

The American Teacher

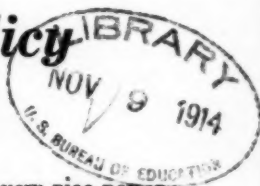
Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.

VOL. III No. 9

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER, 1914

50 CENTS A YEAR

Expansion Policy



Get out beyond your Skin. You are a very nice person;
But it is not worth while to spend all your time in your
own company

Get out beyond your Friends. Friendship is fine and
necessary;
But not enough for a full-sized man or woman

Get out beyond your Classroom. That is where you
make your living;
But you must have more room for your life

Get out beyond your Church. That you need for
your spiritual comfort;
But you must have more for salvation

Get out beyond your Town. That is where you spend
your time
But your soul should reach from the Mountains to the Sea

Get out beyond your Nation. In that Humanity has
a stake;
But most of Humanity is elsewhere

Get out as far as you can—then it will be worth while
to come back Home

DO NOT CLIP
THIS NUMBER.

FREEDOM FOR TEACHERS*

THOMAS W CHURCHILL

President, Board of Education, The City of New York

IN THE DESIRE of the Board of Education to obtain help from every source in working out the school problems confronting it, the Board originated the proposition, now carried out with success, of organizing the principals and teachers into a council to enable it to utilize to the full the talent and experience of the teaching force. The life of the schools is already being advanced by the free use of the ideas of teachers.

Results accomplished have confirmed in me the belief that a thoroly representative organization of all those in the schools would be able to discuss and to formulate in a broad way, not only propositions to be transmitted to the Board of Education, but also questions which the Board of Education refers to such an organization. This the Teachers' Council has done. In the doing of it, it has had the earnest and helpful co-operation of all of the teachers from whom it has sought help. The experience and judgment of the teaching staff have been employed in the formulation of school policies. The resulting recommendations of the Council justify its organization, and I note in the Board of Education a sentiment favorable to the extended use by it of the Council.

From time to time suggestions have come to me that the Council could be organized upon a more representative basis, that all of the teachers might be given a direct vote in their schools, rather than thru their associations; that elections might be by districts or by representatives selected in the districts or that each group of teachers in a grade should meet to elect. The present plan of organization was devised by a com-

mittee of teachers from the associations and was duly considered and approved by the Board of Education. It is my settled conviction that any recommendations for a change ought to come from the Council itself, rather than be imposed upon the Council by the Board of Education. Surely that would be the more democratic way. The Council as at present organized is representative of the teaching force. It is a more representative organization than any in existence prior to its formation. Naturally, therefore, the Board of Education looks to the Teachers' Council to consider and to recommend, when it finds such recommendation desirable, what changes should be made in the plan of its Council.

The movement for a teachers council began, and it should continue, with the spirit of freedom and autonomy. The method of securing general representation of all teachers was left to the teachers. Whether the original electing bodies should be schools or existent organizations of teachers was and is of less moment than the spirit and purpose which all recognize is paramount in this new movement. The Board of Education, I am certain, wants the teachers to be larger partakers in the work of education, the success of which must ultimately depend upon your own thot and effort.

During the past year many communications which I have received voice protest against the too rigid prescriptions in the school system. As one principal puts it "we are told too many things that we must do. What we need is more freedom to do the things we know ought to be done." I recognize the fact that supervision and guidance are essential in a school system, but it must be a wise supervision. There has been in our sys-

*Letter to the President of The Teachers' League, New York, sent to meeting of the League on "Liberty in Teaching," 23 October, 1914.

tem, due undoubtedly to its centralization of authority, a detailed prescription of what teachers should do. It magnifies unimportant details in curriculum, methods, exercises and records. It leads to teachers emphasizing the covering of a course of study, rather than the teaching and training of children.

There is in all this evidence of the need of larger liberty to teachers and principals. I recognize that there is danger in allowing it. But any greater liberties, than are allowed to our teachers and principals, that are allowed in other systems should be extended to them in this. It is necessary not that principals and teachers should do the same thing, but that each should give the best of himself.

At a time when so much official emphasis is placed upon the means of training and upon uniformity of procedure, it is difficult to effect a change in the teachers' own viewpoint. I recognize fully the need of larger liberty in a freer selection by the teacher of the means by which the qualities children most need must be developed. The danger in allowing it should not result in failure to encourage experiment.

The time is here when the Board of Education may encourage initiative and temper the errors of judgment of individuals. Believing this, I have recommended to the Board of Education, the use of separate schools units as deliberative councils for educational inquiry in the following:

What is it that the children attending school most need?

By what methods may they be most effectively trained to satisfy those needs?

Are those methods already employed meeting the situation?

What improvement should be made in existent means and methods of instruction?

This extension of teacher representation to the school itself should be adopted. There is nothing in this recommendation inconsistent with the plan of the larger deliberative body. On the

contrary, it is the logical outcome of the creation of the Teachers' Council. There are many questions and problems which arise in each school which call for the individual and collective judgment and experience of the teachers in their solution. This plan, I am informed, is being tried in a few of the schools and has been found by both principals and teachers to work well. It is not for the Board of Education, or for those high in authority, to outline what such school councils should undertake to do. That would develop in the course of each day's work.

Perhaps I can express the policy no better than by quoting from my report as President of July 9, 1913, in referring to the contribution that each teacher might make to the formulation of policies of the Board of Education. It is as follows:

I am not one of those who fear the narrowness of the class teacher. If she is ever in any degree narrow-minded, we have particularly ourselves to blame for keeping her in a system so mechanical as to limit too much the exercise of her initiative and invention. Truly, a sincere invitation to teachers to become regular purveyors of good to the entire school system, and not to be timid protestors in a far corner, will give us the benefit at first hand of the opinion of those who are the real educators.

What we need to do is to keep clearly in mind the essential purpose of the school to develop sound character, and then handle all school subjects in that natural relation to life and its duties which springs directly from the nature of these studies and their bearing on life problems. Morality thus is genuine and essential and universal.—Chas A McMurry, in *Conflicting Principles in Teaching*.

There is no point to providing health supervision for pupils, and then employing tubercular teachers and syphilitic janitors.—Ellwood P Cubberly, in *State and County Educational Reorganization*.

SIXTY-FOUR, MANHATTAN

HENRY R. LINVILLE

FIVE MINUTES' walk below Fourteenth Street, New York City, lies Tompkins Square in the great East Side. All about and out from this little park extend the streets of small stores and tenements crowded with a population of Jews, with scattered aggregations of Italians and Slavs. On the bright October morning when I was there the park benches sustained a full quota of old men and women, mothers and little children, while hundreds of freer-moving people passed in and out across the cement walks on more urgent business. On the playgrounds in a corner of the park were scores of school boys, going thru the vigorous drill of physical training gladly and buoyantly because there were no walls about them, nor hissing steam, nor sodden air. And I thot their play was probably more important than the work of any that past them, for their pale, yearning faces told a pitiful story of indoor life, unventilated homes, ill-chosen food, and bad cooking.

The time has now past when a practical school person could be expected to express surprise at seeing children outside a school building in school time. In the crowded districts of large cities we see classes exercising in the school yards; and in the outlying sections we even see them running up and down the hills, when formerly they should have been "studying." The fight for field and museum excursions in school time is nearly over, but almost all schools look forward to the day when they shall have a "library" of their own. I was interested to find that Mr. William E. Grady, Principal of Public School 64, Manhattan, has no library, and doesn't want one. What is more to the point, the school doesn't need one, for around the corner of the park there is a branch of the City Library, much better equipped and much better supervised than school libraries generally are. Here the classes of small children go to see the picture-books and

the larger ones to read their stories in literature, all in school time, under the direction of their regular teachers, but with the assistance of the librarians. Copies of books needed are placed on the tables before the classes come in, and from nine o'clock till three the librarians have something to do, beside searching for scattered pamphlets to send to the binder.

P. S. 64 has been sending classes to the branch library for three years, long before most of us ever heard of a Gary plan of outside school work. That is long enough to be a test of the sincerity of the librarians, the principal, the teachers, and the children when they say they like the scheme.

Nobody had yet started an agitation to have the libraries used all the time, but their turn should come soon. Then the school children will be able to supply the demand for users. Even when that time comes the children of a single school may not be able to tax the resources of one library. If libraries were conveniently located to three or four schools in crowded sections of the city, all could help to make the handsome facades a symbol of usefulness. Co-operation of this sort would also help to make children acquainted with the library who would otherwise never enter the place. Then, too, the unconscious social impress of an institution which in essence at least means the collected literature of the ages, should be very great. The quiet, the dignity, the charm and the refinement of a well decorated and well managed library give us one more avenue of approach to the minds of the men and women of tomorrow.

Christodora House is a settlement house. When I stepped from the school on the morning I visited there, I went with Mr Grady into the gymnasium of the settlement house, which adjoins the school building. I forgot for some moments that I was not in the school, for

there was a large class of little fellows of seven or eight with their physical training teacher in the settlement gymnasium. In the old days the settlements and the schools held aloof from one another. The schools had (and generally still have) little interest in the social welfare of the pupils. But here and there a principal or a teacher has interested himself in children, and like Mr Grady, works on a settlement house committee. This is real coöperation. It is effective along the lines of the purposes of the two institutions, and it also has the practical advantage of appealing to their citizen supporters.

The playground, the library, and the settlement house are not enough for P. S. 64. The school feels the need of a clinic in the neighborhood. The three thousand boys include no doubt a considerable number whose health has been neglected so long that their condition has been accepted by their families as necessary, and by the school and civic authorities as normal for their group. A clinic well managed by medical experimenters would be helpful, but a clinic with a social outlook would be vastly more worth the while for the school and the rest of the community.

There is no reason why the clinic should not be a psychological clinic as well as a physical one, for the schools should know more definitely than it is possible to know at present the exact grading of mentality within the pupil body. The scale of measurement used in the schools is 70 per cent perfect in academic subjects. The 30 per cent of leeway is supposed to give normal children their opportunity to be promoted, and to separate them from backward children who should not be promoted, or should receive other training. As a matter of fact, in a large system of schools there is well-nigh resistless pressure upon the schools to promote many children who do not really perform the work they are supposed to do. The response to this pressure is dishonesty on the part of the schools. The dishonesty brings in

its train a great deal of disorderly conduct on the part of pupils, and confirms in the administration the habit of neglecting mental, vocational and social adjustments.

The old-fashioned principal is of course ignorant of the Binet test, as he is of the age-progress basis for grouping pupils, and wouldn't take any stock in either if their purposes were explained to him. But happily the blessings of mortality make it possible for us to experiment here and there with scientific methods of determining mental capacity, and of trying plans of training and of grouping that will fit the situations discovered. None but defectives are given Binet tests now, but why should not some modification of the test be given to all children by the staff of a psychological clinic?

Against the day when such a plan may be possible, Public School 64 has under operation a system of grading by age and progress which has already accomplished two objects. First, it has removed mental misfits from classes in which their only successes have been in the line of creating disorder; and second, it has permitted the adoption of a kind and rate of training which enables the brighter pupils to do far more than they could with the dead weight of the inefficient. At the same time, average or dull pupils are brot together in their several groups under the care of teachers who understand their capacities and in a measure their needs.

The grading of the pupils has resulted in the creation of the following groups: (1) Atypical children, (2) Immigrant children who cannot speak English, called C classes, (3) Average foreign children with inadequate knowledge of English, (also some average, retarded pupils) forming E classes, one class in each year from the second year thru the sixth, (4) Classes in each grade made up of pupils who did exceptionally well in the preceding term, (5) Classes in each grade made up of the oldest pupils in the grade, the grouping being made on the

basis of chronological age in the first four years, and on the basis of physiological age in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth years, and (6) classes made up of normal average children in each grade. The result of grading in accordance with this plan is homogeneity. I visited a good many classes in the school, and got the agreeable impression in each case that the similarity in development would simplify the work of teaching greatly.

But at its best, grading in our elementary schools leaves untouched the new social problem of fitting the children for life. Whether it was because P. S. 64 has succeeded so well with its outside work, and in its practical grading system, or whether because of these and other considerations, it is a fortunate circumstance that this school was selected as one of those in which the experiment of pre-vocational work in the upper grades is to be carried on. The movement for vocational education has great social and also intellectual significance for the schools, no less from the point of view of the welfare of the children than from the point of view of progress in intelligent and artistic teaching. It would therefore be very unfortunate if the experiment were to fall into the hands of narrow-minded or unskilled principals.

In general it is understood that the experiment which is to be tried in the upper grades of the elementary school consists in offering to boys the opportunity to learn for three hours each school day the elements of one or another of the journeymen trades, such as electrical work, printing, plumbing, painting, wood work, etc. Four hours of each day is to be spent in academic study that is, however, more closely related to their vocational work than the regular studies would be.

The equipment for this work is now being installed, but in the meantime the old manual training shops are being used and incidentally remodeled for the wood working. In imagination I could see the old tabourets and a goodly portion of the

formalism they stand for being swept out with the new shavings.

One of the problems connected with carrying on the pre-vocational work in the schools has been to find suitable teachers. Young artisans who teach in the evening schools are applying for these positions, and so are some of the young journeymen of the trades who have never taught before. As I observed two of the latter who were visiting the principal the day I was at Sixty-four, their fine presence suggested to me the thought that here was a splendid by-product of manliness for the teaching body of the schools, one which probably few of us have been expecting. We are in sore need of manliness, and we have too little encouragement for it in school systems.

The combination of the manliness, and the womanliness, and other qualities of character, of mental equipment, and of skill, tend to make up the good teacher. In our enthusiasm for devices and organization we may sometimes forget that the lasting work of the school goes on in the class room, both the bad work and the good work. There are good teachers at P. S. 64, and there are probably some unskilled ones. It would not be strange if there were poor ones who are doing some bad, lasting work. I didn't see their work, because I went purposely to see the good teaching.

I had time to see work in English and in geography. Both classes were having a great deal of fun with their work, which does not mean of course that they were having fun with the teachers. On entering the English class unannounced and unattended, I found half the class of boys standing in the aisles violently waving their hands toward the teacher, and three boys lined up near the teacher facing the class. When I took a seat I could see that the three boys were not being punished, for their faces showed entire satisfaction with the situation. They were being used as "material" for a laboratory exercise in English, and during the lesson other material was called to the front.

The lesson of the class was the com-

parison of adjectives. Descriptive adjectives of size, appearance, and condition were suggested by the teacher and by the boys themselves. Neither the boys nor their clothing escaped analysis, but nobody betrayed embarrassment. The three boys on the floor when I entered the room were on the order of a staircase, and of course they were "large," "larger," "largest," and "tall," "taller," "tallest," and a number of other things which I do not recall.

Other boys had hair which was "short," "shorter," "shortest," and neckties that were "blue," "bluer," "bluest." The boys wore no coats in school, but they had waists which were "clean," "cleaner," "cleanest." Then suddenly, some inspired youngster got the floor probably by force of assurance (it was done so suddenly that I was dazed, and could not tell how it happened), and called out, "Weinstein is dirty, Sasonoff is dirtier, and Dubinsky is dirtiest!" The class wasn't broken up, altho even the teacher laughed, as she should have done.

Later in the period there was some drill on the identity of "positive," "comparative," and "superlative," and then some more extended applications of what they had learned. The laboratory method in English ought to be a success everywhere, but as an advocate of live animal work in biology classes, I can understand why some teachers would prefer to stick to the books.

The boys in the geography class were a little older than the boys in the English class, and quieter. The reason for the greater composure was that the teacher and his map of China compelled rather steady and continuous thinking. The lesson began with short statements by the boys about articles from China that they had seen since the previous lesson was discussed. They had seen chopsticks, and were required to tell what they are used for. They had seen various articles of food, and ornaments and fabrics, and they gave their reasons for thinking the articles had come from China.

Then an idea of the extent of China as compared with the United States was developed with the help of the map. The time it would take goods to come from China to this country was calculated from knowing the time it takes to cross the Atlantic and to travel from New York to San Francisco.

The interpretation of the map of China seemed to me to be especially valuable, because of the stress laid upon the relation of the flow of water to the location of plains and plateaus. This relation considered in connection with the nearness of mountain ranges to the rivers was used to enable the boys to picture the contour of the country. The ideas came with some difficulty, but it was well worth the while, because the teacher lead them into doing it for themselves.

The probable weather conditions of China were considered with reference to weather conditions in our own country. The great distance between the two countries seemed an insurmountable obstacle to the conception of similarities in climate. But a boy who had left his former home in Russia in the summer time and found it summer still when he arrived in New York helped the other boys back to what they must have previously learned about degrees of latitude, and their bearing on seasons and climate. All this was good, clean work, relieved now and then by a bit of fun when a boy's reasoning became entangled.

It has been the custom among high school people to maintain that the elementary schools do not train the children to think. The elementary schools might easily reply, "Neither do you!"—and both would be right; for thinking is uncommon. If in our teaching we introduce the charm of variety and the light touch of fun, without buffoonery or coarseness, we can develop in the children the habit of thinking, and make thinking attractive—provided we can do our own clear thinking.

I have no desire to put an extra burden upon the courteous principal of Sixty-four, Manhattan. But I should like

to suggest to principals and teachers in high schools that they spend less time in condemning the elementary schools in their faculty meetings and elsewhere, and go down and get acquainted with the principals and teachers who send up the boys and girls that keep the high schools going. If other schools are not as good

as Sixty-four, their output may seriously interfere with the work the high schools are trying to do. High school people should then search for the spots where good work is being done, and learn their methods, for they exhibit a measure of attainment of an educational and social ideal.

IMPORTANT EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS

IN THE questionnaire sent to candidates for the position of Associate Superintendent of Schools in New York City, one question called for a statement of the applicant's opinion as to the "five most important educational problems of today." Of the thirty-three applicants, none gave it as his opinion that the selection of superintendents and other supervisory officials is an important educational problem. Some of them could not think of five important ones, as only 161 statements appear in the list, out of a possible 165.

The replies to this question have been analyzed and tabulated by the Division of Reference and Research, and the results are interesting to the student of educational tendencies, as well as to the student of candidate-psychology. More than half of the opinions relate to revision of the course of study (77 replies). The selection and training of teachers and the care of special types of children received the same emphasis (19 replies in each group), but the applicants from the city are apparently more concerned in the former problem, whereas the applicants from outside the city are more interested in the latter. Five city applicants and four others considered the standardization of methods and supervision as one of the most important educational problems; but no specific suggestion as to standardization was made, except that classes be limited to forty pupils.

Among the most interesting results of the analysis is the list of "General aims

and theses" suggested by applicants as among the important educational problems, with the number of times that each was offered. This list is printed below:

- Reduction of waste of effort in administration and supervision (5).
- More efficient teaching and administration in elementary and high school (3).
- Relate school work to the life of the pupils (3).
- Keeping operative in the American mind and in the mind of the educational group an adequate conception of the meaning of education in a democracy (2).
- More democracy in school government without sacrifice of discipline.
- Elimination of educational preferment by political and religious influence.
- Bring together all religious denominations into a general patronage of public schools.
- Personal touch should be kept between teacher and pupil.
- More individual teaching is necessary.
- The need of a new definition of education.
- Schools to have their rightful place and function in the work of education determined.
- Proper administrative units in rural and city schools.
- Furnish motives for creative work.
- Improve the whole spirit of the school so that children will remain until graduation.
- Less use of text-books and more oral work.
- Build habits for success.

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VOL. III NOVEMBER, 1914 No. 9

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.

UP OR DOWN?

IT HAS BEEN discovered, after years of trial, that a formal examination is not an adequate instrument for discovering ability—except ability to pass the formal examination. As practical people we shall want to make full use of this discovery. We shall seek for some better instrument for discovering ability. We shall not declare that inasmuch as formal

examinations are inadequate, we would do better to let superintendents or commissioners select teachers on the basis of their relationships or connections. We shall seek to go forward to a method of selecting teachers that really discover the ability concealed in a certain proportion of the candidates. We shall not wish to go back to the vicious system of collecting the calling cards of politicians, or the autographs of men high in the councils of the dominant political party, as cards of admission to the public school service.

In the rating of pupils in schools and colleges, in the admission of students to colleges and universities, in the administration of the merit system of civil service in cities and states, it has been found that formal examinations do not do exactly what was expected of them a quarter of a century ago. There is no use hanging the examiners; there is no use damning the examinations. The examination system was a great improvement on the help-my-friend system; but it is time to find something still better. By all means let us abandon the examination system if it is unsatisfactory. But let us by no means go back to the judgment-of - the - experienced - business - man - interested - in - the - welfare - of - the - schools when it comes to the selection of teachers.

QUICKSANDS

"Elimination of education preferment by political and religious influence."

THE QUESTION that brot forth the above statement was, *what is your opinion as to the five most important educational problems of today?* and it was given by a candidate for the position of Associate Superintendent of Schools of New York City, altho one who hailed from "outside."

Big educational systems are accustomed to having their critics cry "Politics!" at them, but the educational bosses pay very little more attention to the criticism than more skillful politicians do when they are attacked. This makes it

possible to discuss the question of politics in education even with the educational politicians themselves, and carry it thru with equanimity and good humor. It would relieve educational critics of one of their many burdens if similar good humor might prevail during the discussion of the use of religious influence in school systems.

However, the ideal good service which a school system may give to a community must not on any account be impaired to save the sensitive feelings of those who hold to special religious faiths, provided it can be shown that a religious organization is using the resources of a public institution, such as the public school system is, to promote the economic interests of a special group of persons. There is very little question that our country is full of instances of attempts of religious bodies to control the educational output and the supply of educators in large and in small public systems. The candidate cited knew it, and he thought the eradication of the influence of religious groups quite as important as the elimination of political influence. What he suggests as a principle must be taken up by each community as its own problem.

In many parts of the country one or another of the Protestant churches have exercised a dominating influence thru the selection of superintendents and principals of schools, at least, by a representative board of education. Much of the time there is no opposition from the non-partisan group of the community, sometimes because it is a question which of two contending religious organizations would do better by the community, sometimes because of a widespread feeling that education is more or less the business of the church anyway.

Altho the development of the idea of education as a social function has made the benevolent patronage of the church largely a thing of the past, communities are still extremely backward about realizing that partisan representatives of practically all religious creeds are offenders

against the common weal in their policy of trying to get control of educational administration. In many New England towns, the Congregationalists and the Catholics contend for the mastery. In the South, the Methodists have the controlling power. In the West, here one and there another Protestant creed endeavors to get the upper hand, but the West is a battle ground that no community group representing but a fraction can claim for long.

In the large cities of the country there are enough of spoils for a bi-partisan or tri-partisan division to be a matter of practical importance. And besides, the experience of those in a large city who "want something" tends to show that one must have the backing of an organization in order to "land" that something. The use of the cohesive power of a great church organization as a means of mutual aid for its adherents engaged in public education comes dangerously near being the dread scourge we sometimes call "politics." If the members of one creed do not possess the assurance to take all the educational plums for themselves, but are willing to divide with another for a time, their shyness bodes no good to the public.

THE AMERICAN TEACHER is not an anti-religious periodical in any sense whatever. The social vision which it endeavors to manifest is too clear to be dimmed in any degree by an ill-concealed screen of religious prejudice. The well-being of the community that should have its schools administered and the children taught by the best equipped persons mankind has produced, is the only consideration that ought to weigh with any self-respecting organ or individual.

A lay board should themselves select as little expert service as possible. Having selected the superintendent, they should trust his judgment, or remove him.—Ellwood P. Cubberly, in State and County Educational Reorganization.

WITH DISCRETION

THE ATTITUDE of the superintendent or the principal toward the teaching profession is to a certain extent gauged by his respect for the teacher's judgment or discretion. Of course, his experience with teachers will largely determine how much respect he has for their judgment; but some principals or superintendents will never get a chance to find out how much good sense teachers may exercise on occasion for the simple reason that they never give the teachers a chance to show just how they do use their headpieces. The comments heard from various parts of the country on what the teacher should or should not do with regard to the present European War are very illuminating in this connection.

One acting superintendent forbids all mention not only of the war, but of the various belligerent countries; he goes so far as to suspend the study of history and geography for the year—fearing, among other things, that the poor children might have to relearn the boundaries after the war is over! On the other hand, the principal of a high school in one city engages a military expert to come to the school at stated times to explain the maneuvers and developments of the armies. This is offset by the principal who takes practically the same stand as the superintendent mentioned, and further orders the teachers not to relate any experiences they may have had while abroad this summer, or to mention anything else that might even remotely suggest the cruel conflict.

The absurdity of this position must be obvious to all who do not sympathize with it. Carried out logically the teacher of mathematics or of physics must refrain from mentioning Napier or Poincaré; the teacher of biology must avoid the name of Darwin or Mendel; the teacher of hygiene must teach bacteriology with Pasteur and Metchnikoff left out; chemistry must be ignored because so many of its great ideas and most of the apparatus come from belligerent countries, and all important literature will be given a vacation.

Superintendent William H Maxwell is one of those who have no sympathy with this position. "Children," he says, "who have reached the age at which they can read the newspapers are neither made nor kept virtuous by preserving silence in the classroom regarding what they and all the rest of the world know, at least vaguely, and beyond doubt ignorantly." Recognizing that it is possible for most people to discuss the war foolishly, not to say viciously, he is content to warn teachers that certain topics must be treated with discretion—which is not the same as ignoring them. This position, it seems to us, is the only one that an educator can take, if he has any respect left for his calling.

If there is no confidence in the discretion of the teacher, we may as well close up shop this year as wait until next. The teachers must be prepared to discuss every topic that is of vital importance to the community and to the children—whether it be sex or war, whether it be honest graft or corruption in high places. They must treat these themes with discretion—of course; but if there is any doubt as to their having discretion—get other teachers.

A GOOD SUGGESTION

IN THE FIVE or six years since the Rochester idea started to convert unused school-building-hours into community assets by establishing "social centers" we have found ever new ways of making the buildings pay for themselves. The latest suggestion concerns teachers as men and women of leisure, and tends to raise them to the level of citizens. It is found in the following extract from the annual address to principals and superintendents delivered in September by Superintendent William H Maxwell of New York:

This community and its representative, the Board of Education, ought to feel proud of the teachers of this city as a body for the work they have accomplished in the schools, for their steady

application to duty under all trying conditions, and in nothing more than for what they have done by their own initiative toward bringing about professional self-improvement. Thru their various associations and thru individual effort this work of self-improvement has gone steadily on and was never stronger than it is today. The time has arrived, it seems to me, when the Board of Education should recognize the importance of the professional and social training which the teachers have been providing for themselves. How may the Board of Education best give such recognition?

There are probably many ways, but one presents itself prominently to my mind at this moment. The Board of Education may recognize the efforts of teachers at self-improvement by giving them the exclusive use of certain school buildings in the evenings. These buildings will be clubhouses or recreation centres for teachers. They may be kept open in the evening without expense except for light, heat, and janitorial service.

It would be the most natural thing to use the training school buildings for this purpose. They have the most suitable equipment. To use them in the evening for the service of the teachers would be a mere extension of the service required of them during the day. They are not needed and are not used in the evening for elementary or secondary school activities, or as social recreation centres.

Education, like everything else in life, to be good at all must be good for something—it must have a value in real social life, either immediately or mediately. In other words, education is fast taking on a utilitarian form and character—utilitarian in the large, worthy and comprehensive sense of ministering to the needs of a varied and progressive society and to the real happiness of its individual members.—CALVIN O DAVIS, in *High School Courses of Study*.

BUSINESS AND EDUCATION

THIS IS NOT to be a discussion of the need for commercial training for the pupils in the schools. It is rather a plea for the education of commercial people in the needs of the pupils. About this time every year many of the cities in this country are struggling—thru their officials—with the problem of working out a budget that will supply the funds for the necessary activities of the various public departments, and at the same time meet the approval of the "taxpayers," who are generally embodied in a group of real estate dealers and speculators. We need say nothing of the fact that in many cities the budget is loaded down with fat items with a view to frying the fat out later for the benefit of certain interested parties. Nor need anything be said of the fact that it is to the interest of all citizens, whether "taxpayers" or not, to have the public business administered as efficiently as possible, and with as little waste as possible. But it is interesting to find that every year the real estate citizens are the most solicitous about what kind and how much education the city is planning to disburse the following year; and these very same people seem to be the least interested in education all the rest of the year.

Several curious items appear in the statement presented to the Board of Estimate in New York City by the "Real Estate Board" on the subject of the 1915 Budget. As usual, these people find that the city is spending too much money giving people something for nothing. The gentlemen recall that the city did not do so much for them when they were boys, and can see no reason why so much should be done for the boys of today—boys who have obviously done nothing for the prosperity of the city. They question the propriety of "indiscriminate extension of the principle of higher education," by which they mean that the sons and daughters of people who cannot patronize private schools really do not need more than the "essentials." They apply similar criticisms to the budget of the Department of Health.

As an example of human incapacity for seeing its own beams while staring at the motes of others, this is exquisite. The Real Estate Board declares that in the Health Budget the "fundamental wrong in the whole matter is that free medical service, free nurses and all the various things done for people by the Board of Health, are done only for a small part of the community. While all are taxed, mainly the part of our population which is always seeking to get something for nothing is benefitted." Now we had always entertained the notion that it was the real estate speculators who are par excellence those who are "always seeking to get something for nothing," since they live essentially on increments not earned thru their own services.

The statement furnishes also an example of the readiness with which those whose independent spirits resent every suggestion of paternalism may yet be ready to crawl on their bellies in the search for patronage. The Board argues that the amount asked by the Department of Health would be largely a waste of public money, since much of the research work essential to maintaining the health of the community can be performed by the Rockefeller Institute, a privately endowed institution. In other words, if the people really care about their common health problems, they should apply to a private philanthropist to help them, instead of taxing themselves.

The secret of these confused and confusing arguments lies in the fact that the portion of the community represented by these highly respectable "business men" constitutes an essentially predatory class and finds its interest constantly in conflict with the public interest. It should be the business of teachers, as of all concerned primarily with advancing the interests of the public, to guard against the demoralizing influence of these gentry. By arrogating to themselves the titles "taxpayers" and "business men" they mislead

the unwary or the uninformed into the reactionary attitude is representative of the best thot of the community.

We understand that in Wisconsin, where the proportion of owners of "real estate" is very much larger than it is in New York City, the citizens tax themselves to provide education—from the kindergarten thru the university—for themselves and for their children, without waiting for the assistance of a Carnegie or a Rockefeller. We are in great need for a more general diffusion and a more profound penetration of the American Spirit. In addition, we need a system of organizing municipal finances that will leave the determination of educational policies in the hands of those who are interested and informed, not in the hands of the political or fiscal specialists.

We have been rather proud in the past of our public spirited philanthropists who have donated their unusable superfluities to some general benefaction instead of expending it on bizarre monkey dinners or architectural freaks. But when we think of ourselves as objects of charity, we feel an almost irresistible impulse to resent the gifts as most insolent. Almost irresistible—for we recognize that the philanthropists, like the rest of us, have been brot up to look upon charitable gifts as rather virtuous forms of self-expression. Here is the will of the late Mrs Virginia Gay, which provides \$400,000 for a home, \$50,000 for a hospital, devoted to teachers who have grown old in teaching in Ohio. Just think of yourself growing old in the service and then depending upon the forethot of a particular old lady for an opportunity to keep out of the alms-house. What is the matter with Ohio?

Instead of insisting upon the deepening of our academic ruts, the school must stimulate the public intelligence, inculcate aggressive public righteousness, and exalt conscientious public service.—Wm D Lewis, in Democracy's High School.

NOBODY'S BUSINESS

President George A. Hubbell of the Lincoln Memorial University, Cumberland Gap, Tenn., sends a circular letter to 2,000 teachers in all parts of the country, soliciting financial aid in rebuilding one of the dormitories. In the letter occurs the following:

Something happened here this morning that I want you to know.

About nine o'clock a young fellow swung in onto the campus with a long-legged stride that would have been an astonishment anywhere else. He had come a hundred miles from his home in the mountains of North Carolina.

I turned him over to Dean Ford, but I listened to the conversation. He had brought with him the sum of \$10—no more—all he had on earth. That was his financial equipment for college. The Dean told him he did not know what to do with him and explained as kindly as he could that the rooms were spoken for and occupied, and every available bed taken, everything "full-up."

I looked at the young man, he never flinched; he smiled, confidently faced us both, clear-eyed and steady,—and this is what he said: "Dean, I didn't come here to get a room, nor to get a bed, I came to get an education; I can sleep on the floor."

There wasn't any answer to that that we could think of, so we made a place for him; we *had* to. We can't turn that sort down; we can't do it, and we won't do it as long as there's a dollar in sight.

These boys the the salt of the earth, big, strong, upstanding, determined fellows; old revolutionary stock, ninety per cent of them; mountain born, fearless, quiet, loyal, high principled and clean.

There are boys of that kind all over, and girls, too. Not all of old revolutionary stock—some of them not of revolutionary stock at all, but worth while, nevertheless. And thousands of these must depend for an opportunity to prepare for life and for service upon the "charity" and patronage of impersonal strangers. Thousands of them go to the mills and the shops every year because

their parents cannot afford to send them to school. We accept the situation without recognizing that we—you and I—cannot afford to deprive them of an adequate education, that we cannot afford to let them go to the shops and mills. But instead of taking up this burden that concerns all the people and all their children, we cast about for some kind persons who are willing to part with some of their surplus wealth to do this thing for us. We have a tradition in this country that it is more elevating for a people to depend upon private charity than to depend upon its own efforts. We think that what is everybody's business is nobody's business, and we either let George do it, or let it remain undone. It is a false tradition, and the sooner we realize it the better.

THE LARGER PURPOSE

THE OLD IDEA of "keeping school" appears to be giving place to a newer idea of the school influencing and improving the community, as well as teaching the community's children. The former pedagogic mission of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic apparently is being developed into a larger modern task in which the teaching of these subjects frequently becomes merely incidental—whether rightly or wrongly is not here under discussion. This change is an experimental one in so far as it depends largely on the teacher whether it shall be made to appear evolutionary or revolutionary; whether the community will adjust itself so as to accept the larger mission of the teacher, or if there will be a reaction against the broadened field of the teacher which will compel a return to the restricted activity of the school as an institution which shall be concerned primarily with teaching the children certain set subjects, and leaving to the church, the home, and the other institutions of the community the larger task of developing the moral, vocational and artistic life of both children and adults in the community.—*The Atlantic Educational Journal*.

BOOK NOTES

BOOKS ON HIGH SCHOOL PROBLEMS

The public high school in the United States occupies a critical position. It has developed with remarkable rapidity out of a type of school that was distinctly characterized by formalism in its methods, scholasticism in its curriculum and by snobbery in its spirit. In a very short time this relic of medievalism has been compelled to overhaul its traditions and principles, and to formulate a justification of its existence in terms of vital service in a progressive democracy. The transformation that the public high school is thus compelled to undergo is nothing short of a revolution.

With the college setting up arbitrary units of requirement on the one hand, and the children of the people clamoring for bread on the other, the situation of the high school is difficult enough. But its friends have rallied to its assistance and the outlook is very hopeful. The most comprehensive treatment of the high school problem appears in the form of a co-operative enterprise entitled "The Modern High School; Its Administration and Extension," edited by Professor Charles H. Johnston (Secondary Education, University of Illinois) and prepared with the assistance of some twenty-five men and women who have made special studies of various phases of the high school situation. The relation of the high school to the other institutions that make up society, the methods of the high school in relation to the numerous social purposes—both on the side of training and on the side of administration—are discussed in a thoroughgoing manner. Nearly seventy pages of classified bibliography, a detailed table of contents and numerous tables and diagrams help to make this a useful handbook of the high school of today. (Scribners, \$2.)

Two volumes of the School Efficiency Series dealing with the high school are at hand. In the "High School Courses of Study" Dr. Calvin O. Davis adds three chap-

ters to his original report to the Hanus Committee on School Inquiry—The newer conceptions and aims, The general aspects of the program of studies, and The special aspects of the program. The discussion of the categories of educational values should be of interest to other than high school teachers. Professor Davis made a comparative study of the high school systems in ten cities and compared these with the schools of New York. His criticisms and recommendations will continue to be of value in all parts of the country for some years to come. On the administrative side, Dr. Frank W. Ballou, (who has become the head of the new department of Investigation and Measurement of the Boston Public School system) has contributed a helpful book, "High School Organization." In this the problems of size of classes, chairmen of departments, the internal organization, estimating need of teachers (as to numbers) etc. are treated primarily from the point of view of New York City. But as this is the largest system of high schools in the country, and has the most complex problems to solve, the work is of rather general application, especially as the portions having a purely local bearing have been omitted. (World Book Company, \$1 each.)

In the Riverside Educational Monographs, five of Dr. William D. Lewis' papers on high school are reprinted from *The Outlook* and *The Saturday Evening Post*, under the general title "Democracy's High School." Those who know what the William Penn High School has been doing in recent years will find nothing new here; but as most people—not even most teachers—are acquainted with Mr. Lewis and his thoroly human and democratic outlook, the book should have a wide reading. When we realize that the "school administrator will decide the numerous questions that arise in the day's work very largely according to his idea—perhaps mostly subconscious—as to the nature and end of education," we are tempted to wish that the administrators would more generally adopt Mr. Lewis' ideas as to the nature and end of education. (Houghton Mifflin Co., 60 cents.)

WHAT THE TEACHERS' LEAGUE OF NEW YORK CITY HAS UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PAST YEAR

I. The League has promulgated the idea of teachers' councils for individual schools, and in a circular has proposed an organized method by which the teachers may share in the management of the school. School councils are in successful operation in several New York City schools.

II. In a set of resolutions on the question of the method of electing members of the Teachers' Council of the Department of Education, the League has maintained that the plan of permitting organizations alone to choose members of the Council gives excessive power to a few individuals in control of organizations, and is therefore undemocratic. The campaign for real democracy in this

branch of the school system will be kept up.

III. The League in a series of attractive bulletins has given valuable information on the pension question, and has advocated the establishment of a pension law that will guarantee fair pensions to all, but gratuities to none.

IV. The League has taken a stand for the abolition of the rating of teachers, and has conducted an active campaign to spread and popularize the idea.

V. The League has a number of plans for investigating the conditions under which the teachers work. Some of these touch the size of classes, the part-time situation, the clerical work required of teachers, and the unsanitary state of schools.

NOT SO STINGY

ACCORDING to the comparative study of school statistics made by the Russell Sage Foundation some time ago, New York State ranks 33 in the ratio of school expenditures to wealth. But the school budget for New York City for 1915 will amount to something very near \$42,123,456.78—which is almost a million dollars for every man, woman or child on the Board of Education.

Each school should show individuality, and minister to the peculiar needs of the community in which it is located, without being hampered by state control.—E P Cubberly, in State and County Educational Reorganization.

Children are compelled by law to go to school. Would it be unreasonable to require by law that all schoolrooms should be kept free as far as possible from contagious and infectious diseases, and from unsanitary conditions that impair physical health?—Chas A McMurry, in *Conflicting*

Whatever is done, no pupil should be driven out of school because of inability to accomplish any one line of work. The ideal of the course should be, thoro work along various lines selected with a view to the tastes and abilities of individual students.—Wm D Lewis, in *Democracy's High School*.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC.

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this day of September, 1914.

[SEAL]

MAXWELL F. LITWIN,
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