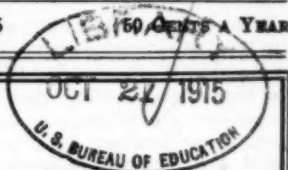


The American Teacher

Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.

VOL. IV No. 8

NEW YORK, OCTOBER, 1915



Unions and the Were-Wolves

They tell us that our Cloistered Craft Should never
form a Bond of Union with the men of Mine or Mill,
(saying that ours is a Learned Profession)

They warn us to Stand Aside when other Workers are
Fighting for the Right to Live,
(saying that we are Employees of the Public)

They demand that we yield the Freeman's Right of
Association,
(saying that thru the Union we become a Menace to Lawful Authority)

Who but the Were-Wolves of the Powers that Prey
would seek to control by Keeping the Workers apart?
Or make a Cheap Appeal to the public whom they
also throttle?
Or threaten, when for Common Defense we Unite?

CREATIVE EDUCATION

GARIBALDI M LAPOLLA
De Witt Clinton High School

Yet the spirit of seeking was spreading steadily thru the world. Even the schoolmaster could not check it.—H. G. WELLS, in *The World Set Free*.

We make no consistent effort to cultivate a progressive spirit in our boys and girls. They are not made to realize the responsibility that rests upon them—the exhilaration that comes from ever looking and pressing forward.—J. H. ROBINSON, in *The Spirit of Conservatism*.

EDUCATION HAS ever been, and is, society's attempt to propagate itself in its own image. Hitherto so severe has been the task of beating the haphazard forces of nature into a discipline favorable to man's advancing purpose, that whatever little victory was gained in this direction, necessarily represented an achievement to be cherished and preserved at all costs. To an aboriginal tribe, the making of a flint-head arrow was an event fraught with serious social significance; and it became their duty in consequence to preserve the process of its making. The possibilities of further invention were narrowly restricted to the accidental in those far away times. Nature yielded secrets only to the stumblers upon them; not to scrutinizers, not to conscious doers. Observation was not then a component of the thinking process, but rather a delicate sensational function alone—a seeing, not a perceiving. Gains over nature were not, therefore, the yield of discovered principles fruitfully applied, but betterments at the best in methods, in small details, each detail in itself possessing great importance. To lose one would have been a profound social loss; to conserve them all a serious social purpose. Add to this, moreover, the halo of sentiment, religious association or ancestral memories surrounding each, and the necessity imperiling the tribe or group to hand down all

these details in their original integrity of form is seen to be fairly destined in its force. And indeed evidence abundantly shows that the education of the child in primitive communities consisted of merely imparting the knowledge of stereotyped methods of hunting, sowing, dressing, each steeped in a haze of ritual and reverence.

This dependence upon the past did not cease with the emergence of man from the savage to the higher stages. Intelligence indeed began to supersede cunning and luck, and to throw the physical more and more into abeyance.

Nevertheless, intelligence assisted in wresting but a precious little more from nature's hoard of power. The force of environment remained still beyond man's ability to modify effectively, and his attitude to nature remained one of acquiescence and impotence. The history of man thru all this time has been in the main one of slavish crouching and fear in the face of the eternal, universal strength.

Cruel, arbitrary power is the essential attribute of God for such a period. And the attitude becomes reflected thruout all of man's activities. The racial crouch before the Eternal becomes a social crouch before the leader. The doings of the leader become objects of fear and worship in the same way as nature became because of her inexplicable mightiness. God is only a synthesis of the feared and worshipped forms of nature and the feared and worshipped types of man. A vast religious pall descends over society in consequence, and its activities, become conventionalized, they assume the character of finalities, they become 'last words'. And it is to continue these that education is established by society. It is these conventions, or notions, or ideals, or customs, whether in art, politics, literature, or industry, that education attempts to pass down in a coating of reverence that shall be proof against the spirit of questioning. As in savage

times the ways of the grandfathers are taught to the children, in Grecian times the works of Homer, the laws of Solon and of Lycurgus, are impressed upon the children; and likewise in Rome the magister and the rhetor teach that which was done and thought of old.

Yet must we occidentals be thankful that our societies have not suffered the stagnation which has attended upon a similar policy more thoroly pursued in the nations of the Orient. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the habit we drill into the new generation is one of reverence for tradition, acquiescence in the forms that were and are, jealousy to conserve them or, at least, to resist as far as possible all attempts at their modification, to shear so-called radicalism of its so-called impossibilities, or to slacken its pace, to do anything in fine which will put off a change. This is a heritage of the days of limited control, of the days of confinement within a repressing understanding of nature. But the spectre of invincible material forces has been laid by the perception that man can direct them as he chooses. In consequence, it behooves us no longer to hold the accomplishments of one generation, or of a number of generations, in reverence. We must no longer inculcate a spirit that accepts with thankfulness, and holds not back the receiving hand with distrust. What one generation has achieved is but an earnest of infinite achievements to come. Let us not teach alone the perfection of past works; let us teach the wonder of possible works. Let us arouse in our young the mood of interrogation of what is and has been, and at the same time, the complementary mood of forward-looking thot. Let us show wherein the past has failed, and thus set up for solution the problem of the future. Let us not always praise those who have done what they wished to do. Let us turn the regard of the young to those who have struggled to accomplish that which is still to do, and thus urge them to take up the work that is still unfinished.

That is the beginning and the end of wisdom—the realization of the need of

continuous struggle. But this need can never be sensed in all its invigorating force unless the human spirit questions at every step, refuses to avail itself of the anchorage of present satisfaction. We must learn as a racial habit discontent with what is as we catch a glimpse of a better that shall be. Oh that we might hang in the skies as a perpetual monitor, a huge question mark flaming with the brilliancy of the sun! Then should our path to progress be an illumined and inspiring way, with all the minions of gloom and error parched to death because exposed to the rays of that searching luminance.

With this as an aim, education becomes creative. It partakes of the *élan vital*, the vital impulse of Bergson, the unconscious, yet visible, radicalism of nature. *Teachers* who thrill to this spirit, this attitude of mind, become real *pedagogs*, leaders by the hand into paths that the boy and girl only too willingly avoid, and that they are taught by the unconscious conspiracy of conservative outlook all about them to regard with suspicion. So we find our youngsters in our literature classes glibly enumerating the qualities that make Dickens or Shakspeare, or this one or that one, a poet, a writer of all times, the embodiment of ideas and ideals that are universal, or, as the literary critic would have it, permanent. And this in the face of our knowledge that the past of the race as ordered into politics is but an infinitesimal fraction of the eternity that lies expansive and vast in the so-called gloom of the future. What is it to be 'permanent'? Can anything be permanent? Not even the thunderings of the seas, nor the snow-capped ridges that shoulder out the heavens. Even they change, even they move into newer forms and meanings.

Of course, this is a spirit, not a method that I have been expounding; it is a facet of the personality, a hue of the soul. It does not lend itself readily to practical illustration for imitation. But this will serve as an example: In our American history classes, it is the universal practise to study the Constitution of the United

States as a document that is the 'last word' on the question of government. Its makers are denoted by the various terms that signify all-wise, all-far-seeing, etc, etc. The whole impression left on the minds of the pupils is one that hallows the Constitution as it has forever been hallowed in the gilded vaporings of Fourth of July orators. To question the all-wisdom of the Fathers, to get at the temporary, transitory psychology and conditions which produced the document so as to understand that at best it can be but partially applicable, seems to be sacrilege. Again, no teacher dares these days to understand Lincoln as he really was—the politician in him, for instance, the methods common to all men in office under the pressure of bickerings and dickerings. Lincoln has become one of those worshipped types before whom we bend in reverence, and woe to him bold enough to doubt that Lincoln was guiltless of human faults. The figure of Lincoln has become encrusted with prejudices, and we call them reverence. What freedom of outlook we should be giving our boys and girls if we once told them that Lincoln traded appointments for senatorial votes in favor of the Nebraska bill of admission! This would not destroy anything but a false myth. The true Lincoln of the far-reaching ideals, the upstanding, kindly Lincoln, would not suffer. And besides we should learn then to listen to an attack on our prejudices without becoming impatient

and intolerant. It would, moreover, make it possible to believe that other Lincolns will come to birth, that, perhaps, that very agitator we condemn, that rebel among us, or that leader cordially hated is just that sort of man.

The questioning spirit, then, should be the one to inculcate; not indiscriminate acceptance of what has come down to us, whether man, institution or belief. Just as unconsciously, yet perceptibly, nature constantly breaks thru present forms into newer ones—the process we call evolution—so shall society be always considering how to grow out of its present self into another, not how to transmit an expressed resemblance of itself to the new generations. Couple this with forward-looking idealism, with a conscious aim toward which to push—a quality nature lacks—and what barrier shall there be to man's progress along all lines of human endeavor? But this should be the spirit of education, besides merely animating a few leaders altogether outside of the sphere of school systems. For the school is to become the laboratory where the new generation shall be trying out its strength and aspirations. It shall be no longer what it has been too long, a huge flattery of the past, a submission to the inertia of minds accustomed to nothing but to what they have known, and jealous to conserve the whole baggage intact. It will be experiment, adventure; not routine, not a following. It will be not a memory, but a hope.

LABOR UNIONS AND THE SCHOOLS*

JOHN C KENNEDY

Alderman Twenty-Seventh Ward, Chicago

THERE ARE many people who do not realize that organized labor was really responsible for the establishment of the public school system in the United States.

Before we had the public school sys-

tem the children of the working class had to go to what they called charity schools. It was very much as if your children had to go to soup houses to get their meals to-day. It was looked upon as charity when the children of the working class got what little education they did get in the period from 1820 to 1850 in New York City, Philadelphia, and in

* From Address before the Chicago Federation of Labor.

many other eastern cities, as well as in a few western cities, and the workers rightfully resented it.

They claimed that an understanding of the conditions about them was something that every child was entitled to, and that inasmuch as education is necessarily the foundation of any republic, and is necessary to the perpetuation of any republic, it was the duty of this republic to guarantee to every child an adequate education.

* * *

At that time, when that argument was made everywhere by the labor men of that day, they were told: 'That is going to destroy the family, it is going to destroy the home, it is going to undermine the state', and your big business men of that day said, 'You are taking our money away from us', and all that sort of thing. They raised all sorts of arguments against the public schools; but, due to the persistence of the labor forces of that day the victory was won, and the system was established.

But ever since that time there has been a perpetual warfare between the forces of progress and the forces of reaction, the forces of big business. The forces of big business have tried to control the system which they tried to prevent being established in the first place. They have ever since tried to conduct it and use it for their own purposes. They have tried to change it from a system of education for the development of the child, to a system to prepare a raw material for their factories and their shops and their mines and their stores. They have wanted to make the public school system of the United States a sort of an annex to big business, a sort of preparatory course to their industrial course. They have wanted to give only such courses and to give such preparation and such training to the children as would be useful to these business concerns in turning out a maximum amount of goods.

Now, that fight is not won yet. It has been going on for a long time, and therefore we should realize that after all it is going to depend on the forces of labor

to say whether the children of the workers are going to get a real education in our public schools or whether they are going to be turned out as a machine made product ready for these business institutions and fitted only to work and be a part of the machinery of industry, instead of being human beings with a life of their own and a right to live that life. That is the fight in which organized labor is engaged at this time. It is a continuation of the original fight.

* * *

The present business system, which dominates to such a large extent the life of this city and this country, cannot continue to exist as it is if our children are well educated and broadly educated. If they get a thorough grounding in science, in economics, in sociology, if they get a taste of real life, they cannot be made servile wage earners; they won't stand for it, and the business interests realize that. Therefore, those who are now exploiting out of the life of the community millions of dollars, those who want to hold labor in subjection, these also want to get at and control the public school system, because they know they cannot hold onto what they have unless they also get control of the public schools. They realize that, these business interests, who are only a small minority of the people, but who are tightening their grasp and injustices upon the masses of the people; they know they cannot retain their supremacy, they cannot retain their control, unless they also control the schools where the oncoming generation is to get its instruction.

That explains why they are so eager to control the school board. It also explains why they are fighting against the organization of the teachers in the public schools. This alliance of the teachers with the Chicago Federation of Labor is a crime—a crime, don't forget that—in the eyes of the business interests; in the eyes of those who want to crush out organized labor; in the eyes of those who want to grind down labor to a bare existence. This affiliation of the teachers with the Chicago Federation

of labor is a great crime. If they had not united with their fellow workers, if they had not followed the words of Abraham Lincoln, when he said, 'The strongest tie binding people on this planet aside from the family tie, should be the tie that unites those who toil'—if

they had not followed his advice and followed his direction, perhaps they would not have looked bad in the eyes of the big business. But they have committed that crime. They recognize that their interests are identical with the interests of the rest of labor.

CHICAGO TEACHERS' FEDERATION

J L ENGDAHL

THE SCHOOL TEACHERS of Chicago are the pioneers among the school teachers of the nation. Brave and courageous, they have taken the lead. Undaunted and fearless in the face of all the terrors that the powers of plunder could bring to bear against them, they have blazed the way toward the brighter day.

They recognized that they must join the growing ranks of the labor movement. They discovered, long, long ago, that their place was in the great industrial struggle, in the great economic conflict in the interests of peace and human emancipation, and against militarism and war and the wages system.

* * *

The Chicago Teachers' Federation, like all organizations of labor, was born in battle, and grew in strength and influence as it won its way through many raging conflicts. It went thru its baptism of fire in 1895 when it forced the state legislature to pass a teachers' pension law. This was followed by an effort to secure an increase in wages. It learned:

First, that self interest for the teachers included the whole school system.

Second, that it included the welfare of all workers.

Third, that it can be promoted only by those forces which tend to promote the general betterment of social conditions.

Having learned this thoroly the teachers saw clearly that they could not compromise with the political and financial powers and accept in return such small concessions as these powers might deign to make. They clearly saw that they must refuse to compromise upon any-

thing less than the rights of the whole class to which they belonged.

* * *

With the strength of this conviction to aid them they began war against John D. Rockefeller and his attempts to control the Chicago school system, once he had closed his clutches upon the University of Chicago. Dr. William Rainey Harper, president of Rockefeller's Standard Oil University, was a member of Chicago's School board, which led to his appointment as head of "The Mayor's Educational Commission" that was going to "reform" education in Chicago. This commission prepared a bill for presentation to the state legislature, providing for many changes in the school system. The bill became known as the "Harper Bill" and was the first great cause of a universally expressed discontent at the close connection between Rockefeller's University of Chicago and the Chicago board of education.

"You needn't ask me to vote for that bill," said a member of the state legislature to a lobbyist. "I can smell kerosene all over it."

Rockefeller's hired man, Dr. Harper, was outspoken in his desire to bring the University of Chicago into closer touch with the public schools. But he made his adroit advances as though conferring a great favor upon the public school system. It was evident from the start that public opinion was not with the doctor.

The "Harper Bill" fixed the school superintendent's term at six years; provided that his salary could not be reduced

during that time; placed in the superintendent's hands full power in the appointment and dismissal of assistant superintendents, principals and teachers, and also power in the choice of text books and school materials and the planning of the course of study. This would give despotic power into the hands of one man completely protected from the consequences of his acts by the salary and tenure of office clause. Only one problem then remained to elect the right kind of a servile school superintendent. If the kerosene control back of the University of Chicago could name him, a great step would have been taken in building up the despotic power of the Standard Oil Trust. John Dee's clutches would then have closed upon the Chicago public school system and the way paved for complete control by the Rockefeller interests over the education of all the nation's children.

* * *

Both as president of the University of Chicago and as a member of the Chicago Board of education, Dr. Harper tried to poison and pervert the Chicago school system by placing the prejudiced graduates of the kerosene institution as teachers in the Chicago public schools. He even went so far as to prefer Chicago University students in place of the graduates of Chicago normal schools in picking teachers for the public schools, but Rockefeller's scheme came to nought. The "Harper Bill" was defeated in 1899. An effort to revive it in 1903 met a similar fate.

This defeat of Rockefeller's attempt to dominate the public system of the nation was directly due to the growing power of the school teachers' union. The victories the teachers have won during the last 15 years are the real reasons why they are now being persecuted by the plunderbund, which includes big national business interests that center in Chicago.

There is no cringing or cowardice among the Chicago school teachers. They learned long ago that when they went out to face the corporations they

must face them alone. Old party politicians offered to aid them but when the fight grew hot these deserted them. Reform organizations at times offered their support, then gradually grew lukewarm and finally chilled into inactivity, and no wonder. The prominent officials and members of these "reform" organizations were frequently the tax dodgers the teachers were after, and they were also the officials of the corporations the teachers were attacking.

So the teachers found their place and their support in the labor movement. The "black coated proletariat" of the universities, the college professors, hastily crawl under their desks and out of sight when one of their number is discharged for giving voice to the thots that are in his brain. Compare with him the lowly hodcarrier. If an injustice is done one day-laborer on one building under construction in Chicago, the Hodcarrier's Union of Chicago can tie up every job for a score of miles, from Evanston on the north to Gary, Indiana on the South. The Hodcarrier's Union has done and is doing and will continue to do this. Millions of dollars invested in building construction work obey the dictates of these hodcarriers. The teachers saw in the power of organized labor the support they needed. If organization could win better working conditions, a shorter work-day, increased wages for hod carriers, who had muscle power to sell, it could at least accomplish as much for the brain power the teachers had to sell.

* * *

So the teachers established their place in the labor movement, and now they are not hunting hiding places, like the professors at the state universities and colleges. They have not been intimidated by threats coming from the most powerful citadels of capitalist greed. They are out in the open, fighting, and fighting hard, for victory and humanity.

They need the support of every father and mother who has a hope and ambition for son or daughter. There should be a teachers' union in every city, town and hamlet that boasts a public school. You can help.

PROFESSIONAL AID

THE FOLLOWING quotation from an editorial in a recent issue of *The Boston Teachers' News Letter* should be of pertinent interest to the teachers of New York at the present time:

THE SUFFRAGE QUESTION

Do teachers want the vote? There is a question easier of solution—namely, Do teachers need the vote?

To this there is but one reply possible from every teacher who has worked to better the conditions of her profession. They do.

Wherever you find women who have been seeking to secure higher salaries, pension systems, better working conditions for women and children you will find suffragists. Set the daintiest anti, possessed of an adoring husband and sons, with never a wish unfulfilled, to work upon these matters and in a year, or two at the most, you have an ardent suffragist.

The fact is that the problem is no longer one of sentiment. It no longer is susceptible of argument upon the basis of right or wrong, of expediency or non-expediency. It is an economic problem and is settling itself, tho too slowly for the best good of humanity.

There is no doubt that Woman Suffrage is settling itself because of its relation to economic problems. The attempt by the New York Legislature to amend or nullify or pass laws that would put the schools of New York back where they were fifteen years ago, caused the teachers, many of whom have been but partially interested in suffrage, to form The Teachers' Branch of the Empire State Campaign of the Woman Suffrage Party with Miss Katharine D. Blake, an ardent suffragist, as president. In the struggle of the teachers to defeat legislation which they felt would be harmful to the schools, the women teachers realized as never before what a wasteful, archaic method this so-called indirect influence is. They quickly appreciated how much more dignified their position would have been as voters than as pleaders with the men who are the happy possessors of votes. Women workers everywhere are beginning to see that the ballot is a most efficient weapon in the industrial conflicts that are constantly

being waged by selfish individuals or by selfish corporate bodies. Indeed, in the light of the attempts to weaken the effectiveness of the Workmen's Compensation Act, and the strong effort to legislate in favor of the Canneries, not only the women but the majority of earnest men also, have come to believe that the enfranchisement of women is vital if we would conserve even the small measure of remedial legislation now on the statute books of the State of New York.

In the City of New York there are about 19,000 women teachers and about 2,000 men of the same profession. The men are beginning to realize what the American Federation of Labor realized three years ago, namely, that women without the vote in trades or professions who form the major part of the workers in those lines, are a positive menace to men who seek to attain the ideals of the profession. Here, then, is a common cause to work for, one which holds promise not only for those immediately affected by its outcome, but for generations to come.

That the movement toward Woman Suffrage is ever onward, is indicated in press dispatches from different parts of the world. Near at home is Canada offering equal suffrage to her women; across the sea, Queen Wilhelmina of Holland announced at the opening of Parliament, September 21, that the government of Holland would introduce a bill to eliminate the existing hindrances to the granting of suffrage to the women of Holland. And, adds the dispatch, "the announcement was greeted with applause." *Verbum sat sapienti.*

The normal school should contribute to the hygiene of the profession by conscientiously refusing to place its stamp of approval on candidates who are careless, ugly-tempered, cynical, and void of sympathy for children. The public is not in a position to protect itself against poor teachers who have once been brevetted with the school's diploma. We must stop the stream of undesirables at its source.—Hoag and Terman, in *Health Work in the Schools*.

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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.

BAD BUSINESS

WILL ANYONE rise up and declare that waste and extravagance are to be preferred to economy? Will anyone hold that bungling and blunder are better than efficiency? Certainly not—no one here will.

Must we conclude, therefore, that "business administration" is to be preferred to all other kinds? By no means!

"Business administration" sounds so fine that even when we see it result in gross injustice and maladjustment, we are at a loss to find a point of attack. The trouble lies in the ambiguity of the word "business." For campaign purposes, and in all sincerity, business administration means the management of affairs in accordance with the principle of orderly, economical, effective organization. It means putting the thieves out and keeping them out; it means closing the doors against those who make a business of looting the public thru fraudulent supplies or service. But "business administration" in the hands of "business men" too often means, in practise, the management of affairs in accordance with the principle of exploiting the workers for the purpose of producing a large profit—or "saving." It means "buying cheap and selling dear," whether applied to goods or to labor.

Business administration means at best the protection of the public against exploitation by private interests. It means at worst—that is, ordinarily—the exploitation of one part of the public for the benefit of another.

A very crude example of the application of "business" methods to the administration of the public schools—in the interests of "economy"—is furnished by the assignment of teachers in the schools of New York City. There hundreds of teachers who have been regularly licensed are appointed to regular vacancies—as "substitutes." This means that although they have qualified technically to serve at a minimum salary of \$720, and although they are doing the work required of regular teachers, they are being paid on a *per diem* basis. This is a hightoned way of mulcting some hundreds of young men and women workers out of their "holiday and vacation" pay. There are no doubt legitimate reasons for "economizing" but it is curious that economizing can be effected only at the expense of the workers. It would be considered outrageous to change the designation of some of the supplies furnished to the city by contractors, and then withhold from ten to fifteen percent of the contract price. But it is considered good business

to change the name of a teacher from "regular" to "substitute" and then withhold a handsome part of her earnings.

The same board of education is now contemplating another business venture. Teachers-in-training have been assigned to high schools, where they teach one or two classes a day, under supervision, for a merely nominal sum, and thus acquire the experience which is to qualify them to become regular teachers. Such assistants have heretofore been assigned in the ratio of one to fifteen regular teachers. Some genius in mathematics has figured out that by changing the ratio to one to ten, the city would save several thousand dollars more a year, since more classes could then be "covered" by the cheap teachers-in-training. This is the "business" principle according to which clever manufacturers fill their shops with "apprentices" and are thus able to compete handsomely with their less enterprising competitors, who employ regular men and women at regular wages to do regular work.

Let it be noted also that the same board of education is now conducting a series of very important experiments in part-time coöperative vocational training. This plan has always been under suspicion from the side of the laboring people, because it offers the opportunity to overload a given trade, thus depressing wages. If the New York City board of education conducts its own business on the principle of excessive numbers of substitutes and apprentices, the interested public may well believe it will use its schools, engaged in vocational education, to assist employers in the same nefarious practises, at the expense of the workers.

All this may "look good" to the "taxpayer." But in the long run the public will find that it is bad business—very bad business.

UNION or no Union—are the children's interests safer in the hands of lawyers, real-estate speculators and profit-mongers, or in the hands of teachers and workers?

ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRETION

THE STATE LEGISLATURE of New York enacted legislation in 1911 and in 1912, making mandatory upon the City of New York the payment of increased salaries to certain classes of teachers. The promotion of the teachers to these grades was stayed by a court order, until December, 1914. The Board of Education now requests of the Board of Estimate the necessary funds for the increased salaries of the teachers affected. The controller of the city, ever watchful of the interests of the "taxpayer," requests a legalistic ruling upon the matter, and is informed by the Corporation Counsel that the granting of the additional funds is "discretionary" with the Board of Estimate, because the City had already provided funds for educational purposes. The Board of Estimate then informs the teachers that they are not to be promoted, because it is "discretionary" with the Board, which chooses to exercise its discretion against the promotion of teachers at this time.

What is really within the discretion of the Board of Estimate is the granting of funds to the Board of Education, that the latter may not be embarrassed in carrying out the necessary work of the Department.

Let us remember that in September, 1914, J. P. Morgan, a financier, "came to the rescue of the city" by lending a hundred million dollars, at a profit of six millions—\$1,500,000 more than the usual rate. Let us, therefore, "practise economy" that our rescuers may be paid.

A CONTRAST

Genuine conservatism is the true basis for radical reforms.

DR. E. T. DEVINE, in *The Survey*.

Every bit of progress we have made is the result of revolution.

COMPTROLLER W. A. PRENDERGAST,

Before the *Teachers' League of New York*.

WHEN SHALL WE LEARN ABOUT SOCIAL FORCES?

IN "THE SURVEY" for September 4, 1915, Dr Edward T Devine considers at some length the relation of teachers to the social forces surrounding them. He calls attention to the fact that teachers are in touch with families in which exist poverty, overcrowding, under-nourishment, ignorance and incompetence; and thus, the data and also the inspiration to become active social reformers would seem to be at hand. But the teaching profession "has contributed far less than might naturally have been expected to the radically progressive measures for the improvement of living and working conditions."

Dr Devine offers a few suggestions concerning the causes of this backwardness of teachers, but does not pursue the analysis to a satisfactory conclusion. He seems to consider that the attitude of the general public in expecting among teachers no understanding of business, of legislation, of the public health, of courts and hospitals, of wages and rents and taxes and politics" has had something to do with the neglect of these matters by teachers. He does acknowledge, however, with a touch of sarcasm, that teachers show considerable comprehension of business when it comes to securing positions and pensions.

Besides being indifferent to social forces, teachers are discovered to be lacking in the intellectual grasp of the possibilities of their work.

Thus they become experts in their art, but not competent critics of the results. They conserve old types but do not create the conditions out of which new and higher types may emerge. They serve law and order, but not life and progress. They prevent deterioration but do not insure reform. They teach the elements of civics but not of justice, liberty and human brotherhood. They teach the elements of negative personal hygiene but not the ideal of positive health which must rest upon the basis of social policy and democratic control. They teach,

very incompletely it is true, the elements of individual thrift and economy, but do not lay the foundations for social economy and the conservation of public resources.

Dr Devine maintains that philosophy and pedagogy are not to be blamed for this state of affairs. Therefore, a revolution in educational theory is not the way out. "Teachers", he says, "must learn to see more than their pupils, to know more than their textbooks, to live a larger life than that of their classroom. They must claim their legitimate place among adults, as observers of all human life, as participants in all social activity."

Here we have once more but in slightly different form, the old advice that lecturers have been giving to teachers for a generation or more. Not only lecturers have been giving it; supervising officers and superintendents have also presented it, accompanied by "orders" ever since there were "systems" of education. Would it be of interest to Dr Devine to learn why those trained "in schools of philanthropy", or those who have been trained by experience in settlement work, do not enter the profession of teaching in public schools in order to attempt to work out on a large scale the social problems so commonly met in that environment?

The answer seems to be that these socially minded workers are unwilling to subject themselves to the machine experiences of the public school, or to the autocratic system of management so characteristic of systems of schools in America.

There is so much machinery in school systems that the ordinary requirements of soulless efficiency would appear to determine that machine-like personalities in all of the wheels within wheels should fit into and become dynamic parts of the system itself. At least, it would be very strange if the men and women teaching in the schools should in general be any different from the kind that are found serviceable under the conditions that exist. And it would be stranger still if the teaching force of any large city should

contain any considerable number of socially minded persons, alive to problems that lie about them on every hand, precisely as it would be worthy of marvel if the police force of a city should contain even a small number of men informed upon or interested in the relation between crime and the existence of defective human strains. The generally accepted and the more obvious of the requirements in school systems as well as in police departments has resulted in the selection of persons fairly well adjusted to their several jobs. And they have not been adjusted to the ideal requirement of comprehending or caring much about the social forces with which they work.

Now, if anyone seriously desires to see the state of affairs in the schools changed, he should not expect the change to be brought about thru the method of lecturing the teachers. Rather let him hold himself in readiness to encourage by every means in his power the portentous manifestation of the passion for freedom that is even now stirring the souls of teachers everywhere. And let him not sneer if one expression of the new spirit seems to be in the direction of increase of salary. Out of bitter experience the teacher feels the urgent need of improving the conditions under which he works. Also out of his experience he resents the tyranny and the insolence of educational autocrats. Thru this experience he begins to see the supreme need for democratic control of education in which shall be manifest in large degree the influence of the teacher himself.

Those teachers who are part of the new spirit and have helped to give it power and effectiveness have come to regard the great field where social forces play in and thru the schools and the community as one which teachers would enter naturally, developing interest and understanding as they grow in the realization of their own professional ideals. To expect a similiar outcome thru advice handed down from above indicates a dependence on the improbable.

NOTE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

REPORT OF THE Professional Improvement Committee of the Teachers' League:

As the Chicago Teachers' Federation is a body formed to improve the status of the teachers of that city, and as its past history proves it to have been an important factor in the development of one of the ideals for which the Teachers' League stands,— democracy in the schools,—it seems fitting at this time to send to the Chicago Teachers' Federation the following resolution:

"Whereas, the Chicago Board of Education has recently passed a resolution demanding that the members of the Chicago Teachers' Federation resign from that organization or suffer dismissal from the teaching corps,

"Therefore, be it resolved that the Teachers' League of New York City extends sympathy to the Chicago Teachers' Federation in its fight for American citizenship."

SPAIN AWAKENING :

WHILE A MEMBER of the Romanones Cabinet, Senor Ruiz Jimenez did not see his way to allow a teachers' congress, convinced as he was, that the Government and especially the then Minister of Public Instruction were quite equal to the task of supervising and regulating national education and of watching over the interests and the welfare of the teachers themselves. The present Government and its Minister of Public Instruction have thot otherwise, and a congress has just taken place in Madrid. The discussions were of the most practical nature. Several instances came to light where teachers received but forty-one pesetas a month while board and lodging cost sixty. They were thus reduced to the impossibility of earning their living and were obliged to request the mayors to close the schools. The Congress made a strenuous effort to free the teachers from the grip of undue State supervision and to further the *federation of their various associations.*—*America*, October 2, 1915.

PRESIDENT SCHURMAN recommended in his annual report the participation of the faculty in the business administration of Cornell University.

NOT A PROFESSION—VI SCHOOLS AND VACATIONS

IF WE LOOK upon the school as the home of childhood, the school should be open three hundred and sixty-five—or six—days a year, because healthy children should have a chance to get together every day, and to do something worth while, under suitable guidance, every day. If we look upon the school as the social or civic headquarters or meeting place of the community, the institution should be open every day of the year.

Looked at merely from the view-point of the children's needs, it must be recognized that it would be somewhat worse than stupid to do the same things in school, day in and day out. We have to take into consideration not only the ages of the children, but also the seasons of the year. Certain things can be done in summer that cannot be done in winter, and vice versa. The work can be done the whole year round, is just the work whose value is being most seriously questioned—that is, the formal work done with benches and blackboards within four walls. Certainly the traditional "book work" does not do itself so easily in the hot months. When we speak of school the whole year round, we do not, therefore, mean the distribution of the present program over four equal quarters, or the extension of the present program so as to enable the children to get more of the same.

In the cities it is especially true that children do not know what to do with themselves thruout the summer days. But it is almost as fully true in the smaller towns and in the country. There is really very little work that the children can do that it is worth while for them to do, from every point of view. And whatever value the regular program of the school may have is in large part neutralized by the drift and irregularity of the summer "vacation." Every teacher of experience knows the difference between new classes received in September and those received in February. The summer vacation is "demoralizing" in

more ways than one. If it is undesirable to coop the children up during the hot weather, let us remove the bars from the cage—and see how long we may leave them off. But the essential thing about the school is not—or at least should not be—the confinement and the mechanization of activities. It is the presence of opportunities for interesting and profitable activities, with enough guidance to insure safety and progress. These factors in a regulated life—and the life of the child must be regulated—are just as valuable during the hot part of the year as during the cold part.

In the interests of the children, therefore, we should be in favor of continuous activities in the school plant. And those children who are fortunate enough to be taken to the country or the woods or the seashore need these opportunities quite as much as those who are left behind to the parks and playgrounds and cobblestones. Indeed, the movement to provide "camps" for boys and girls during the past fifteen or twenty years, is in large measure an attempt to combine the advantages of a sensible school with those of the summer's special opportunities.

One of the gravest injuries produced by our traditional summer vacation has been the development of the idea that regular work—whether in school or in some gainful occupation—is a good thing to escape. The necessity for regular hours, for meeting engagements, for accomplishing assigned tasks, is looked upon as a penalty. Vacation time has become traditionally the happy time, the joyous time. Now one of the urgent needs of the day is to change our schools in such manner that this pernicious tradition may be quickly destroyed. It is the lot of honest men and women to work, and they must insist that the work be joyful. And whatever it is that the child must do day in and day out should be accompanied by joyful feelings. There may be some technical necessity for carrying on work that simply cannot be carried on joyfully; but there should be no excuse in the case of school work, or in the case of most of the world's work.

The school is the place for the child to learn that people have a right to be happy.

We understand well enough the origin of the American school vacation in the fact that in the early days only a few weeks of the winter could be spared for schooling; the summer time was needed for help on the farm. We also understand the origin of the business man's and the clerk's two weeks of vacation. These are primarily shoddy imitations of the perpetual vacations more or less enjoyed by parasitic classes. In so far as the stenographer has needed her two weeks for rest and recuperation they have been gradually wrested as grudging concessions from the employer. But most workingmen and workingwomen get their vacations without pay when work is slack and when funds are low, in other words, when they would rather not.

Now, if the interests of the children require the continuous opportunity to use the school, the same interests require that the teacher be not used too continuously—that is that the teacher have plenty of vacation. And this for reasons quite different from those usually advanced. It is true that conscientious teachers work very hard, and that there is an appalling percentage of nervous breakdowns among teachers. It is true that many use their vacations for rest and recuperation. But people in other lines of work exert themselves just as strenuously, and generally manage to get along with shorter vacations. We do not know whether the two weeks of the book-keeper are quite sufficient. If the worker continues at the task year in and year out with only two weeks of vacation, we do not yet know how much longer he could do it with three weeks, or how much more efficient his work would be.

The important reason for breaking into the teacher's work with something different is the danger of becoming stale. This shows itself physically in chronic fatigue. Being so tired every Friday night that you must go to the theater or a party of some kind is a bad sign. The

worker should show some signs of being tired at the end of the day, and at the end of the week. But when workers get to looking forward to the respite, the work is bound to suffer.

On the mental side, the repetition of teaching to plan, year in and year out must debase the quality of the week. In teaching, as in perhaps no other work, there is need for constant renewal of outlook and inspiration. This we do not get from the ordinary types of *recreation*, so called. We need contact with new ideas and with dynamic personalities; these are not to be found where you meet other teachers only, nor among those you see regularly during the hours out of school.

On the professional side, we need to keep in touch with what is being done in other places, in other lands. It is necessary to read pedagogical periodicals and books; but it is not enough to read pedagogical literature. It is necessary to know what is going on in the world, into which we are supposed to be introducing the children; but it is not enough to read the papers and magazines. It is necessary to know the inside of the human spirit; but it is not enough to read novels and psychologies.

To retain our freshness, our enthusiasm, our understanding of our materials—which are constantly changing—and of our professional technique, which is constantly growing—we must do more than is possible in the leisure spells between one day's work and the next. The teachers who went to the expositions in California, the thousands who attended summer courses, those who traveled nowhere in particular, and those who rusticated back home or among strangers—they all probably did more to increase the efficiency of next year's work than they could have done in any other way. It is not necessary to take courses every year, and it is not healthy to rest every year. It is probably true that very many teachers take courses only in anticipation of approaching examinations, or in hopes of receiving recognition toward promotion. But I have been happy to find at

summer schools many teachers who took courses "just for fun"—than which no better reason can be found for doing anything. Just to the extent that our studies are accelerated by the hope of immediate reward, we lack of being professional teachers. But to the extent that we do utilize our summers for making of ourselves larger men and women we are making ourselves professional workers.

Those who have given little thought to the subject cannot see why, even for professional improvement, the teacher should require more time than does the engineer or the physician. The answer is that the practitioner in any profession who becomes something more than a grind must have—and does have—a very liberal allowance of time for his advancement in professional proficiency. The danger in every profession is that we shall continue to prescribe in accordance with the rules which we learned before we got our diplomas. It is not necessary for the physician to take his vacation at fixed intervals, and the only thing that makes the vacation periodic for the teacher is the organization of the school's work. There is one other feature about the teacher's work that differentiates it from that of other professions in this connection, and that is the constant intercourse with immature minds. The physician deals with all sorts of people, and with adults as well as with children. The teacher's intercourse is for the most part restricted to a rather narrow range of types, even among the children.

It is for the reason that the profession requires skill, and enthusiasm and adaptability and continuous readjustment, as well as current contact with people and ideas and events, that the teacher must be given the margin of time—which you may call vacation if you like—for professional improvement.

The teacher, in ordinarily good health, who must use the vacation regularly for resting up is probably in the wrong department. It is quite possible to organize school work in such a way that with all the devotion and enthusiasm the

work can be done without wearing the human machine out too quickly. But even under the best circumstances, the demand for a vacation must be made, purely on professional grounds.

If it is said that workers in other fields do not get such long vacations, the answer is that they would all be better off if they did—and society can already afford to give all workers vacations of reasonable length—"with pay." It is part of our business, as teachers, to develop standards of living that will help to elevate the general standards. And the hold upon a certain amount of leisure must not be relinquished: we owe it to the other workers to show that such leisure is worth while—socially and economically, as well as personally—and to show them how to use it.

SCHOOLS AS POLLING PLACES

NOW THAT THE use of school buildings as polling places for general and primary elections has been tried in a number of towns in various parts of the country, without serious injury to the morals or prosperity of the communities, New York City is ready to experiment on a small scale. Three of the five hundred buildings are to be used this year, for the first time, as tho they really belonged to the citizens. And elections are to be carried on, in three districts, as tho they were public functions, and not merely pretexts for renting space in some barber or tailor shop. The educational, the social and the economic advantages of using the school as the polling place, and of using the school principal as the polling clerk, are set forth so simply and convincingly in Edward J. Ward's monograph on the subject (United States Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1915, No. 13) that we may hope to see the most conservative communities adopt the simple and democratic plan, before very long.

ARE we today training children to live tomorrow under conditions that disappeared forever yesterday?

THE LAY BOARD

A Board of Education of twelve to fifteen, composed of citizens from all walks of life—merchants, clerks, lawyers, blacksmiths and men of no particular occupation—would constitute an average city board of education. These divide up into committees on course of study, teachers, text books and apparatus, janitors and sanitation, promotions and graduation, kindergarten, elementary schools, etc. To the public they seem to be very busy and to do their work reasonably well, and for the reason that the whole matter of standards of work in public education is as yet so new that the public does not know whether or not the board of education is doing what it should. What they do may be very bad for the schools, but the public has as yet little means of judging the value of what the board does. Educational malpractice is as yet hard for the layman to recognize.

The case may be made clearer if we imagine the same board to have been elected, not to manage the schools now, but to manage a municipal hospital, and then have them divide up into committees and attempt to manage the hospital in the same way they now do the schools. The committee on course of study would be replaced by one on medical treatments, the committee on teachers by one on doctors and nurses, the committee on text books and apparatus by one on drugs and surgical instruments, the committee on janitors and sanitation by one on nurses and sanitary work, the committee on promotion and graduation by one on operative cases, the committee on kindergartens by one on

maternity ward, and the committee on elementary schools by one on children's diseases. Now assume that these committees and the board as a whole attempted to exercise the same degree of control over the details of the management of the hospital that boards of education now too often do over the schools, giving directions to the superintendent, nurses and doctors as they now do to the superintendent of schools, the principals and the teachers, and we can easily imagine the resulting chaos. Yet the mismanagement which would take place in the case of a hospital would be no greater than often takes place to-day in the management of some of our city school systems. In the case of the hospital the results are visible, and easily brot within the comprehension of the people; in the case of a school system the results are more concealed, and not so easy to bring within the understanding of the electorates. Yet a good city superintendent of schools makes about as thoro preparation for his work as does a physician or surgeon, and is about as competent in his line as the doctor is in his.—*Ellwood P. Cubberly*, in "Desirable Reorganizations in American Education," *School and Society*, September 18, 1915.

KEEPING JOHN AND MARY IN SCHOOL LONGER

STATES WHICH have recently adopted laws granting pensions to dependent mothers are Wyoming, Oklahoma and Nevada. This type of legislation is important in facilitating the enforcement of compulsory education and child-labor laws.