is concerned, there need be anticipated no insuperable difficulties.

But ratings?—Shall we leave those to be determined by a majority vote of the teachers? At which point it is pertinent to inquire what the object of ratings is, anyway. Is it efficiency? Is it the establishment of a standard of good work by which one may measure his own qualifications from time to time and see when he falls short of true excellence? If so, one need have little fear that in a school-community democratically constituted and instinct with the spirit of co-operation and pride in the solution of our common problems the inefficient teacher would long be allowed to remain inefficient. Once the responsibility for incompetent work is shifted from the shoulders of the principal to the broader back of the teaching body, you have a guarantee not merely of saner standards of judging efficiency, but of a pow-

erful pressure upon the delinquent to do better.

And let it not be imagined that the wilfully inefficient teacher is commonly to be met with. The discouraged teacher, the weak teacher, the poorly trained and over-taxed teacher we all know—but show him a way to improve, open to him a source of advice and encouragement in which he has proper confidence—above all, give him assurance that his improvement is noticed and will count something to his scheme of things, and you have a different problem.

It is commonly objected by the skeptical that the teaching body as a whole has not shown itself possessed of sufficient professional spirit or practical wisdom to make such a step "safe"—and that to hand the management of the school over to the teachers would be merely to open the door for mismanagement and anarchy. "It's human nature to loaf unless you're driven, and you can't change human nature, etc., etc. And further, when all this educational hysteria has run its course we can go back to the good old quiet ways without any fundamental changes." If plain recognition that our present attack on the problem of education is ineffective be hysteria, we must plead guilty to the charge; if an extension of the well-established doctrine of interest from the taught to the teachers be hysterical, we plead guilty; and if recognition of the world-old truth that work done under the lash is half-hearted work—that it presents an almost irresistible temptation to eye-service—if this be anarchical, we plead guilty. And as for poor, old human nature, the one unchangeable law of whose existence is change, and change, and change, to meet the variation in environment and to answer the new inspiration of improved conditions that the years are bringing to bear upon her—if she cannot be depended upon to make these adjustments in teachers—in heaven's name why are we bothering to teach at all!

Does your superintendent come to judge or to help?

THE VERDICT OF SMITH O'NEIL

DOROTHY PAUL

FROM OVER the rim of an indistinguishably battered geography, held shield-wise, Smith O'Neil steadily regarded the new teacher after the aggressive fashion of a Roman gladiator.

From thirty-nine similar coigns of vantage, the sixth grade steadily regarded Smith O'Neil. While the new teacher, with the perilous calm of the uninitiated, viewed the sixth grade impartially, in cheerful ignorance of the impending crisis.

Now the sixth grade was Smith's, and the fullness thereof; its members were as clay in his hands, and its teachers, by the law of inheritance, were his natural prey. The years had come and gone in unheeded numbers, since any but Smith had occupied the scarred and battered desk at the foot of the sixth grammar grade, and the affixing of his not unusual name to what is known in pedagogical dialect as a "promotion slip" had become as rare as the proverbial sneeze of an elephant. For English grammar was to Smith as the writings of Xenophon, and "Percentage" as clear as the Book of Revelation; but the pitching of a "curve" and an "outshoot," the skilled harrying of teachers, and the fearless destruction of law and order were as child's play to him—wherefore did the annually renewed sixth grade wear its heart upon its sleeve for the perennial Smith to peck at. And it needed but a nod to call them to his heel, like a trained pack of hunting hounds, bent upon the extermination of that common invisible foe called "discipline."

Many and varied were the scalps that Smith wore at his girdle—as many and as varied as the methods he had used to separate them, so to speak, from the heads of his victims. And calling them "methods," by the way, is no mere phrase or figure of speech, for Smith's mode of attack was neither rash nor random; his wide experience in such matters had taught him that each type of victim must fall by a certain and prescribed type of torment, best suited to its own peculiar needs.

Smith's first victim had been his first teacher (Smith believed in beginning at the beginning, and consequently knew his art from the ground up); her scalp-lock had been a thin and grey one, and hers that temperament by courtesy called "nervous," which can be reduced to frenzy, by as simple a process as the skillful tilting of a bit of mirror, at various experimental angles, in a ray of harmless sunlight.

For the next Smith had paid rather dearly; but he had never regretted the price. And the applauding "gang" thot it a bargain at any cost. The victim was a certain Miss Mills, spare as to frame and theoretic as to mind. She walked on the balls of her feet, carried her shoulders like Jim Jeffries, and abjured certain hidden, unhygienic, and strictly feminine garments, which might possibly have slightly redeemed an undeniably curveless and rectangular build. Now, neither Smith nor the "gang" were art critics, but they had certain vague ideas of their own. A taut and cunningly stretched length of kite-cord at a perilous ankle-height above the floor of the main aisle had caused the abrupt downfall of Miss Mills, and the temporary but remorseless downfall of Smith O'Neil.

The names of Smith's other victims were legion, and their scalp-locks of every hue, from red to grey; furthermore, the "types" with their corresponding torments neatly attached like prescription labels, were systematically pigeon-holed in the diabolical inner-consciousness of Smith, so that the worshipful and obedient "gang" never dreamed that the moment *could* come when an unreadable riddle should confront him. But the aggressive gladiator behind the geography, "sizing up" the New Teacher in a long and challenging gaze, realized that he had met a new type; and the watching thirty-nine not receiving their cue, and feeling that for some vague—but doubtless good—reason the verdict was to be deferred, dropped their eyes peaceably to the map

of Asia, with the furtiveness of browsing sheep whose bell-wether has strayed. For about the new teacher of the sixth grade there was something which defied tradition—something in the smooth tan curve of her cheek, in the low ring of her voice and in the little waves of hair about her face.

All morning things hung in the balance, and then at noon Smith decided to lead an ace. He had sized up his type, so he thot, and he was anxious to see what kind of hand she held.

Accordingly Smith returned from lunch at an unusually early hour, and entered the empty room of the sixth grade with an agitated coat-pocket and the expression of a stalking setter.

Swiftly and deftly was the big crystal ink-stand on the desk emptied of its ebon fluid, and refilled with that part of the content of Smith O'Neil's pocket which bore the semblance and restiveness of a tiny green frog of the common or garden variety. Half replacing the heavy cover at just the angle to admit air and tempt escape, Smith viewed with pride his work for the fraction of a second, and then retraced his steps to the play-ground with a holy and sanctified face.

That afternoon the New Teacher of the sixth grade entered a room that held the anomalous combination of the stillness of a wake at midnight and the wrapt studiousness of a monastery. She began the lesson without the preliminary call for order and with wonder in her soul. Then, with one hand stretched to the imprisoning ink-stand, she stopped; her glance strayed from its green and galvanically restive contents to the seraphic countenance of Smith O'Neil, and in a flash she was enlightened.

But not so Smith—for him the problem deepened.

Looking straight at him she asked the inevitable question; and in the hush made by thirty-nine bated breaths Smith aggressively followed the example of the Father of his Country in a similar plight. Again were thirty-nine breaths bated. But not one word did the New Teacher

of the sixth grade say, until Smith returned, foiled and resentful, from releasing his prisoner.

Then she made a request—it was not a command, it was decidedly *not* an order—it was a *request* that she might see Smith for a moment after three o'clock. She didn't pause after she gave the invitation—it didn't seem to be a question implying R. S. V. P. Yet somehow, when the "gang" filed out at dismissal time, Smith seemed to find it necessary to finish the cutting of his initials into his desk top before he followed them.

The New Teacher of the sixth grade always went with the departing class down the long hall to the door. To Smith that distance down the hall had always seemed a very short one, but this afternoon it took her centuries to make the journey.

Working meditatively with his knife on the desk-top, Smith eyed the door furtively. In the big empty room, with the monotonous buzz of circling flies, and surrounded by the chalky implements of learning, Smith experienced the miraculous subtraction of a cubit from his stature.

From the open window came puffs of warm air and a long shaft of afternoon sunshine. Over on the playground the "scrub team" was practising, with much heat and dissension; out into the sunny street poured streams of home-going children, and on the fence in a remote corner, shielded from the idly curious gaze of janitors and teachers, by a "china-ball" tree, he could see a dangling book-strap, that meant that certain sympathetic members of the "gang" were awaiting the final outcome of the encounter—they were all right, the fellers were—'twasn't the first time they had waited!

And then, in a final furtive glance toward the door, Smith caught sight of the New Teacher of the sixth grade.

Tradition says that drowning people see their lives pass in panorama before them—even so Smith, in that brief half-instant, wondered swiftly, as he had wondered many a time before, which it would be—which of the dusty, musty,

inevitable school alternatives: "suspension," "expulsion," "reported" or "lines."

But it wasn't any of them—the New Teacher of the sixth grade came and sat on the little desk in front of Smith's. The warm breeze from the window caught her hair and blew it in waves about her face—it wasn't strictly orthodox, as teachers went, but somehow it was vastly becoming. As she looked at Smith, she smiled; it was a sunny, chummy little smile, and furthermore, judging by all previous teachers of the sixth, or any other, grade (and many had Smith seen) it was not strictly according to Hoyle to smile at "kept-ins."

Smith looked out of the window for one fleeting moment, with the expression of a hardened criminal down at his dusty shoe for another fleeting moment, with more the expression of a "prison trusty"; and finally, reluctantly, up at the new teacher of the sixth grade for a third fleeting moment, with an expression of countenance that was new to Smith O'Neil—and, well, you may take it as an axiom, that no matter what color the blood to which you add a tincture of the milk of human kindness, some subtle chemistry will turn it blue.

Ten minutes later, on top of the fence, in the secluded corner by the china-ball tree, Smith and the gang talked it over, swinging their feet above the heads of passers-by. Smith's memory seemed to have played him false, concerning the exact words of that low-voiced private talk with the New Teacher of the sixth grade—but anyhow, the gang caught the drift, as they usually did when Smith laid down the law.

And then a strange thing happened—so strange as to be almost within the category of the miraculous.

Someone came out of the school gate and down the street toward the secluded fence corner. As she passed below them she looked up. The little sunny, chummy smile was on her face, and the gang, in the very act of dropping down on the other side of the fence, changed its mind. By force of long habit they glanced with one accord at Smith O'Neil—and then it was that the miracle happened; for, with an effort of mind and muscle that would have carried the mightiest enterprise, the red hair of Smith O'Neil was bared, *by the hand of Smith O'Neil*, to the afternoon sunlight and the New Teacher of the sixth grade!

SIDETALKS WITH SUPERINTENDENTS—IV

J. S.

I UNDERSTAND that Mr. H. G. Wells, the English novelist, wrote his "The Food of the Gods," and certain other fantastic novels with the hope that he might break in upon the monotonous and established way in which the English mind sees social conditions. His experiment implies the possibility of currents of that being set up thru the stimulus of the strange imagery, and even the possibility of the slight shifting of atoms from their usual combinations in ideas that have existed for centuries. There is very shrewd insight into the psychology of convention back of this notion of Mr. Wells'. He knows that if he can slip a few innocent, little thot atoms with ready combining power into the mental solution of the average English mind, a number of new combinations are

sure to be made. The rest ought to be easy.

However, there have been times when Englishmen, and other men, too, for that matter, have not exhibited new thot combinations from any stimulus less than a thoroughgoing earthquake.

Nothing would please me better than to see some clever writer like Mr. Wells try the experiment of slipping gently some new suggestions into our teacher mentality. At the same time I am impatient for the coming of an earthquake, and I believe in the end that is what we shall get. In fact, I know it, for I have read the premonitory tracing of the seismograph.

One of the first things to feel the disturbance will be that toppling part of our educational system called our "su-

perior officers." The builders should have known better than to run it up without adequate support and relation to the parts beneath. Perhaps it is too high, anyway.

Concretely, the average school principal or superintendent is permitted by the system which creates him to draw a little away from his fellow teachers, and to feel himself excused from meeting issues raised by them when the fair-minded decision of the issue might restrict his prerogatives. In my long career as observer of the habits of educational superior officers I have had occasion frequently to regret the exigency that separates men physically, mentally and morally, when one goes up and the other stays below. There is something subtle in its influence, and I think destructive to the social and moral fiber, in this act of leaving the ranks and becoming a superior officer.

I have heard honest teachers talk as if they felt that when a teacher becomes a principal or a superintendent he severs not only his clan ties, but even his ethical ties. Some seem to believe that as discriminating teachers look at acts, it appears to be as difficult for a principal to be honest as it is for a camel to pass thru the eye of a needle.

I have at times interested myself in trying to work out the reasons for the change that comes over men who become superiors. In some cases the change may be due to the fact that the man is not strong enough in character to withstand the effect of added responsibilities and power. Possibly the system of selection does admit of the chance of the calling of persons to positions for which they are not qualified. Definite demonstrations of this point are often seen in the selection of persons long considered unfit by their fellows.

I think the most important factor in the changing nature of promoted teachers is the sudden release from all moral and official obligations to former peers, and the taking on of obligations to a selected, higher class. In time the interests of the higher class and the lower

class have grown apart, and their codes of ethics have reflected their interests. Now, whatever the justification, or lack of it, for the class differences and the antagonism between superiors and subordinates in educational systems, there is enormous waste in the very existence of that antagonism, and the consequent loss in productiveness. Educational thinkers are beginning to see this and call attention to it. This is the tracing on the seismograph.

Superior officers are obviously ineffective and useless if they cannot control the machinery over which they have been appointed. With growing intelligence on the part of the knowing portions of the machinery there is certain to be increased difficulty in the management. It is not inconceivable that the knowing part of the machinery will become so intelligent that it will demand a system of supervision and management in which the energy expended shall be made to yield commensurate results; and that it will demand a share in the selection of the human agents who direct its activities. It may demand that these agents conform to a code of morality that will imply the best interests of the knowing machinery—the workers, the teachers themselves—and the best interests of the product—the children. This ought not to be impossible, for the agents would themselves be teachers, and would remain teachers.

After all, what is the use of earthquakes? They are tremendously wasteful themselves.

Teaching cannot be made the most honorable of professions by increasing salaries, but this is the easiest way to raise its standards. If we can bring into the work men of ability, they will promote the reforms that are needed. Teachers have inherited the status of domestic servants, and like domestic servants they should free themselves from personal subjugation.—PROF. J. McKEEN CATTELL, in address, "Science, Education and Democracy," Section of Education, A. A. A. S., Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 31, 1913.

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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.

DISCIPLINE

THE STORY in this number written by Miss Paul is obviously a contribution to the study of discipline. One of the best of the possible lessons in the story is the suggestion of the ease with which the teacher solves the behavior problem in her class. To those who are inclined to stiffen themselves with nerve-racking intensity against a troublesome class this

story should come as a personal message.

A good deal of the energy that we all expend in our daily labor in teaching is given out in connection with discipline. And it is developed in very much the same fashion that one obtains thru induction a large supply of electricity. You start with a small amount of suspicion or antagonism on one side or the other, and before you have that of a plan for settling the case of discipline that has arisen, you have a problem that cannot be solved.

It is very hard for sensitive teachers (and we should all be sensitive to external facts) to free themselves of the subjective attitude in matters of discipline. A rebellious child is impertinent, or commits an act that is insulting to us, and the fact calls for decisive action, if not for resentment. We demand satisfaction, and we usually get it, but at what tremendous cost of energy, and with what futility in general!

When we are passing along a much crowded street we have occasion for a hundred fights in as many minutes, but we don't have the fights, and we are scarcely ever conscious of insults to our persons. Thus we save our heads and much wear and tear on our nerve-systems. If we were not in authority over lesser beings just emerging out of racial savagery, we might be similarly unconscious of acts committed thru ignorance.

SABBATICAL LEAVE

EVERY YEAR hundreds of raw and inexperienced teachers are appointed to the schools. Immediately our educational machinery begins to move to make a practical Pestalozzi out of the late graduate of the college or normal school. In a great measure the efforts are successful. But once the apprenticeship period is over little is done to improve the teacher in service.

To be sure, the classroom teacher has always been urged by those in authority to continue his studies at college or university, and credit has always been given him when a little of that has been ac-

complished. But it is needless to add that such work has nearly always proved futile. How could the teacher, tired by the day's exertion, and burdened with the cares brot home from the classroom, be expected to do satisfactory university work? As a result we have daily enacted the tragedy of fatigued teachers doing university work, and the comedy on commencement day, when degrees are conferred upon those who have completed so many hours.

It has been repeatedly suggested that a great aid in improving the teacher in service is the granting of a sabbatical leave of absence. Among the thousands in the system, there are surely a great many who for their own self-improvement are anxious to spend an entire year in study. A leave of absence with one-half pay should be granted to them every seventh year. This somewhat corresponds to the sabbatical year generally granted in our universities, and has been successfully used in the public schools of Boston, Cambridge, Schenectady, Rochester, Trenton and Newton.

It may be urged against this plan that too many teachers would want to avail themselves of the opportunity, and that it would involve an expenditure of money which may at the present time be used to meet more urgent needs. However, a simple expedient may be used to overcome the first objection. The total number of such leaves of absence may be limited, let us say, to twenty-five, and a proportionate selection may be made from the different classes of teachers. As for the financial objection, it is interesting to know that it has been estimated that in reality the city would save money by adopting this plan, as younger teachers or pupil teachers at low salaries will for the time being be doing the work of the teachers on leave.

The benefits that will be derived from an infusion of new ideas and culture every year cannot be overestimated. Smug self-satisfaction, the bane and ruin of every progressive school teacher, will to an extent be eradicated by the presence in our midst of thinking men

and women. These will point the way and lead us ever onward toward the ideals of our profession. It is only a question of time when every progressive school system will be granting sabbatical leaves of absence. May we therefore not urge the members of boards of education to seize time by the forelock and confer an everlasting benefit on pupils, teachers and the community by adopting the plan immediately?

TOWARD A PROFESSION

AMONG THE bills introduced into the Maryland Legislature this year are about a dozen that deal with the schools. Two things are worth noting: 1. The bills were drawn up and were unanimously approved by the legislative committees of the State Teachers' Association, the State Commissioners' Association and the State Board of Education. 2. Half of the bills have to do with the improvement of the quality or of the status of the teaching and supervising forces of the state.

Specifically, the following items are now pending:

1. Requiring newly appointed teachers, after June 1, 1915, to have pedagogic training, at least the equivalent of a summer school course.
2. Permitting school boards to send a percentage of their teachers to an approved summer school in lieu of holding a teachers' institute.
3. Providing a teachers' training course as an elective in one approved high school of each county.
4. Providing for the construction by the State and Worcester County of a building at Ocean City for general educational meetings.
5. Increasing appropriations for the maintenance of the three State normal schools.
6. Providing increases in the salaries of elementary teachers having had special pedagogic training and of experienced high-school teachers.

Educational legislation pending in New Jersey includes a bill for appropriating money for the establishment of

a normal school in the southern part of the state, and the addition of \$150 per year to the expense-allowance for county superintendents.

The Massachusetts legislature has before it several bills calculated to improve the quality of the educational work of the near future. A new normal school is proposed for Fall River. Another bill provides for the reimbursing of the city of Boston from the state treasury for expenses incurred in maintaining a normal school. This is a frank recognition of the fact that education is primarily a state function and not a purely local affair. The Boston taxpayers will no doubt be glad to have the city reimbursed; but they cannot complain when the state legislature undertakes to prescribe the minimum tax rate for school purposes.

For the standardization of requirements for teachers' licenses, there is proposed a system of certification by the State Board of Education for teachers in superintendency unions. Another bill would give the State Board of Education authority to maintain classes for the training of teachers for the State-aided vocational and continuation schools. Finally, permanent tenure for teachers and superintendents is proposed. It is to be hoped that the bill for the latter object will protect the interests of the children as well as the interests of the teachers.

The Ohio legislature is convened in special session and is considering a large number of school measures. An appropriation of \$200,000 is asked for a college of education at the State University. One bill provides for teachers' training departments in high schools, and another for the examination and certification of teachers. On the side of better supervision two bills have been introduced. One proposes county boards of education, county superintendents to be appointed by the boards, and supervision districts within the counties, with superintendents for these districts. In another bill provision is made for increasing the number of high school inspectors. A minimum salary of forty

dollars per month for teachers is proposed in house bill 15; this suggests that there must be some awfully *poor* teachers in the state of Ohio this year.

SUPERIOR TEACHERS

With a view to increasing the efficiency of the teaching staff in the high schools, the New York City Board of Education adopted, some two years ago, a salary schedule that provided a differential compensation for "superior" teachers. This measure has caused a great deal of dissatisfaction because, whereas at the time of its adoption the legislation was ostensibly carried thru for the purpose of advancing salaries, this provision has worked injustice toward the older teachers who were not prepared to meet the new tests of "superior merit," but who had been led to expect an increase of salaries on the basis of long service. (See editorial in *THE AMERICAN TEACHER* for February, 1912, entitled "Superior Teachers.")

A special study of the conditions has been made by Associate Superintendent Clarence E. Meleney, and in his report he recommends that requirements be graded according to years of service. It would seem to be simple common sense to expect more from a teacher of ten years of experience than from one of two or three years. Unfortunately, too many teachers are content to continue their work on the *good-enough* basis; but this is only another way of saying that the community has been too long content with "good-enough" service.

In Mr. Meleney's plan the rating of teachers for the purpose of determining their status in relation to salary increases would be made on the basis of special inspections, by principals and district or other superintendents. He recommends specific requirements of teachers of different lengths of experience, as follows:

1. Teachers of less than three years' service in the New York schools. District superintendents and principals should direct their observation of the classroom work of

these teachers with a view to their arrangement to classes in which they can best adapt their activities to the instruction of the pupils.

2. Teachers of four, five, and six years of service. Principals should observe closely the methods of teaching and management and carefully examine the results of instruction at least twice each year. If the results are not satisfactory during any one of these years the district superintendent should be requested to make an investigation for the purpose of aiding the teacher and to form his judgment as to the teacher's efficiency. The report of the district superintendent at the end of the sixth year on the merit of such teachers should be based upon more than one investigation and examination.

3. Teachers of more than six years of service. Principals should be familiar with the studies these teachers pursue in broadening their knowledge of the subjects to be taught and in improving their methods of teaching. They should promote in the teachers a professional spirit and aid them in the study of individual children, with a view to the development of their best qualities. The principals should invite the co-operation of the district superintendents in the efforts to strengthen the teachers who fail to attain the highest degree of efficiency in building up the intellectual and moral powers of the pupils. Careful examination of the work of all such teachers should be made during two successive years before the expiration of the ninth and twelfth years of service.

4. Teachers of more than twelve years of service. It should not be too much to require of teachers of twelve or more years of service that they attain a degree of efficiency to be characterized as "superior." It should be apparent to principals and superintendents that superior teachers possess scholarship and culture, a comprehension of the ultimate aim of class instruction and training, an appreciation of the abilities and characteristics of the children, a sympathy with the aspirations, a knowledge of the relation of school work to the future activities of the child, and a power in development of physical, intellectual, and moral habits of the children. Such teachers

should have acquired power in class instruction and training to be self-reliant, resourceful, capable of taking the initiative without too much dependence upon the principal, but always in co-operation with all the aims and purposes of the school. They should be able to comprehend the value of school activities beyond the classroom, and participate in the larger work of the entire school as an educational center in the community.

Whatever one may think of the special points emphasized in these recommendations, it must be gratifying to all to see the many serious attempts to elevate the standards of our calling.

TEACHERS ON STRIKE

WE FEEL SURE that the executive of the National Union of Teachers regrets deeply that it has been compelled to take the extreme step of withdrawing teachers from the elementary schools of Herefordshire. No alternative, however, consistent with maintaining the self-respect of the teaching profession, was possible. The case for an improvement of the disgracefully low salaries paid to teachers in Hereford is unanswerable. A decreased education rate in the county has been obtained by sweating the staff. The salaries asked for by the Union on behalf of the teachers were moderate in the extreme. The attitude of the Union and the teachers to the county education authority has been patient, tolerant and honorably respectful. The teachers of Hereford may be assured of the complete sympathy of the teachers of London, who wish them a speedy victory.—*The London Teacher*.

The schools have been kept so busy with what is called "preparing for life" that the teachers have been given no leisure for a more active contact with that life.—MEYER BLOOMFIELD, before the *Third National Conference on Vocational Guidance*, Grand Rapids, October, 1913.

TOWARD DEMOCRACY AND BACK

EVEN THE LEGISLATURE of the various states must sooner or later become aware of the idea that democracy is the demand of the day. Several bills pending in the state legislatures suggest that we are not standing still.

In Virginia a bill has been introduced requiring civic training in high schools and higher institutions receiving state support. This means a recognition of the fact that you cannot leave everything to nature and trust to luck. Even in Virginia the doctrine of *laissez faire* is losing ground. Another recognition of the fact that we are living in a new age comes in the form of a bill in the same state providing for instruction in the prevention of accidents.

In Ohio and in Massachusetts there are bills pending to authorize local boards to allow the use of the school buildings for other than strictly school purposes. This is an admission that the schools really belong to the public and that the public consists of the men and women who live and work and have various dealings with each other. A second bill before the Massachusetts legislature provides for the use of school buildings for purposes involving the charge of an admission fee. This way of using the public's buildings is getting to be quite common in many places; it means that the public has decided that it would rather use its own buildings than hold its meetings on street corners, especially in bad weather.

Two curious specimens of what appears to us as reactionary legislation come to our notice. In South Carolina a bill was passed by the lower house prohibiting white teachers from teaching in schools for colored children. This can only mean the denial of adequate education to a race which is only reluctantly granted the civic rights implied by the provisions of the national constitution. This act is hardly offset by another recently passed bill which provides for the introduction of moving pictures into the public schools. The

latter bill does not specify that pictures shown in the colored schools shall be exclusively taken from scenes of negro life. In Ohio there is pending a bill which would prohibit the changing of textbooks oftener than once in five years. This may be an effective way to guard against the depredations of politicians and contractors, or it may be well calculated to protect the tax-payer against too large a book-bill; but it is hardly conducive to a close adjustment of school work to changing needs.

In New York City mild agitation has been aroused by the action of the Board of Education's committee on the care of buildings. One of the large high schools in Brooklyn has for some two years served as a public forum center on Sundays, under the auspices of a private organization. The auditorium of the school has been used for lectures and discussions and debates on topics of current interest. Just before one of the recent meetings the officials of the committee in charge of these meetings were notified that the school must not be used on a certain Sunday if William D. Haywood was to speak, as announced. There are many opinions possible as to the wisdom of Mr. Haywood's attitude on each of a thousand public questions. There can be but a few as to the justice of having the committee on the care of buildings act as censor on the public utterances of a man of the standing of Mr. Haywood. The committee on the care of buildings is responsible for the proper physical care of the buildings—if one may judge by its official designation—but it is hardly responsible for shielding the minds and morals of grown men and women—the citizens of the city—against the heresies of a new social philosophy. The time is past—we had that—when the worshippers of things-as-they-are can obstruct the motor-car of progress with carpet-tack tactics; the said motor-car carries puncture-proof tires, and the simple-minded obstructionists will either be run over, or they will succeed in making themselves ridiculous.

Shortly after the committee on care of buildings had thus unwittingly and

unnecessarily spilled a few drops of Martyr's Blood, it announced a new schedule of fees for the use of public school rooms by private organizations. This immediately aroused a little hurricane of protest from voluntary organizations that have been using the schools for various activities. The claim is made that the fees are exorbitant and the suspicion is voiced that the higher fees are calculated to discourage certain groups that cannot afford the higher fees. Moreover, under the proposed regulations an official censor is to attend every meeting by an outside body, and the fee of the censor is to be paid by the organization. Here we have a fine example of a formally progressive program substantially vitiated by reactionary red tape. To extend the use of the school plant is in accordance with the needs of progressive democracy. But to establish a censorship on what the citizens of the community may or may not hear and say and think—in the guise of protecting public property—is to open the doors to official abuses of power for personal or partisan ends, if not to more sordid forms of "graft"; and it is really shutting the door to the opportunities for school-building use that is most needed. The agitation has forced the committee to announce that it will hold a public hearing on the subject in the near future. It is to be hoped that the whole matter will be well threshed out; and if a mistake has been made, the committee should be given a chance to correct it.

The subjective attitude toward disciplinary problems involves a serious danger in addition to loss of self-control. If the teacher reads into the disciplinary situation a direct affront to himself, he will almost inevitably set himself against his pupils in a most unfortunate way. The difficulties that he faces will inevitably be represented by his young charges, and so the personal attitude will direct itself against a personal object.

—W. C. BAGLEY, "Some Problems of School Discipline," in *School and Home Education* for January, 1914.

BOOK NOTES

All books may be ordered from
THE AMERICAN TEACHER

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING; an experimental investigation of the economy and technique of memory. By E. MEY-MANN, Professor of Philosophy in Hamburg. Translated from the Third Edition of "The Economy and Technique of Learning," by JOHN WALLACE BAIRD, Professor of Experimental Psychology, Clark University. 12mo. pp. xix+393. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1913. \$1.50 net.

So long as farming in this country was essentially a kind of mining industry, whereby wealth was dug from the earth and sold for the cost of digging and transportation, almost anyone could succeed as a farmer; nowadays it is necessary for the farmer to become a scientific agriculturist if he would compete effectively in the business of raising crops and cattle. In the teaching business we have made some advance since the days when anyone who could read with fair facility could "keep school" by keeping two or three lessons ahead of the class. But the competition has not yet forced upon us the necessity of becoming scientific experts in the control of mental and spiritual growth. This reflection is brot out by going over the pages of this book; we are made to realize how far our work is from an applied science.

We have no doubt given up the "faculty-psychology"—with more or less reluctance; and we have just about settled down to dealing with the youngsters in terms of the "function-psychology" when along come some more experimenters and tell us that it is necessary to incorporate into the school work some plan for formal memory training. This is certainly disturbing. Yet there is not so much contradiction as would seem.

The new experimental psychology does not return to the faculty psychology; and the new training of the memory does not mean the strengthening of the memory by "practise," in accord with the old theory. The new analysis points out the various ways in which the individual may learn, and the various types of individuals, according to the way each instinctively receives and organizes his mental income. We thus come to some practical considerations of value to the teacher,

and of value to the pupil. Training the memory should then mean not the drill in memorizing for the sake of the "practise," but instruction in the technique of learning, and practise in methods of learning that will be most efficient for each individual.

Thus, it should be worth while to help each child to discover what kinds of sense impressions are most helpful as means for making enduring impressions; it may be better to do this than to multiply our presentation so that every possible type of mind may be reached. Instead of repeating words, and writing them on the black-board, and making a diagram and demonstrating a model, and letting each child handle some objects, we may find it more economical to divide the children into different groups, or to teach them how to get what they need. It should be worth while to teach children that an attempt at understanding will help the memory; or to address their attention in the most efficient way. Learning to remember means learning to learn, learning to attend, learning to establish associations deliberately.

Among other interesting material in this book is a consideration of the physical conditions of classrooms, etc., in relation to the efficiency of learning. There is an extensive classified bibliography, a subject index and an author index. On the whole, the energetic teacher will find this book worth careful study; it is not a book for casual reading. The author is perfectly frank about disputed points, and the scientific spirit is evident thruout. The translation has been well made.

PRINCIPLES OF CHARACTER MAKING. By ARTHUR HOLMES, Dean of Faculties, Pennsylvania State College. 12mo. pp. 336. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1913. \$1.25 net.

It has long been a tradition of the universities that applied science lags a quarter of a century behind research. It should be the function of the teacher to reduce this interval to the lowest span. And there is no better way to begin than by giving serious consideration to those aspects of scientific research that must find their application in our own everyday work. This little book is well adapted to introduce the teacher—and many who are not teachers—to those results of modern investigations into psychology that have their

most direct applications in the training of the young. The principles of character making are the principles that should guide us in converting a bundle of native reactions into an organized body of more or less controlled reactions that fit the individual for effective social relationships.

Dr. Holmes brings out the modern scientific conception of character by comparing many classical definitions of "character" and showing wherein they differ from our practical understanding of the term. He then analyses the sources of the character, gives a simple account of the principles of heredity as they apply to this subject, and develops the modern idea of instincts. The headings of most of the chapters are very similar to those we find in the regulation textbook of psychology—Making and breaking of habits, The self, The will, etc.; but the treatment is much more lively and intimate than anything we have had since William James began to "write psychology like a novelist." Without trying to build a systematic text-book, Dr. Holmes has done something better; he has given all that most of our teachers will need from a text-book in a most readable form. It is the kind of book one might care to read even when not looking forward to an examination. Of special value to the teacher in service who wishes to keep up with the progress of the science are the chapters on the impulses and ideals of youth, and on the psychological basis of moral education. The book is essentially a compilation, but it has the unity of a well-defined point of view, and the "go" of a live personality.

The autocratic position of the principal sometimes leads him to become dictatorial and unyielding. Teachers are continually hearing what he wants, and they are supposed to obey without further discussion or questioning. The attitude taken by a principal in such a case may give him greater ease and satisfaction than the rational position of having the teachers and himself engaged in the search for truth which is above them all. The principalship is not a position of reward to the faithful, the Nirvana to be reached after the toil of class work. It is a position which implies aid and co-operation.—FELIX ARNOLD, in *School and class Management*.

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY.

Let us say it frankly, our children should be taught to want many things beyond their reach. They should be made pungently but optimistically discontented with anything short of a generous life. Resignation and contentment with little are not virtues so long as privations are due to social maladjustments instead of the limitations of nature.—ARLAND D. WEEKS, in "The Education of Tomorrow."

COMMENTING ON the action of the Illinois State Teachers' Association, at the Springfield convention in January, State Superintendent Francis G. Blair writes as follows:

Nothing showed more clearly that teachers are not opposed to any proper investigation of our present school system to discover its faults as well as its virtues than the resolution calling for a thoroughgoing educational survey of the entire State. The survey is to be directed, according to the resolution, by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the School of Education of the University, the Normal schools and other institutions. There will be no disposition to shut anybody out or to cover anything up.

We understand that several hundred teachers are to take an active part in the survey. The point of greatest significance in this matter seems to us to be the fact that the survey was initiated by the teachers of the state, and not by an administrative or legislative body, or even by professional investigators. There are to be seven main lines of investigation, and the chairmen of the seven subcommittees will be free to select their co-workers.

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