

The American Teacher

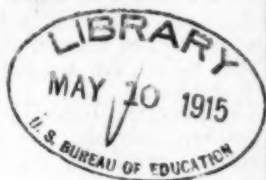
Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.

VOL. IV No. 5

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Credo



I believe that teaching is a human relation

*I believe that the teacher is an interpreter
of information in the light of his own
time*

*I believe that teaching is contributive only
in so far as the teacher is vitally con-
nected with the new idea of his day—
in art, in literature, in science, in social
relations, in economics.*

*I believe that the teacher must hand over
to the new generation the precious
knowledge from all the generations be-
hind in such a way that the progress
of the world will be helped permanently.*

TEACHERS' UNIONS IN ENGLAND

CLARA E GRANT

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IN ENGLAND practically all certificates licensing teachers to work in the public elementary schools, i. e., in infants' primary and grammar grades, are issued by the national board of education sitting at Whitehall, London, and thus, tho salaries are paid and scales regulated by each local education committee, the teachers are, in a sense, official servants of the nation tho not included in the civil service.

Thus, tho local authorities may dismiss a teacher, only the government could cancel his certificate, should such occasion arise.

There are of course innumerable professional bodies of teachers representing the various types of schools which, in England, are more sharply differentiated than in America, but, for our immediate purpose, it will suffice to confine our consideration to the one large organization of public school teachers known as the National Union of Teachers, and chief local union the London Teachers' Association.

The former, originally known as the National Union of Elementary Teachers, dropped the term "Elementary" some years ago when secondary schools and other types of institutions for advanced education became unified under the control of the public education committees, and it is now known as the N. U. T.

This union aims at enrolling every fully qualified public school teacher in the country, and so strong is it in its activities and organization that, tho not affiliated with any labor organization, it has sometimes been described as the strongest trade union in England. Local branches are formed all over the country, holding their own committee and general meetings, with frequent educational lectures and conferences, whilst a strong central body sits in London, to which delegates are sent. The union runs a weekly organ, *The Schoolmaster*, de-

voted to its own interests and recognized as the chief medium for advertisements of vacancies all over the country; it maintains a representative in Parliament, and holds a large conference annually at Easter.

Unfortunately in England the public schools (the term so wrongly appropriated by privileged private schools such as Eton and Harrow) have never, either in inception or development, won the pride and trust shown by American citizens in their schools.

Prior to 1870, practically all elementary schools were "parochial," founded by religious denominations and only partially supported by national grants. In 1870 the "Board" (now "County Council") schools were established, to cater for the vast number of children untouched by the parochial schools. Altho these, drawing from local as well as national funds, can maintain higher standards of staffing, buildings and equipment, yet neither these nor the parochial schools (now also aided by local funds) have reached, socially, very far above the children of the working people, resulting in an unfortunate reaction on the personnel and ideals, and, therefore, salaries of the profession. Always in life the primary struggle is the material one, spiritual ideals following later, and it is perhaps inevitable that the early struggles of the N. U. T. have centered round the improvement of salaries and professional status rather than round those educational and spiritual ideals which alone compel the recognition demanded.

The N. U. T. has, however, frequently acted as a real tower of strength to individuals and groups, protecting them from injustice, tyrannical control of leisure or outside activities, sending representatives down to intervene between teachers and employers or even fellow-teachers, where necessary, and it has a strong "Legal Department" for

cases taken to court where mediation has failed, or in cases of libel, assault, accident compensation cases, and so on.

On the social side it offers large privileges to its members, *i. e.*, a splendidly managed Provident Fund, providing for sickness, old age and life insurances, house-owning, etc., and it is now developing a Holiday Bureau.

The London Teachers' Association is a large and active organization of all ranks of teachers in the London service, numbering nearly 20,000 members. (One curious and significant difference between the English and American unions lies in the fact that the higher officials, *i. e.*, supervisors and inspectors or superintendents, are not found in the English teachers' organizations, except of course in the more strictly educational bodies, *i. e.*, the Child Study and Froebel Societies.) The aim and organization of the L. T. A. are similar to those of the N. U. T. Thru its general secretary, who is an elected member of the county council and has a seat on the education committee, it watches with eagle glance the interest of its members. The doings of the educational committee, prospective and actual, are closely watched and discussed, and memoranda and personal deputations are frequently sent to the educational committee or to its chief officials. The general secretary, too, gives private and personal advice to individual teachers seeking his help.

Where tactfully and generously followed, such procedure offers valuable opportunities for mutual discussion and sympathetic understanding between teachers and employers, but certain obvious dangers need to be carefully guarded against.

The L. T. A. offers unusual material privileges to its members, including a mutual insurance scheme, an extraordinarily well-worked Holiday Bureau, and a trading scheme conferring privileged terms of purchase with many business firms. Certain types of such co-operative benefits are obviously helpful and right, but there is always the danger of the temptation to remain in a union for

its material advantages, when one may wish to come out for the sake of some principle.

The Association publishes a newsy weekly paper, often containing the rank-est criticisms of the powers that be; and it has recently inaugurated an Educational Committee for studying methods of teaching, etc., and valuable courses of technics by well known experts.

Whilst the above unions represent teachers of all ranks, and therefore may well stand for a solidarity of aim and action on broad educational lines, there is a growing tendency to develop associations representing sectional interests, *i. e.* Class Teachers' Federations, Head Teachers' Associations, Women Teachers' Unions, etc. Where these exist for purposes of social intercourse and mutual discussion of interests common to the group, they serve a useful and material purpose.

Where, however, there is the slightest danger of a spirit of self-protection creeping in, of emphasizing the assumed rights of one group over another, the sectional association becomes a real menace, especially in the field of educational service, where there can be no real clashing of group interests.

Granting the right aims, unions of teachers are worthy of generous acceptance and encouragement. To fight, with force and dignity for proper recognition and remuneration, and for proper conditions for children and teachers, to educate and win over the community (especially in England) to strengthen the weak individual within its ranks, to secure redress of grievances within the fold before coming outside, and to promote social intercourse and broad educational ideals amongst its members, and above all, to inspire in all a generous attitude towards their hours of labor for the community, and a loyal relationship with their employers who represent the community—by these, and by these alone, can a Teachers' Union justify its existence and become a real strength and inspiration to education.

ANOTHER ENGLISH REVOLUTION

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SOME TRUTHS ARE SO simple, they require constant iteration ere we adequately apprehend their axiomatic significance.

Is there any truth in social geometry more self-evident than this: New needs provoke new devices for their fulfillment? No observer who can think beyond his inherited prejudices but has been stirred by the amazing changes now transforming school and society. Of all persons moulding the youth's education, we English teachers ought to have responded most sensitively to the newer needs of the age. Have we thus responded? Why not? Briefly and bluntly, because we have not known how to defy the traditional tyranny of haughtyculture. At heart we are egocentric evangelists, aglow with irrelevant ideals, zealous to impose scholastic aims upon an unscholastic studentbody. And we have suffered for a martyr's follies. Not one of us but feels in his soul that his students have wilfully abandoned the refining delights of culture for the garish indulgences of yellow journalism. We deceive ourselves. The unlovely fact is that in our wrong-headed enthusiasms for impossibilist ideals, we teachers have departed from modest good sense and in lieu of understanding modern needs we have futilely continued to preach old gospels, the irrelevant gospels of haughtyculture.

Haughtyculture is the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of prestige. To know (by rote, if necessary) the "best" that has been written in antecedent ages gives one standing! It may or may not yield insight. Unfortunately, in a stratified society, prestige is dearer to the human heart than mere wisdom. Haughtyculture has marred the vision of mankind precisely because it has cunningly appealed to the deepest of all human instincts: the passion for self-distinction. Haughtyculture has catered to a passion which roots deep in vanity. To know the

books—if only by name—that have been traditionally approved as *the* great books is a distinction so profitable in a darkling world of unholy ignoramuses, one wonders how the gentleman's ideal of culture for culture's sake has ever been liable to the assaults of modernity. But "The old order changeth, giving place to new."

The classicists make sad moan over the bankruptcy of haughtyculture, the younger generation of spirited mentors teasingly rejoice over the magnificent ruin. Old follies endure not forever. The mock-heroic attempt to "elevate" our lowly students by teaching them to admire thru apish reverence, the achievements of a caste-culture has failed most dismally. The élitizing passion has spent its pristine force. Incurable sentimentalists will lament over the inevitable—possibly the irrevocable. More robust souls will wisely accept incontrovertible facts and strive to bend it to our more realizable purposes. We have been disillusioned. We reluctantly admit that scholarship is an impossible ideal for the masses. Education is no longer a bookish discipline but an interesting study in human passions and prejudices and groping experiments in team work. In short, education, as he who thinks may perceive, is rapidly becoming a congeries of problems in Sociology. Education has become sociological.

A sociological education shifts the cultural emphasis from scholarship to sheer interest. Not bookishness but intellectual alertness is the touchstone of achievement in our democracy. In an age so chaotic and heavy-laden as this, he must be a simpleton indeed who would pin his faith to the outworn ideals of earlier centuries when life was a reliable routine, fixed by habit and tradition, sanctified by provincialism and approved by superior folk as the order of nature. The bewildering changes of yesterday have sent our faiths scurrying for some secure anchorage.

Some of us modestly believe we have espied safe harbors. To these ports of refuge we invite pilgrims who wearily seek a pedagogical haven for their oppressed souls.

How can we cope with the complex demands of this marvelous age of chaos, so new and so beautiful to lovers of change? A thousand intelligent answers might be given. Let us try a pertinent few.

Mathematically stated, our problem reads: (1) Given a mixed population of commonplace students; (2) Given the psychological law which postulates that all abiding interest flows from *live* experiences and graphic associations; *Required*; To find a method of enlightenment for high school English work.

CONSTRUCTION.

- (1) Draw a sharp line thru all haughty-culture prejudices.
- (2) Connect the class room work with the pupil's own environmental experiences.
- (3) Connect the teacher's sympathies with the strivings of the plodding masses.

PROOF

(A) The age in which we live is most worthy of our study (Axiom).

(B) All idealism is bound up with mass movements (See History).

(C) The study of English is the cultivation of Idealisms (Plain Geometry).

(D) The English Room is the Place "par excellence" for the sympathetic study of current social movements (By intuition and consent). Hence, all questions, all books, all suggestions that dramatize and illuminate the aspirations of the masses are the true and exalted content of the English Curriculum. "Which Was to be Expected."

There are three vital interests which characterize this age as the most human of all the weary ages: the rights of children, the needs of women, the responsibilities of men. No person can conscientiously call himself educated whose sym-

pathies have been left unquickenened by these tremendous issues. No school education can honorably pride itself upon its cultural "éclaircissement" unless every young man and young woman under its tutelage has been touched deeply and imaginatively by the immensity of these humanities. For the only "humanities" are the vexing problems of everyday life. One can understand why the brilliant sociologist, Edward A. Ross, in his *Changing America*, confesses that after years of abstractionist thinking, (scholasticism caught in its own trap) he was finally succumbed to the sentiment that the deepest concern of life is "Men, women, and children." (In tune with our spirited age of emancipation, we should invert the series in the order of affectionate concern and write "children, women and men.")

Children, Women, Men—if not a holy trinity, at least a beautiful cluster of deepest idealism is garlanded about these eternal three.

Is there any valid reason why the English class room—the most spiritualizing influence in the student's life—should evade its fine responsibility of analyzing, sifting, weighing, refining and evaluating the "raw" materials that collectively constitute the affectionate interests of human beings? Is there any compelling reason why the English class cannot be a spiritual clearing house wherein the oppressive doubts and untamed dreams and jarring idealisms of youth may be composed and collectively resolved? What the English work might be and is not, makes the best teachers falter and fail and lose faith. The inspiring potentialities of youth, largely untapped and unexploited, challenge the courage of the younger teachers, light-bearers still unexhausted by sapless routine.

Some of us have made the actual experiments in class room and we confidently and heartedly assert that English can release its mighty promise for democratic uplift by identifying its idealism with a human philosophy of everyday life; a philosophy of amelioration. The interpretation of social aspirations,

celebrated in the subject called English, will never attain to its democratic eminence in our high schools so long as a traditional curriculum, unrelated, scholastic, high-brow, continues to parade as useful culture. The ideals hitherto emphasized by the study of English truly embody a pathology of culture; a sort of corrective discipline for arriving "gentlemen and ladies." Something more positive, more wholesome, more electrifying is needed to stimulate the finer energies of ultra-modern adolescents. To the discovery of that more positive philosophy of everyday life, we Teachers of English must address our ingenuities.

Perhaps the most adequate approach to our problem lies thru the "Critical Question." It is amazing to observe how indifferent teachers are to the value of critical questions (not found ready to hand in copiously annotated text-books). Yet no type of query more effectually releases the personal, intimate experiences and observations of students. For example, consider the following questions as types of challenges we have been hurling at our pupils:

- 1—Why do you behave better in a stranger's home than in your own?
- 2—How does conceit help to stimulate faith in one's possibilities?
- 3—Why is it so difficult to be truthful in a personal crisis?
- 4—Why are we less ashamed of our wrong-doing privately than publicly?
- 5—Suppose you could do as you pleased; what then?
- 6—Why do we cling so passionately to our prejudices?
- 7—Why do we all argue so much without changing our beliefs?
- 8—Under what conditions may disobedience be a virtue?
- 9—Why is your attitude toward a servant girl so different from your conduct toward, let us say, a college professor?
- 10—Why do we admire the Revolutionary Heroes of the Past while condemning those of the Present?
- 11—Why have women played so small a

part in the intellectual development of the race?

- 12—What prevents us from listening with comfort to hostile ideas?
- 13—Why do men find it easier to be charitable than to be just?
- 14—What cruelties are children guilty of in the pursuit of pleasure?

These challenging interrogations can set off a battery of startlingly interesting ideas and experiences, such as an approved list of "classics" could at best only feebly ignite. Youth simply loves to discuss the discords and contradictions of life even as sophisticated adults do. The philosophic temperament—Andrew Lang has immortalized "Why Why" as the first radical cannot be evoked too soon.

Critical questions should motivate and surround every recitation. Book work is relegated to its proper historic function of supplementing and clarifying *familiar* experiences. These familiar experiences must represent the student's daily observations and verifiable insights. The books usually recommended by post-graduated pedagogs are alien to the pupil's familiar interests. He may learn thru cultural coercion to respect what is beyond him: he will not learn to weave haughtyculture into his mental fibre. The process of osmosis operates as infallibly in the mental flow as in the physical transfusion. Teachers are forever violating the psychological law of osmosis: bravely but futilely essaying to persuade unharmonious things to co-mingle.

Critical questions are fundamentally important and transforming. Dryness, weariness, repetition, plagiarized appreciation, parrot memorization, aimlessness, fade like so many nightmares when sheer interest, spontaneous and vital, irradiates the collective recitation. However, books, tho a by-product (rather than the main product), may be a brilliant supplement to the English work. Accepting the truism that interest derives from familiar experience, we may supply ambitious students with stimulating books of a sociological nature. For example: the following "human studies" have been used

as first aids to classroom efficiency:

Ross, Sin and Society.
 Ross, Changing America.
 Spargo, The Bitter Cry of the Children.
 Kirkpatrick, War: What For.
 Maeterlinck, The Life of the Bee.
 Fiske, The Destiny of Man.
 Hauptman, The Weavers.
 Galsworthy, Justice—Strife.
 Bennett, The Human Machine.
 Griggs, The Use of the Margin.
 Andreyev, The Seven Who Were Hanged.
 Olive Schreiner, Woman and Labor.
 Florence Kelly, Modern Industry.
 Brisbane, Editorials.
 Brooks, Social Unrest.
 Devine, Misery and Its Causes.

and so forth.

Each one of these studies challenges the reader's prejudices, releasing critical abilities, the value of which for understanding the problems of citizenship in a socialized democracy cannot be overestimated. Not all the classics listed in the celebrated (and haughtycultural) curricula of high school and college could ever avail to inspire adolescents with so keen an enthusiasm for democracy's experiments as these human books of a sociological content. The experiment is worth trying. The English room may yet become the spiritual Clearing House for the adolescent's problem of pleasure and pain. The most enthusiastic meas-

ures for that consummation are the introduction of the Critical Question and of the Sociologic Study. English as a discipline in culture may yet become the interpreter of current social aspirations; failing that, English will simply remain a corrective exercise, a kind of inherited pathology of culture. The most human ideal for English teachers ought to be to identify their splendid "humanity"—English—with a philosophy of *everyday life*. Why not? Let timid and disconcerted protestants ponder these words of Bernard Shaw's: "I deal with all periods; but I never study any period but the present, which I have not yet mastered and never shall."

If this most illuminating thinker can find inexhaustible significance in our own age, shall we sentimentally cling to our moribund ideals, denying our modernity, to emulate an alien culture? I love to think of the English room as an Exchange Centre, throbbing with the pulse of question and answer, analysis and hypothesis; a laboratory for thinking and natural failure; a vital concourse where sympathetic humans, passionately fond of insight, are honestly debating the living issues of this marvelous age. Is this ideal beyond our capabilities?

WHAT NOT TO DO*

LEON W GOLDRICH

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WE ARE ALL of us so frequently informed as to what others consider the best for us, what others would do in our places, what others have done to succeed, that it is refreshing to learn that man has advanced, has developed, has progressed thru wise inhibitions (knowing what not to do) as much as thru positive outward actions (knowing what to do). The savage acts always and immediately on blind impulse. Thru ignorance, he fears every-

thing and everybody that does not form an immediate part of his tribe. He cannot adjust himself easily to a new environment. He carries his lance or his bow and arrow with him all the time, and he is ready to act—to kill at the slightest provocation. The civilized individual thinks before he acts, he has developed a rationalized and sympathetic will. By sound knowledge and wisdom, he has learned to trust his fellow men, not to fear them, he has learned the value of weighing the feelings of others as well as his

*Read at a conference with teachers in P S 62, on February 1, 1915.

own, he has learned to refrain from using arms or even words that might injure the feelings of those he admires, and he has learned the lesson of personal sacrifice for those he loves. The civilized being no longer acts on impulse; he has so completely fashioned his will, that, guided by noble feelings and intelligent thought, he either acts or refrains from acting as the case in hand demands. Control of feelings and control of actions are the best indices of a "safe and sane" rational being.

Teachers are all supposed to be rational beings, all educated and cultured persons, representing some of the best products of a twentieth century educational system, and all expect us to be models worthy of imitation by those who come under our guidance. If we are to live up to the ideals set for us, our consciences should be trained to guide us wisely as cultured human beings and in our particular vocation, so as to enable us either to act or to refrain from acting under any condition or environment in which we may find ourselves.

Mastery of subjects to be taught, methods of teaching, understanding individual child nature, should teach us what to present and what not to present at any given time in the educational career of the child, but what I desire to call your attention to more particularly to-day, refers to those inhibitory guides which are always taken as signs of culture, refinement, and professional superiority.

Ten Inhibitory Guides.

1. Do not find fault with other members of your profession—either those of your grade or other grades. Professional etiquette demands this.

2. Do not find fault with the children you are asked to teach. The master workman neither blames his material nor his tools.

3. Do not show signs of discouragement. Hope is man's greatest blessing.

4. Do not cast your burdens on

other people's shoulders. Success in any organization depends upon division of labor and wise co-operation.

5. Do not lose your temper under any condition. No one particularly cares to see your temper and you lose some charm every time you show it. No one profits.

6. Do not waste useful energy thru useless worry. Worry endangers him that has it, brings joy to your enemies who have caused it, and makes your friends sorry to see it. Away with it.

7. Do not destroy the enthusiasm shown by others. Enthusiasm is one of the warmest components of the soul. Do not chill the warm soul of the individual who loves his work.

8. Do not envy the progress or rewards of others. Every advance made by others, every recognition given to encourage others adds leaven to a rising humanity. Never lose an opportunity to give due recognition for work well done.

9. Do not object to helpful criticism. He who has become perfect is fit for the company of angels. The mortal who knows it all—that is, who thinks he knows it all and says so—is a fool. Such an individual will forever remain hopelessly ignorant. To know that one does not know is the beginning of wisdom. He who is my friend will try to remedy my faults.

10. Do not think or talk of school all the time.

Live, learn, enjoy life, travel, enlarge your circle of friends, increase your sphere of influence, enlarge your sympathies, have an avocation as well as a vocation, be happy, absorb and radiate worldliness, cheer, comfort, life and spirit wherever you go. Be a real human personality.

No, Frankie, Democracy does not mean eating pie with a knife; nor does it mean using your sleeve in place of a napkin. Democracy is a state of mind; it has to do with sense, not with dollars.

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Democracy in Education: Education for Democracy

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This paper is striving to do its part in the creation of a real profession of teaching, the members of which shall be self-respecting and respected, thru stimulating clear thinking on the work and the social position of teachers, and thru intelligent criticism of systems of educational administration. No greater service than this could be rendered to the children of the state.

CALLING NAMES

THE TEACHERS' COUNCIL of New York City should formulate a rule requiring members of the Board of Education to "smile" when in the future they feel disposed publicly to characterize teachers as "derelicts," "lame ducks," or "paid subordinates." We don't expect the Teachers' Council to take this suggestion seriously, for teachers have little of the spirit of Owen Wister's "Virginian."

That is one reason why we may expect other designations of contempt. Alas, that culture has brot us to this!

Yet there are other names which members of the Board might call teachers, and gain confidence and respect thereby: "colleagues," "fellow-servants of the public," "fellow-workers for the common good." However, it all depends on the point of view.

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

ONE OF THE strong appeals to voters in this country has been the promise of "business administration." There is some prospect that a more effective adaptation of our education to actual economic and social conditions will not only weaken this appeal in the future, but will help to expose the fallacy and the dishonesty of its claims and implications. A good example of what its champions advertise as "business" method in public administration is the attempt of the financial authorities of the city of New York to meet an alleged "emergency" in the city's business. It is suggested that the shortage of funds, which is a matter that concerns, presumably, all the citizens, be made up by requiring of a small portion of the city's population a certain amount of free service. The inability to provide funds for summer schools is to be met not by an increased tax levy, which would distribute the burden with some approximation to equity, but by asking a few hundred teachers to "volunteer" their services for the summer.

It must be said that this "business principle" was not aimed specifically at the teachers. The financiers had contemplated a general reduction of the wages of all city employes as a means of "economy." A reduction in the city's payroll of 10% would yield about nine and a half million dollars, and it would be money found—so far as the "taxpayer" is concerned. It ought to be plain why business administrators prefer a reduction of wages to an increase in tax-rates. The workers are helpless, whereas the "taxpayers" control the elections. And

the workers will continue to be helpless just as long as they permit the real-estate gamblers and the "business men" to control the elections.

STOP THIEF!

ANY POLICEMAN will tell you that at the cry of "Stop Thief!" uttered vehemently in the street a considerable number of "respectable" citizens will start to run, and others will stop short as if expecting to receive a leaden message thru the back. Whether guilty or not, apparently a large number have it in us to inquire, "Do you mean me?"

When our editorial entitled, "How It Feels to Be Suppressed," was written for the April number, of course we had in mind a definite set of circumstances and definite personalities. What was our surprise, however, on being asked by a representative of an entirely different high school if it was not his principal whom we had in mind! This was just about as good as if the newly discovered guilty one himself had asked the question—and much less embarrassing. Besides, a puzzle of three years' standing is unexpectedly solved. It is now specifically acknowledged that the reason THE AMERICAN TEACHER has practically no supporters in that school is that the principal has let it be known positively that he does not approve the paper.

Nevertheless, we hope our message of freedom of opinion and discussion will reach all teachers who want it, and are willing to do a little fighting, if necessary, to get it.

SOME PROPOSED PENSION LEGISLATION

KANSAS, NEW HAMPSHIRE, Connecticut, Indiana and New York have proposals for teachers' pensions. There is some similarity between the Indiana and the New York plan. In Indiana the teachers would have to contribute \$10 per year for the first 15 years of serv-

ice; \$25 for the next 10 years and \$20 for the remaining years up to and including the fortieth year. The remainder of the income would be furnished by the public. Retirement would be granted on demand of the teacher with annuities ranging from \$600 after 35 years of service to \$700 after 40 years. A disability benefit after 25 years of service is provided for. A refund of contributions would be made to any teacher leaving the service before she should be entitled to an annuity. In the New York Legislature several bills have been introduced to re-habilitate the pension system of New York City. The most comprehensive of these bills provided for new entrants, for those now teaching, and for those already retired. The plan for new entrants is worthy of notice. Two-thirds of the cost is to be borne by the city and one-third by the teacher. The teacher would have to make monthly contributions of \$3.66 for 30 years. This would then amount to \$2,500. To this the city would add \$5,000 making a total of \$7,500 to be set aside as a reserve from which to pay the teachers' pension. The pension would vary according to the age of the teacher at time of retirement from \$504 at 48 years of age to \$2,340 at 70 years. The teacher would have the right to retire after 30 years of service but might remain longer if she chose. A retirement for disability after 15 years service in New York City is provided for. As in the Indiana plan there would be a refund of contributions to a teacher leaving the service before becoming eligible to a pension. Like Franklin's "plan of union" this bill is objected to for two diametrically opposite reasons—the authorities think it is too costly to the city, and some teachers think the pensions are too small.

Every new reader adds strength to your arm. Strengthen yourself by getting the co-operation of more subscribers.

NOT A PROFESSION**THE TEACHER AS SCAB**

NOT VERY MANY years ago it was quite fashionable for universities and public school systems to send representative teachers abroad to gather inspiration and ideas. Jobson, one of the special supervisors of his subject, was given a chance to volunteer to go to a certain European city—leave of absence with full pay—for the good of the service. It happened that Jobson's wife was not well that winter, and he declined. Mobson, a care-free bachelor, went instead. Two years later there was a vacancy in a higher position. Everybody knew that Jobson was the logical man for the place. His immediate superiors knew it; his colleagues knew it; his "subordinates" knew it. But in considering the candidates someone brot forward the fact that Jobson did not go to Europe when he had the chance to, whereas Mobson did. Both had had a chance to volunteer; Jobson declined. Mobson seized the opportunity. Mobson got the job; Jobson got left.

* * *

During the nineteenth century of the present era the masters of commerce and industry succeeded in developing a widespread sentiment of approval for a certain attitude of sacrifice for the benefit of the employing classes, which went by the name of "loyalty." This attitude was raised to the level of a cardinal virtue by means of clever sermons, fiction, advertising and hortatory addresses to the workers. The workers everywhere were assured that the only road to promotion and "success" lay along the doing of more than they were paid for. A favorite maxim of the times read "If you do no more than you are paid for, you'll be paid for no more than you do." This reached such a point that young people took pride in overworking themselves, in the hope of catching the notice and receiving the favor of employers or managers. Of course the majority of the work remained underpaid, as before; they had succeeded only in screwing up the production per

unit of pay to the very limit of human endurance.

This mania for giving service out of proportion to the compensation is not to be confused with the sentiment of devotion to the public weal. The latter showed itself in the past, as it does today, in various forms of self sacrifice for the benefit of the general welfare, or for the benefit of unfortunate members of the community. In times of great suffering, as after fire or flood, or during war or famine, all citizens were ready to give of goods or services without thot of return or personal gain; under such circumstances the thot of private advancement is farthest from men's minds. A few here and there give to the poor on the understanding that they are thus purchasing reserved seats in heaven; but most normal men and women are actuated in their voluntary gifts by less deliberate purpose, by less conscious motives. In our ordinary decencies we are not very calculating.

* * *

Loyalty to the community finds in our own times many new opportunities. There is work aplenty for the volunteers. Every social agency of an unofficial kind can easily employ double the number of volunteers that it now has. And every official agency that comes in contact with human beings—departments of health and of education, the departments of justice and correction, tenement inspectors and firemen—finds daily situations with which it cannot cope for lack of workers, and pay for such workers is not forthcoming. Those who can serve and have the time need not be unemployed for lack of work. And in times that need the services of able workers, there is nothing more noble for you and me to do than to volunteer our services at those points where our work can do the most good.

And if willing workers were ignorant of the opportunities, they should hail with joy the tidings conveyed in a circular issued by the city superintendent of schools of New York City early in April of this year. According to this circular the city found itself so close to the insolvency line, that it was obliged to withhold the

funds formerly used for the maintenance of summer schools. And accordingly the teachers were invited to volunteer their services for the coming summer. This was at the suggestion of the Board of Estimate, presumably.

The Board of Superintendents subsequently recommended to the Board of Education that the voluntary basis of operating summer schools be not adopted. The Superintendent, in his first tentative invitation also specified that only such teachers might volunteer their services as (1) felt physically able to undertake the work; (2) already held a permanent license. And he asked that services be offered quite freely and voluntarily. This did not mean that the free offerings of younger teachers (who had not permanent licenses) would not be appreciated. It meant either that only high grade service was desired, or that there was a possibility of playing politics with the volunteering business.

* * *

No one appreciates better than does the teacher the need for additional schooling for thousands of the city children. But the teacher who has thot about his work sees just as clearly the danger in the proposed plan. There are hundreds of reasons why certain teachers would not be in a position to offer their services this year—whether they got pay or not. Yet it would be almost impossible to organize a staff of volunteer teachers without prejudicing the standing of all the others.

If a teacher has strength enough to do the work required for forty weeks, she could be penalized for not being able to stand it for forty-six weeks in the year. The temptation to over-work, to which many would yield, is an unfair temptation to place before anyone—whether it is in the form of increased pay, preferment, or opportunity to serve society freely and devotedly.

It is true that in general promotion and advancement must depend upon differences that appear in a more or less competitive sense. But under the conditions that now obtain in the teaching business,

the implications of superiority based on the margin of voluntary work performed is essentially fallacious. It is not true, for example, that the teacher who gives more hours to volunteer work in connection with various school activities is necessarily a more valuable teacher. To measure values in this way is but to tempt teachers to a perfunctory stretching of such voluntary hours, when they might more profitably spend their free time and energies in improving themselves as human beings. The fact that I can get along without a vacation does not make me a better teacher, nor does the fact that I am willing to forego my vacation. But what I do with the vacation when I get it is of great significance. To prefer altogether on the basis of volunteer work is just as unsound as to prefer altogether on the basis of courses and lectures attended, or on the basis of hours spent in school. But to allow any merely formal matter to determine the standing of teachers is the mistake, for it is on the basis of formal compliance with the expressed wishes of superiors that tough mediocrity gains the advantage over unobtrusive and sensitive idealism.

* * *

During the epidemic there is no difficulty about getting the free services of physicians and nurses. The question of pay is secondary. Why should not the same spirit prevail among teachers in the presence of such an emergency as is now faced by impoverished New York?

The answer is not far to seek. In one case the workers are actuated by common ideals, and their work is controlled by themselves. They develop their own standards and make their own regulations. In the other case the workers are treated like "hired subordinates" forty weeks in the year, and are expected to deal with their "superiors" in the attitude of apologetic seekers after favors. They are occasionally flattered to keep them in good spirits—or to make them exert themselves a little harder; and they are "rated" in unworthy rivalry over formal and meretricious virtues that may be sig-

nificant, but may also be mere hocus-pocus.

Under such circumstances the offer on the part of the stronger or more resourceful teachers to perform service in excess of the "standard" quota cannot help but operate to the disadvantage of those who are in no position to make similar offers. It is so obvious that many would be tempted to volunteer for the purpose of gaining favor, that the superintendents would not accept the voluntary services of those teachers who had not yet attained to the relative security of a permanent license. And it is so unlikely that the better teachers would offer to serve under the circumstances, that the superintendents advised against the plan even before they received the replies to the "invitation."

A body of workers of professional standing would manage its common affairs co-operatively instead of thru "hired superiors," as at present. With such workers to draw upon, an emergency would be dissipated without the question of extra pay ever arising, and without the possibility of invidious comparisons as to the relative *amount* of service rendered by the individuals. And public emergencies must depend more and more upon a professional attitude on the part of the workers—all workers—and upon a spirit of co-operation on the part of the citizens—all citizens. We cannot continue to entrust our public emergencies to chance philanthropists, or to the public spirit of officials disposed to "volunteer" the services of their "hired subordinates."

It has been said that the occasion for the invitation to volunteer for free service in the summer schools is not an emergency at all; that the financial stringency is but a pretext. There is grave suspicion that this is but part of a general plan of "retrenchment"—the small end of a wedge that will split up the solidarity of the public employes, that they may be sacrificed for the benefit of the "taxpayer." However that may be, teachers who have reached a certain level of self-respect will not scab on their fellows.

THE GRACES OF SUPERVISION

FRANKLIN J. KELLER

De Witt Clinton High School

IT HAS BEEN said that every good movement for social betterment evolves among its proponents a lunatic fringe. While we are ordinarily in danger of identifying this marginal embellishment with the main sane body of the movement itself, another danger is that we shall not keep the former ever before us as a warning of our own possible excesses.

Not long since an efficient and warm-hearted man suggested that for the sake of efficiency he would have every "please" and "kindly" and "mister" excised from official communications. The trouble was that at that particular moment he was thinking of a certain work he wished to be furthered by gentlemen and gentlewomen who do not, when they come to work, leave at home their fine feelings as they do their Sunday clothes. Moreover, he was committing that sin of which all of us are guilty at times—that of simply striving to get something done and forgetting that in the operation the work must touch many human beings who are living their lives every minute of the day and whose happiness is more important than, or just as important as, the accomplishment of the deed itself. But that is not all; it is in the very core of human nature to work more effectively when the emotional tone is pleasant.

This article is a plea for fostering respect and consideration for the feelings of men and women. It is based upon the assumption that nothing is more important than these feelings, and that both efficiency and "efficiency" depend upon them. It is feeling that supplies the motive that gets things done. For instance, this paper is not being written because the writer reasoned that it would make the school system more efficient, but because in specific instances his own feelings have been injured and he "feels" for the distress of others who have had similar experiences. On the other hand he realizes how rosy life has seemed when supervisors have been his friends. He

feels keenly the necessity of making this a most friendly world. Which brings us to our topic.

It is so seldom that the supervisor and the examiner realize how easy are their tasks! Each finds the teacher all anxiety to please, all eagerness to make a favorable impression. Yet how often is this tremendous advantage thrown away by the assumption of an overbearing attitude, a tendency to find only defects! Or how often is there evidence of an unsympathetic mood, which makes the supervisor play the role of a sleuth—with the teacher as the possible miscreant! The same holds true of the relation between the teacher and pupils, and perhaps when the teacher becomes the supervisor this attitude is carried over. On the other hand, what a hold the supervisor has who comes into the classroom with a smile, seems to be looking for good things to say. If the work deserves it the teacher is gratified, if not, he is flattered. In either case the existing good feeling is such that further adverse criticism is received as simple justice instead of carping meticulousness. This is so obvious that the merest tyro would accede to its validity. But the trouble is that many supervisors do not practise what they know to be true, and thereby thousands of teachers are made unhappy and so, less efficient. No one has a right, either human, or God-given, to make another person unhappy except as a last resort to secure a good obtainable in no other way.

All this seems so elementary that it is almost presumptuous to put it into print, but within only a short time the writer has had occasion to know of a supervisor of great experience and probable good intentions, who walked into the room of an experienced teacher (marked "A-A" by the principal) who did not say "Good morning" or otherwise noticed the teacher, altho a greeting would not have disturbed the proceedings, whose every criticism while in the room was unfavorable, and moreover didactic, and who finally walked away from the teacher with as much courtesy as he would have

shown a good, lively lamp-post. Later he observed another teacher's work, left the room, and then remarked to the teacher's immediate superior that the interpretation of the subject matter was wrong, when as a matter of fact it was absolutely right. The result can hardly be other than that both those teachers look upon the supervisor as an incompetent and cannot feel for a moment that he is an inspiration. In all likelihood, however, he has very real ability which has gone to waste and which has failed to increase the efficiency of the school system—because it did not grace itself in supervisory courtesy.

Why should the supervisor not have smiled as if he were about to be feasted with good things in the home of his friend? Why should he not have shaken hands as if he were glad to meet again one of his confreres? Why should he not have asked the teacher what he was trying to do and what drawbacks he was encountering, and thus have saved himself from having to make those adverse criticisms? Why should he not have said adieu as if he were glad of the privilege of having spent some time in that classroom? In the second room why should he not have stayed until the end of the lesson, and then have made the criticism to the teacher himself who could have proved in a short time that the supervisor was wrong? These would have been the graces of supervision such as make life more worth while, and human beings happier.

The burden of reform does not lie entirely upon the supervisor. The teacher must recognize the fact that every human being is a man or woman first, and an official second, that he or she is subject to all the whims and fancies and quirks from which we poor mortals suffer, that it is not only legitimate but essential that the subordinate should recognize and adjust himself to these idiosyncrasies, for in the long run they do not affect broad educational policies. Thus may we speak of the graces of the supervised.

In general, it is palpably true that a

system must be administered by human beings and that the system itself can never be dissociated from those human beings. Yet it cannot be too often repeated, for day after day we forget it. Finally, despite the fact that these words have been inspired by unpleasant personal experiences, they are words of earnest sincerity; they come from one who is himself shortly to supervise and whose daily prayer is, "Lord, keep me human."

The Harrisburg, Pa. school board has adopted the recommendation of the superintendent and high-school principal that an experienced and competent female teacher adviser be employed to have general out-of-door oversight of high school girls. The duties of such teacher include personal conferences with mothers in the homes, and with the students themselves, the determining of causes for failure in studies, for dropping out of school, advising on personal matters, securing safe and proper employment for those forced to leave school, conferring with employers, and, in general, acting as helper and adviser on all matters pertaining to the educational and personal welfare of high school girls.

LET US NOT worry over the attitude of reactionaries. It seems to be a law of progress that no new idea can succeed unless it meets opposition. Those who oppose an idea perform a useful function. By opposing, they advertise it and thus it is brot to the attention of persons who would not hear of it otherwise. Reactionaries are therefore almost as necessary to the progress of an idea as those who work for it. Hence they deserve our thanks, for they halve our work.

What would the tired business man and the contractor say if the city officials should suggest a reduction of ten per cent in the contract prices of supplies for the city departments, or in the contract prices of buildings in course of erection?

BOOK NOTES

THE SOCIAL responsibility for the health of the school child is entering more and more into the public consciousness. A good analysis of this responsibility, together with an account of the various methods thru which it finds expression is given by Dr Hoag and Professor Terman in their *Health Work in the Schools*. This is not only an excellent manual for administrative officers, but a very instructive book for the class room teacher. All of us come in contact with the health problems of children, and even when we do not have to teach hygiene formally, we shall be able to get much of help from this book. There are extensive references, good illustrations, many useful charts and tables, an analytical table of contents and a good index. (Houghton Mifflin Co. \$1.60 net.)

LOOKING FORWARD

BUT OF EDUCATIONISTS there are different kinds. Between the schoolmaster of yesterday, with his paymaster and social complement, the politician, and the evolutionary psychologist, there is a world of difference. The transformation of the former pair of educationists into the latter is plainly incipient, proceeding for the most part with well nigh imperceptible steps, yet at times also by obvious new departures. It is, perhaps, of all the phases of the contemporary transition, the one most fraught with significance, most charged with promise for the future. Beyond and beneath the needed process of political conversion, educational conversions are also needed. And these are in progress, and at many points. VICTOR BRANFORD, in *Interpretations and Forecasts*.

It is strange indeed that a system in which the teacher is the vital educator, the only real agent in the application of the course of study to the children, not only gives that teacher no "definite and authoritative position in shaping" the curriculum, but usually does not even consult him in its formation.—PAUL KLAPPER, in *Principles of Educational Practice*.

MORE PRODUCTS OF THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY

(From the Bulletin of the St Paul Grade Teachers' Association)

- I On April 14, 1915, the Teachers' Advisory Board of St. Paul met *in the office of the Superintendent* to consider the revision of the Course of Study.
- II In a discussion of the work of the Chicago Teachers' Councils, the St. Paul Bulletin says, "It would be interesting to ask why Boards of Education have reasoned that all the wit, wisdom and intelligence of the teaching force has been possessed by the superintendent, or by a small group composed of the superintendent and his assistants, or why they have ignored the presence of teachers in the ranks who must have intelligence, whose years of experience give them an understanding of educational problems, whose daily work in the classroom authorizes them to speak on the needs of the children."
- III Ella Flagg Young organized the teachers of Chicago into councils, whose delegates bring questions directly to her attention without the intervention of her assistants.
- IV Chicago teachers discuss with the superintendent propositions like these:
 - 1 The excessive number of examinations in schools.
 - 2 The exemption from examination of pupils who do work of high quality.
 - 3 The amount of teaching supervisors should do.
 - 4 The establishment of junior high schools.
 - 5 The moistening as well as the heating of the air in school rooms.
 - 6 The opening of school room windows at the discretion of teachers.
 - 7 The more frequent cleaning of schools.
 - 8 That all basement school rooms should be closed.
 - 9 That a less dangerous floor covering than oil should be used.
 - 10 That the salaries of engineers and janitors, and the expense of lighting and heating, should be paid out of the building fund, instead of from the educational fund.
 - 11 THAT TEACHERS SHOULD HAVE A VOTE IN THE SELECTION OF THE PRINCIPALS WHO ARE TO BE PLACED OVER THEM!

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CHOOSING THE FIT!

What the public wants it can have, and it can have its work done efficiently, provided it will support the reorganization of school administration—let us say in the City of New York—along the line of encouraging the leadership of teachers who have social ideals and ability, thru official recognition and appointment to those positions that are now held by a "friend," or by a "friend of a friend."

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