

The American Teacher

Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy

Vol. IV. No. 10.

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Bonds



HYPHENATE the inside of your School with
what goes on Outside

HYPHENATE words with the Thots in
Children's Minds

HYPHENATE their Thots with the Problems
they can Understand

HYPHENATE their Understanding with the
Experience of the Race

HYPHENATE their Experience with Lofty
Ideals

HYPHENATE their Ideals with Practical
Effectiveness

Let the Work of the School be the Tie that
Binds.

PREPAREDNESS FOR PEACE

LOUIS HEATON PINK

Member, Board of Education, New York City

THE DEMAND of Leonard Wood and preparedists that the schools teach military training is a sad one in a peace loving democracy. The business of the school is to train men, not soldiers. The schools of the United States have not done their full duty. They are beginning to wake up to the crying need of a nation organized, efficient industrially and socially.

The wastage of young men turned out into the world with no practical equipment for earning a livelihood is our greatest national extravagance. Too many become day workers, drifters; too many gravitate to the street corner and the pool room.

The European conflict has proved that it is not numbers that count most, nor courage, nor patriotism, nor dash, nor armament, nor fortifications, but the industrial, economic and social organization of the country as a whole.

The nation is the fighting unit.

If we are to organize the nation we must begin with our young men. Trained they must be for commerce, for business, for industry, for their work. They must fit in the national life.

Five thousand men are employed in United States arsenals. If war is before us we shall need half-a-million. If we must suddenly increase our army from a handful to 2,000,000 how can we arm, clothe, provision and properly train the men? Where shall we get modern artillery and the skilled men to operate the guns? We are totally unprepared for war because we are unprepared for peace. The tremendous natural resources of the country alone has staved off the day of reckoning; national carelessness and extravagance have not yet begun to sap our vitality.

We can be so powerful economically and industrially that no nation will dare to attack us. Preparedness means that we must fight preventable disease; diminish our frightful fire losses; make

safe our railways, our highways, and our factories; irrigate deserts; protect forests; cultivate abandoned farms; find a rational solution for the liquor problem; organize industry, banking, commerce; and above all, give our boys and girls a thorough education and prepare them for life.

It is as necessary to train the mechanic, the clerk, the salesman, as the engineer, the physician, or the lawyer. The task before America is to educate the plain people so that there shall no longer exist an aristocracy of the educated.

New York City sends annually over 30,000 children from the elementary schools into industry. Close to a million American boys and girls each year start out to find employment with only common school education. It is a crime to send a child out to battle with the world so ill-equipped for this struggle. The time will come when the state will insist on secondary education and perhaps even college training for every boy and girl. But the next practical step is the continuation school. The youth who goes out into industry must be trained for his calling. The night school is invaluable for adults but does not meet the need of young persons. Boys and girls will not toil all day and study all evening; it is against human nature. School time must come out of work time. The employer who engages young men and women under eighteen must expect to allow them from four to six hours a week for education and for training in his business. He thus secures properly trained help; society gains efficiency.

To be effective the continuation school must be compulsory. It must be controlled not alone by the educational authorities, but also by employers and labor. Business and trade education must be practical, not academic. That is why school men should not have absolute jurisdiction.

Only six states, New York, New Jer-

sey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Indiana, have definite machinery for organizing and supervising vocational schools. Connecticut, California, New Mexico and Maine have made some progress. Cincinnati has made the most notable experiment with continuation instruction. The continuation school may not give the best form of education, but for the present it is the only practical plan for training all boys and girls between fourteen and eighteen who have been obliged, for whatever reason, to go to work. But it is cheap, and the state can afford it. The cost per child is but a third as much as in the elementary school, and is less than one-fifth that of the high school. The students earn while learning, and their families are not impoverished. The employer loses in working hours but is

amply compensated by increased efficiency. Society is better, healthier, stronger. And the nation is supplied with trained men and women.

Our large cities stagger under heavy debts, and cannot afford compulsory education for all under eighteen. It is doubtful if the individual states would bear the entire burden. The nation must pay a fair share of the cost of business and industrial training.

"To be prepared for war is one of the most efficient means of preserving peace," said Washington. Equally true is it that to be prepared for peace is one of the most effectual means of preparing for war.

Make America the most efficient workshop in the world, raise the level of intelligence, extend democracy—and whom shall we fear?

THE SUBSTITUTE

ELIAS LIEBERMAN

Bushwick High School, Brooklyn

I ENTERED the room suspiciously. It was too quiet—the dreadful calm that precedes a typhoon. I walked up to the desk as if I were a criminal coming up for sentence and said "Excuse me" to the floor, when something went wrong with my feet and I tripped.

Just then a face became apparent through the fogs of nervousness. It was a malevolent countenance made up, it seemed to me, of gum and grin. Then to my horror I heard myself talking, timidly as becomes a teacher in front of the moving spirit of mischief.

"Stop that at once, you!"

"Stop nuttin'," said the voice belonging to the face, a voice incredibly insolent and self-sufficient. "Fer who?"

Thereupon to add verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing statement, a hand belonging to the face seized an atlas and let it down full force on a curly pate in front of it. There was a frenzied howl from the victim.

"Who fer?" demanded the voice insolently. This time a moist wad of paper directed by the questioner left its imprint on the blackboard.

I felt my anger growing. I discovered I had a temper beyond my control. Hastily I sprang into the aisle, but the move was inauspicious because I must have stumbled against an obstacle. To prevent falling I had to clutch something. It was wrong, I admit, but that curly head was the only thing I could clutch between me and the floor.

I seized it madly. The head howled worse than ever. Fate has no mercy on the unfortunate.

Like a Greek chorus commenting on a tragedy, the entire class erupted in sympathy. The new orchestrations of the ultra-modern school sound like simple lyrics in comparison to the sounds they emitted. Most of the noises were in the upper register, altho thru the blatant cacophony of the whole I detected the

melody of a popular song—"Waiting for the Robert E. Lee." It took a genius to think of that tune. How it unified the whole! And how it organized the rhythm of tramping feet!

Should I say I lost my head? No, much worse. It didn't seem to have existed at all. I roamed headless through the class, and wherever I went—there was chaos.

Fortunately, you can work on the emotions only up to a certain point. When that has been past you reach Nirvana. Somehow you don't care the tenth of a shuck whether school keeps or not. You glory in your rarefied state. Nothing is important; nothing matters; a little more noise or a little less—what will it amount to a million years hence?

Suddenly I was disturbed. Nirvana was upset. During the period of bacchanalian noise it seemed so easy to be aloof and do nothing. But now—what an appalling silence. I was completely awed by the silence. Had my personality taken effect? Were those Comanches at last aware that before them stood authority, civilization, restraint? They were.

From the rear I caught sight of a mountainous form in tortoise rimmed glasses and a black string. It heaved with importance and with contempt. An insect under the microscope could not have felt more self-conscious than I did under his stare. Even the boy with the gum in his mouth felt awed because with divided attention that one seems to experience in great crises I saw him in the

shadow of the principal's white vest chewing reflectively.

"What is the meaning of this?" queried the great man, not looking at me especially, but taking me in with a sort of cosmic sweep.

"The meaning?" I asked blankly.

"Why couldn't you keep order?" he insisted, "why do you let your class act like Indians?"

"Why do I let them?" I murmured.

"Yes—and don't mock me," he thundered.

The curly headed boy snickered. Under him fate and the gum chewer were sending a lean arm and a determined hand holding a pen knife. I saw it all, but in the presence of majesty what can one do?

Perhaps the white-vested incarnation of power had given me up as a bad job. He ceased to address me. Ponderously he walked to the front of the room and faced the class.

"Aren't you boys ashamed of yourselves?"

"Yes sir" came the glib reply.

"Will you ever do it again?"

"No sir, with equal glibness.

"No—ouch!" from the curly headed boy.

"You will always obey your teacher?"

"Yes sir," in unison.

"You see it's very simple," he said, again turning to me. "What's that? You're going?"

"Sorry," I said very meekly, "but I have been offered work at addressing envelopes. It's a nice easy job and soothing to my nerves."

PENSION PROBLEMS-II

ONE OF the important problems of New York City, which must be solved in the near future, is the pension problem. At first glance the solution may seem easy, and it might if the number of pensioners remained the same. But all pension lists show a steady increase in the number to be carried by the fund. In order to meet this yearly increase in number some provision must be made

whereby the income will increase proportionately. Otherwise in the course of time the fund will become exhausted and no more retirements can be made. This is clearly shown by the experience gained thru the working out of the present law. No provision was made at the time the law was past for meeting the increasing obligation of the future, either by setting aside a certain sum of money to accumulate to meet this increasing demand,

or by providing a way for increasing the income. Altho the fund has increased to some extent with the growth of the school system and the increase in salaries paid, yet that increase has not kept step with the increasing demands made upon it. Hence, in any pension plan which is advanced, the guarding of the future integrity of the fund should be fundamental.

If the integrity of the fund is to be preserved, the cost must be carefully considered, or the experience of our present law will be repeated with possibly more disastrous results. In considering the cost one of the first questions which naturally arises is, Who is to pay? Shall it be a pension pure and simple, which the city pays? Shall the teachers contribute all that is needed for the pension, or shall both contribute, and in what proportion?

* * *

Thirteen states have state-wide laws. In five of these the pensions are provided for entirely by state funds; in three the teachers contribute the entire amount; in the others the state and teachers contribute varying amounts. The following table shows not only the amount contributed by the state and by the teachers, but also the maximum pensions paid teachers in these state-wide pension systems:

MAXIMUM PENSIONS PAID SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE THIRTEEN STATE-WIDE PENSION SYSTEMS.

- \$200—Maryland (flat rate; provided entirely by state funds).
- \$250—Maine (provided entirely by state funds).
- \$450—Wisconsin (teachers contribute according to years of service).
- \$500—Rhode Island (provided entirely by state funds).
 - Virginia (1% salary deductions).
 - California (\$1 a month salary deductions).
 - Vermont (contribution fixed by local authorities).
- \$600—Arizona (provided entirely by state funds).
- New Jersey (the teachers contribute ac-

ording to years of service; no contributions by state).

Utah (1% salary deductions; no contributions by state).

New York, *outside of New York City* (1% salary deductions).

\$750—North Dakota (no contributions by state; teachers contribute not exceeding \$40 according to years of service; counties contribute 10c per school child).

Massachusetts, *outside of Boston* (amount purchaseable by \$200 a year for 30 years, half of which is contributed by the teachers).

\$600 paid by Arizona is the highest amount of pension borne by any of the thirteen states which have pension systems.

Carnegie Foundation Report, 1914, p. 34.

Report Massachusetts Commission on Pensions, 1914, pp. 145-146.

The present New York City law provides for contributions from both the city and the teachers. Two questions naturally arise. First, what proportion of the cost should the city bear, and what proportion, the teacher? Second, how should the cost of the pension be determined?

* * *

In arriving even approximately at the cost of any pension it is necessary to know the probable length of life after retirement. The average length of life after a certain age is reached can be determined by consulting those annuity life tables which correspond to the same class of professional workers and the same conditions. Early retirements even at a comparatively low pension cost more than larger pensions given late in life. For instance, a pension of \$750 at age 50 will cost approximately \$10,714, whereas \$9,200, approximately, will pay a pension of \$1,200 a year at 70 years of age for the rest of the life expectancy. For this reason the age at retirement is a most important factor in determining the cost of the pension.

Given the age at retirement, the probable length of life, the next question is how much will it cost to pay a certain

pension over that life expectancy? This can be easily determined if a basic unit quantity is found. For instance, What will it cost to pay \$1.00 per month over any given life expectancy? From this unit amount the cost of a pension of any size may be determined. The question thus resolves itself into a problem in simple proportion.

A point which should always be borne in mind is the fact that in determining the cost of a pension the total cost must be estimated, and not the amount paid this year or next, and unless provision is made at the time of retirement for meeting the full obligation, the fund will always be in danger of either being overdrawn, or of reaching the point where the cost makes future retirements prohibitive. This is the only sure way of arriving at the cost of any annuity whether it is called pension, annuity, or insurance.

Experience gained from the present law shows that had provision been made for meeting the future cost of each pension at the time of retirement the fund would not have become exhausted and the contributions of the present teaching force would not have been used up to pay the pensions of those already retired, but would have accumulated to pay for the retirement of the teacher to whom they belonged. This principle of safeguarding the future of the fund should be basic in any new law which is advocated.

* * *

The size of the pension must be determined by what both the city and the teachers are willing to pay. It is generally granted that each should contribute one-half.

There are two ways of considering the teachers' contributions. They may be considered in the aggregate, the teachers as a whole producing their half, or, each teacher could produce her own half toward her pension, thus putting it on an individual basis. The present law shows the working out of the former principle. The teachers as a whole pro-

duce their part of the pension and the income is used to meet the present demands without providing for the future obligation toward those contributing. This is really a form of tontine insurance, which has been declared illegal in this state. Thus a new law based on this principle would be of doubtful legality.

On the other hand, if the teachers' contributions are put on an individual basis, it is comparatively easy to determine the amount needed to produce half of the required pension. Since mass contributions on a percentage basis are unstable, it would seem that the logical thing to do would be to base the pension on a definite amount given by the city for the retirement of each teacher after the same life expectancy; this amount to be augmented by the earnings of the teacher's contributions. This would always provide for the individual teacher's pension, and would not affect any other teacher's rights to a pension. Moreover, each teacher's contributions may thus belong to her, and may be returned to her in case she leaves the system before retirement.

For the sake of unity among the teachers, the minor differences on matters of detail should be overlooked, and the more fundamental facts upon which all must agree should receive attention; namely, that the pension scheme must be as safe and sound as could be demanded of any other kind of investment, and that the cost must be the determining factor in the amount of the pension to be paid.

EVERY fool believes what his teacher tells him, and calls his credulity science or morality as confidently as his father called his divine revelation.—G. B. S.

SELFISHNESS!

When the teachers demand hygienic and safe conditions for their work, it is obvious that they are selfishly concerned with their own hides. When there is an epidemic or a fire in a school, it is obvious that the teachers have neglected their duty—for it is always the children who suffer most then.

NOT A PROFESSION—VII

THE EDUCATOR'S SELF-RESPECT

FROM TIME to time occasions present themselves for Distinguished Citizens, for Editors and for Statesmen to tell us that Teaching is the Noblest of Callings, and other remarks calculated to make our vocational bosoms swell with pride. From time to time occasions present themselves for Taxpayers, for Publicists and for Officials to tell us that Teachers are a Privileged Class, that they presume too much upon their privileges and other remarks calculated to shrivel our conceit. Just now is the time for ashes and sackcloth, and for turning our faces toward the wall.

It was bad enough to chase the cheap-bad enough to get the children to copy letters to be used in this or that campaign. It was bad enough to adopt resolutions in small meetings and then publish them in the names of large associations. It was bad enough to bargain stump speeches in exchange for legislative votes. In all these things—and in others no more creditable—we teachers could claim that we were protecting our interests. We could even claim that we were protecting the interests of the schools, or of the children. We could claim that we had no recourse but to the methods of Tammany and the Philadelphia Ring.

But today we are disgraced.

In New York City the public schools employ some twenty thousand teachers—enough to constitute a town of respectable size. In New York the Board of Education, or certain members thereof, in a spasm of righteous zeal, undertook to wrest from the superintendents certain parts of the administration of education that rightly belongs to the educational experts. And a vast horde of the teachers, instead of standing firmly for the professional control of the schools, permitted themselves to be divided by a personal issue—permitted themselves to "take sides" as between the president of the board and the city superintendent. It may be admitted that the superinten-

dent has not made himself too well liked. It may be admitted that the educational machinery was not being adapted to the needs of the times as rapidly as it should have been. It may be admitted that there were many cases of injustice to individual teachers. But the fact remains that teachers were willing to trade the principal of professional control of the schools for personal favors, or for personal spite, or for the hope of general reforms.

In this same city, where discontent with the schools ought to be a normal symptom of advancing standards and ideals, this discontent had been cultivated and manipulated in a conflict for personal or group aggrandizement. And the teachers lent themselves to this procedure as offering an opportunity for gaining minor and special advantages. When the conflict became one between the fiscal officers of the city and the board of education, the teachers allowed themselves to become partisans in the conflict, in the narrowest political sense. When the accelerated discontent was used as an occasion for presenting to the city a new plan of organization—the so-called Gary plan—the teachers not only permitted themselves to be used as pawns in the contest of the politicians—they even went so far as to reject the proposals without a hearing. They asked first of all to be let alone. They took no interest in the proposals at first, except as sleepers disturbed by an intruding sound! Then they refused to consider the plan as an educational problem, but permitted themselves to be led by the politicians who insisted upon discussing it as a financial problem.

The teachers, confronted with an opportunity to express themselves on the fundamental questions of school aims and school organization, permitted themselves to yield to the calculating appeals to their prejudices—the plan will save the city money, and perhaps you can then get a salary increase; or, the plan was originated by an outsider, from a small town, and can be of no value to a great

city like New York. We permitted ourselves to be led by the nose until it was almost impossible for us to know just where we did stand. We listened solemnly to the attacks and recriminations of the "City Hall Crowd," and the "Park Avenue Crowd." We asked each other "are you for Wirt, or are you for Ettinger?" We did not ask each other—or ourselves—"Are you for the children, or are you for your pocket?" We did not ask each other "Are you for better education, or are you for a softer job?" We asked each other instead, "Are you for the Controller or are you for the President?" In other words, we let the Controller and the President formulate our problems for us, instead of framing the question ourselves.

When the agitation for the foreign plan and the counter-agitation for the plan of a favorite son of the city approached the level of educational criticism, we permitted the authorities to determine for us what we were to believe. We permitted the loudest newspapers to serve for us as witnesses, jury and judge. We did not ask the agitators "What does your plan enable us to do for the children?" We asked instead, "Where shall the children hang their coats?" We did not ask of the agitators, "What does your plan do to advance my professional responsibility?" We asked instead, "What would we do on a rainy day?" We did not ask the agitators, "How does your plan promote the socialization of the children's emotions?" We asked instead, "What time shall I have to eat my lunch?"

In so far as we have resisted change because we preferred to remain undisturbed, we are not worthy to be considered members of any profession.

In so far as we have resisted change because the change was proposed from the outside, we are unworthy of a place in any profession.

In so far as we have permitted our judgments of proposed changes to be formed for us by our officers and our authorities, we are too immature to be classed in a profession.

In so far as we have allowed ourselves to confuse professional problems with personalities, with political conflicts, with questions of financial expediency, we have failed to act professionally.

So long as the teachers of this city, or of any important city, continue to meet educational issues in this manner, we can make no claim upon the public for treatment worthy of a body of professional workers. Until we have sufficient self-respect to take into our own hands the framing and the testing of educational issues, instead of leaving these tasks to those who would exploit both us and the public, let us speak very softly of the Noblest of Professions. And as we go forth to cultivate this very essential Self-Respect, let us begin with ourselves.

EXPANSION POLICY IN EDUCATION

NEW LEGISLATION in Illinois and Idaho require that high school education be provided for all pupils by the local communities, or that tuition for such education be paid from the local funds, for attendance in some neighboring high school.

In Massachusetts there is created by law a department of university extension, to be under the control of the board of education. The head of this department is to be appointed by the board of education, with the approval of the governor and council, and is subject at any time to be removed by the board. This department is authorized to cooperate with institutions of learning in university extension and correspondence courses; to establish and conduct, where advisable, such courses for residents of the State; and to supervise extension and correspondence courses supported wholly or in part by the State.

A New York City teacher recently retired has said that his nervous breakdown was due 5 per cent to overwork and 95 per cent to disgust with the educational system.

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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.

QUADRENNIAL

LOOKING BACKWARD over the fourth
year of the life of THE AMERICAN
TEACHER, the realization grows that this
has been the most troublous one for
teachers—and the most hopeful one of
all the four, for teachers, as well as for
the existence of the paper itself.

Everywhere in the great centers of
economic power in our country, New
York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland,

the accidental representatives of that
power have moved against the teachers
more threateningly than ever before. In
Chicago and Cleveland the occasion has
been the "menace" of the teachers' union.
In Cleveland the teachers have lost large-
ly thru lack of organization. In Chi-
cago they have won thru effective alli-
ance with the labor unions, and by the
skillful presentation of the teachers' civic
work in showing up the tax dodgers, who
were of course good representatives of
the economic power.

In Philadelphia and in New York self-
satisfied officialdom has punished the
free speech of teachers, and in both situ-
ations the victors have not been able to
discuss the outcome with comfort. A
few more victories like those, and the
allies of the economic power are done.

In the home city of New York THE
AMERICAN TEACHER has been in close
touch with the movement of the eco-
nomic power to curtail its expenses.
Many things have been done and are to
be done with business conceptions of
civic duty in the back of administrative
minds. The movement to standardize
the business of education at times has
seemed to imply the reduction of salaries,
but never the recognition of services of
uncommon value. The interest in an in-
genious system of class adjustment,
called the Gary System, has been great-
est on account of the apparent possi-
bility of money economy, and least on ac-
count of an element of social value.

It has seemed to the money power,
for that is the real source of the inspira-
tion of the New York Board of Esti-
mate, and of the Board of Education as
well when it is not entangled in its own
devices and logic, that since the teach-
ers are not working in the two summer
months they might as well be working
for the city for nothing. Hence, the
movement to compel the teachers of New
York to work eleven months and later
for twelve months appeared to promise
a saving of some \$100,000 a year. That
it might also mean the waste of some
millions in potential human energy was

not shown on the face of the standardization indicator.

The Board of Estimate of New York has won, and a chastened Board of Education must get along with a few millions less than it can effectively. On account of many years of neglect to deal openly and frankly with the Board of Estimate the Board of Education must submit, for appeal to the public would be useless, especially when money is scarce. But the Board of Education may pull itself out of the hole by increasing the burden of classes for each teacher now in the service, by not appointing any teachers to the regular staff, by making more extensive use of substitute teachers at the wages of day laborers, and by dishonestly filling up the time of "teachers-in-training" to the limit of the daily schedule of regular teachers. All of this we now hear seriously proposed. The public may not be interested in what happens to a thousand or more substitute teachers whose implied contract with the city for appointment is to be broken, but the public ought to care what happens to its children who may be taught in large numbers by yet unskilled teachers-in-training.

The troubles of the year are willingly endured by the cheerful staff of *THE AMERICAN TEACHER*, for, as goes the motto of the Sunflower State, *Ad Astra per Aspera*—to the Stars thru Difficulties—there are thousands of our fellow teachers who can never be aroused to the fact that they are a vital part of society and have real social rights, until they have been hit on the head by a band of anti-social ruffians.

Furthermore, all this is nuts and other rich food for *THE AMERICAN TEACHER*. We have never felt more hopeful, and we have never been able to point out more opportunely an immediate professional need, to which our Circulation Manager alludes on the last page of this issue, the urgent need of *organization*.

If your nerves are ill from disgust, let *THE AMERICAN TEACHER* be your doctor.

OFFICIAL SCABBING

IN THE October number of *THE AMERICAN TEACHER* we called attention to the "businesslike" efforts of the public officials in our metropolis to "economize" in the administration of public schools. We pointed out especially the suggestion that the proportion of "teachers-in-training" be increased by some fifty per cent. Since then the amount of money available for school purposes during the year 1916 has been fixed, and the efforts at "economy" are becoming frantic; now it is proposed to increase the assignment of work to all teachers, and to raise the amount of service required of the "teachers-in-training" to that required of regular teachers receiving from two to eight times the salary. In the language of our current industrial unrest, it is proposed to carry on the education of children by employing apprentices, at apprentice pay, to do the work of journeymen.

Let us note that this is precisely the critical point in all our agitation about "child labor" and about "placement investigation" and about "apprenticeship rules." No one seriously believes that doing useful work is injurious to children; but we do not wish to have children exploited, either by putting them on tasks that wear them down to the level of machines, or by making them compete with their parents for the jobs of the mills and shops. But the public, thru its schools, would let the immature worker acquire an unskilled routine, instead of a skilled profession, while he is lowering the level of pay for the whole class of workers. The social workers, the "educators," the "prominent citizens" all protest against the placement of children in jobs that for any reason militate against the further development of the young worker. But the public, thru its schools, would put young workers into the schoolrooms under conditions that interfere very decidedly with the further development of the worker. Investigators and specialists of all kinds warn the schools, as these undertake more and more to supply vocational training, not

to overload any calling and thus reduce the level of pay and opportunity. It is generally agreed among those who have given the matter thought that there is need for great care in vocational work, to avoid this very danger. But the public, thru its schools, would flood the market with half-baked teachers and thus not only debase the quality of the children's education, but also the quality of its citizens' level of living.

No one believes that the "public" really cares to do any of these things. But the affairs of the public are administered by men who suffer from the defects of their very virtues. They have had some "business" experience, from which they have learned to avoid certain kinds of wastes; and that is well. But they have also learned to measure the whole world in terms of costs and profits; and that is decidedly bad. The typical business man seems to have learned only how to save at the expense of other human beings, to accumulate, to appropriate; but he has not learned anything of positive production. As a result he bungles miserably with alarming frequency when he comes to the administration of public matters. The public is not interested in taking money from one pocket and putting it into another; it is not interested in paying its workers so little, for example, that it will then be obliged to care for them in the hospitals and almshouses. It is not interested in getting the children to do work cheap, in order that it may then subsidize the parents. To the business man whatever comes out of one pocket represents an opportunity for profit; to the public there is no wealth—and no profit—except as a result of well directed effort. A given administration may make a creditable showing thru various "economies"—but sooner or later the public that seems to be benefitted by this kind of saving has to pay, and to pay dearly. Merchandising has somewhat confused our minds; but it is still true that the public has no profit in the loss or suffering of its members; altho some may gain at the expense of others.

RELIGION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

THE SUGGESTION that the flexible type of school organization commonly spoken of as the "Gary Plan" lends itself to the coöperation of the school with outside institutions and agencies, including the churches, has aroused a stormy discussion that threatens to obscure the fundamental issues. In a communication printed in this number of *THE AMERICAN TEACHER* the writer states the problem (as to the place of religious instruction in the school, not as to the merits of the Gary plan) in terms of child welfare, and that should be an acceptable basis for the discussion. Our correspondent takes it for granted that religion means denominationalism—for which he can hardly be blamed, since the professional exponents of "religion" are constantly doing this very thing. When he states that it is our duty to teach the child *every aspect of culture necessary to his manifold self-development*, he would no doubt recognize that *religion* is a very important aspect of mankind's culture. But the revelancy of religion should not force us to tolerate denominationalism in the public school.

The difficulty really lies in the too common confusion of our doxies with essential orthodoxy. When we shall have raised up a body of men and women who are able to deal with religious questions as problems of life and adjustment, rather than as problems of sect and creed, we shall agree that the public school is the place for religious instruction.

We may find a helpful analogy in the history of science instruction in the public schools. So long as the exponents of religion were merely partisans of denomination, science and theology were irreconcilable; and the opposition to science instruction came from those who could not separate doctrine and hypothesis—and such opposition is not yet dead. Sooner or later the public schools will teach religion—but they should never further "creed consciousness" or denominationalism in any way.

THE LABOR FORUM

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION of New York City did a "good job" when, in accordance with its policy on the wider use of the school house, it permitted the Labor Forum to use the finest People's School Building in the United States for Sunday night lectures.

The Labor Forum meets every Sunday night. Frank P. Walsh, Mayor Lunn of Schenectady, and Secretary of Labor Wilson have already spoken. Some of the most prominent labor leaders, socialists and radicals in the country are coming.

Two Sunday nights are devoted to "Preparedness." Helen Keller speaks on "Workingwomen's Night." Andrew Furuseth, President of the Seamen's Union, will speak on the Seamen's Bill, December 26th.

One of the spirited features of the Forum meeting is the singing of Folk and Labor Songs by everybody. Questions and discussion from the audience take the place of academic and dry-bone features, often found in the present day lecture system, and lend zest and freedom of expression. At the Labor Forum an important factor of the new education is in process of development.

WHO CARES?

THE SANITARY CODE of New York City prohibits the employment of tuberculous teachers in public, private or parochial schools, except with the written permission of the Department of Health. A letter calling attention to this regulation and asking for certain information as to the health of the teachers was sent to 537 principals of schools in May. Only 76 (about 15%) considered it worth while to reply. If you asked the teachers themselves, you would probably get no better returns, since they would be afraid of losing their jobs. Here is another problem in the reconciliation of individual interest with public welfare.

Have you renewed your subscription? If not, DO IT NOW!

THE OUTLOOK IN REAL ESTATE

A GREAT MANY teachers have lost some or all of their small savings thru over-confidence in the security of the market in town lots and "acreage" tracts. It is not the purpose of these few paragraphs to throw salt on wounds by pointing out errors, or to offer for consideration some safer investment. But it is worth our while to remember the spirit and purpose that forms a seemingly essential part of the real estate business, and to take warning!

The purpose of that business, of course, is to make money for those on the inside. The money made comes from the outsiders, the general public that moves into town and by its presence makes land increasingly expensive, and therefore productive of profit. Public welfare and public improvements are regarded primarily from the standpoint of good business; and money is saved wherever expedient, also as good business. All of this you knew before.

But you may not have heard that within the past few months the leading real estate association of New York City has sought to interest the teachers' organizations of the metropolis in the idea of forcing the owners of personal property to declare their possessions to the tax man. The ground upon which the teachers are asked to cooperate in a public spirited way, of course, is that the salaries of teachers which the Comptroller of the City has threatened to have reduced, will be safe if the teachers go in and help the real estate association in its fight.

The situation thus created by the proposal of the real estate men is susceptible of certain interpretations, and one out of which strange events may develop. In the first place, it is certain that the discovery of large quantities of personal property the owners of which have been evading taxation thereon was made many years ago by public-spirited persons interested in the equalization of the burdens of government. And it was not made by the real estate association,

which, it is safe to say, is not interested in the matter on the score of the public welfare.

The tax dodgers who are now being pursued by the real estate men represent one group of citizens bent on saving what they have, even if they have to lie to do it, and the real estate men represent another group, which does not seem to overlap the first for the present at least. Groups of business men often fight one another. But why they do it no one but the persons involved, or their lawyers, really know. Certainly teachers, unless they are real estate teachers, are not in a position to know the exact extent of financial throttling, or personal spite, or public spirit, in the minds of the contenders.

Another turn of the kaleidoscope will show us what everybody has seen already, and that is the deadness of all real estate investments, except such as are located in places available for munitions factories. Thousands of real estate men are in daily fear of losing everything they have. But if they can shift the burden of taxation away from unoccupied land whither it began drifting before the war came to unsettle us all, and throw it upon the unwonted shoulders of the rich possessors of securities, land may be released from the bondage of a "tight" market. Profits can never be obtained from those who will not buy. In order to put breath into the land market a fight must be made. And to fight ostensibly for the public welfare is always safe. Besides, it is not impossible that such by-products as a better professional name and a fat public office may turn up in the pickings.

The latest advances made to the shy profession of teaching by the pursuers of land values has a far more serious significance than had their erstwhile invitations to us to put our money on their wheel of fortune. They come to us now with the smile of respect shining in their faces. We have been up against powerful political forces in the State Legislature in the fight for the protection of our

salaries, and we have beaten them back. We have been in a fight with legislators before, and now we have a name that means power. That is why we are respected by some and feared by others. In short, the profession of teaching is beginning to be recognized as a political force by politicians who are willing to meet it on a "practical" basis.

It is of still further significance that many leaders among the teachers appear friendly to the real estate advances. The sentiment seems to be that we cannot be too powerful, because legislators may turn against us next year; and we shall need all the support we can get. It has been suggested that even more extended combinations than this one with the land men should be made by the teachers, against the time when still stronger enemies than we have met shall attack our professional welfare.

It is important to note that neither real estate men nor the teachers are spending much thought on the matter of a fair distribution of the financial burden of government—nor on other features of public welfare. Therefore, let us as teachers have a care. The public has begun already to notice our oversight. Furthermore, let us give full consideration to the danger there is of discrediting our professional ideals when we agree to make a political bargain with a group of individuals that has never expressed any sympathy for our professional purpose, and of course has no use for it, but can make use of our organized votes or influence.

A PENNY POSTAL FOR YOUR THOTS

1. *What is the difference between a boss and a supervisor?*
2. *Are you now working under the one or the other?*
3. *Is supervision in your school nominal or real.*
4. *Do you act as your own supervisor thru reports turned in at the office?*
5. *Have you some ideas or ideals regarding supervision? If so, notify THE AMERICAN TEACHER.*

PROFESSIONAL WORK OF TEACHERS

THERE is no better way of judging the condition of a school system, whether reactionary, static or progressive, than by making an inquiry into the voluntary contributions the teachers are making to the cause of education and their efforts at self-improvement. In some places the teachers' professional activities are restricted to securing teachers' rights through legislation and agitation. This may be due to agitators who are never so happy as when they are making trouble, or to oppressive methods of a school administration that attempts to rule by fiat. No great staff of teachers will long be driven. Arbitrary treatment will quickly bring them together in a united resistance, and their professional spirit will manifest itself in partisan strife for their interests. Certain of these interests are fundamental and teachers will be supported by the public in contending for them, such as: Appointment on civil service rules, recognition of merit in promotion to higher positions, reasonable compensation for services, tenure of office that will not permit of arbitrary dismissal, security against old age by suitable provisions upon retirement, and last, but not least, some voice in the educational side of school administration.

When through some system of organization yet to be devised the teachers themselves have a larger share in examinations and ratings, courses of study and teaching apparatus, educational investigation and research, and even the regulations and restrictions of teachers themselves, there will not be the reaction and retrogression that some fear, for the integrity and ability of teachers are such that they will place the standards of teaching as high as those of other learned professions.

This new freedom will soon be achieved by teachers when it is certain that they would meet it, not by a union of those who seek to serve self-interest, but by the dominance of the high-minded, disinterested, truly patriotic and profes-

sional ideals that undoubtedly animate the majority of teachers. The political agitator in the ranks is not advancing the higher interests of the profession so much as is the constructive worker who is contributing to the science of education and the art of teaching. It is a matter of congratulation, therefore, that there is no turmoil among our teachers. On the other hand, they are increasingly active and coöperative in strictly educational investigation.

The motive for giving teachers added opportunities to participate in the responsibilities of school administration is not only to give recognition to the spirit of democracy that must eventually prevail to a greater degree in so great an American institution as our school system. Even more, it is the motive, through added responsibilities, to develop the higher, constructive, creative powers of teachers themselves and to avail ourselves of their united wisdom in improving our schools in every possible way. Interest in the material or financial advancement of their group is a higher incentive for teachers than mere self-interest in perquisites and preferment, but interest in the spiritual influence and intellectual progress of their group and interest in the efficiency and improvement of their work are the most worthy incentives of all.—From *The Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools*, Boston.

IN education we are strangely blind to proper aims and methods. Any education is bad which leads to the formation of habits of idleness, carelessness, failure, instead of habits of industry, thoroughness, and success. Any religious or social institution is bad which leads to habits of pious make-believe, insincerity, slavish regard for authority, and disregarded for evidence, instead of habits of sincerity, open-mindedness and independence.—PROFESSOR EDWIN G. CONKLIN, in *Heredity and Environment in the Development of Man*.

Every new subscription means added strength to the movement for democracy.

A COMMUNICATION

WHEN PREACHERS fall out confusion reigns.

Some theologians assure us that the "Gary System" is a "priceless opportunity" for the churches; and others, that the System is a short cut to Sectarianism and "creed consciousness." It may be that these hopes and fears are closely related. While apparently in hostile camps, these gentlemen may in reality be devoted to the same flag.

We are not concerned with the Wirt Plan *per se*, nor with the theologians. But we are vitally concerned with these two questions:

1. Is religious instruction a matter of major importance to the child, or one of minor importance?

2. If religious instruction is of major importance, should it be given where all other instruction of great value to child welfare are given, or in detached denominational centers?

To me the consideration of these two questions is all-important. The logic of approval, or of disapproval, of religious education rests ultimately upon adequate answers to both questions. It may be argued that while the school develops the mind, the church is supposed to influence the soul. I do not know of any educator of significance in the whole wide world who would draw sharp distinctions between the soul and the mind. Surely no one is so foolish as to believe that an institution which plans a manifold culture of the mind is neglecting the "soul." If it be indeed so, then alas and alack!—we shall have to go marching on without our souls.

As a matter of verifiable fact, the soul of the twentieth century child is infinitely more spiritual and more sensitive to life's higher values than was the child of antecedent ages, in which schooling was not yet the popular fashion. Where the mind is expanded, there the soul is expanded too.

We are generally agreed that the common public school is the hope of our social democracy. No contemporaneous

institution evokes so much heartfelt interest and genuine gratitude from our citizenry (religious and irreligious) as does the American Public School. Our fondest dreams of a rehabilitated society are symbolized in our loyalty to the Public School. Is it stating the case too strongly to assert that so well-beloved an institution of child welfare is the natural center of *all* the best interests of the young? And can we escape the inference that religious education, if one of these best interests, should be incorporated into the public school curriculum? Can we evade the correlative inference that religious education if not one of these best interests of child welfare, should not be included in *any* curriculum intended for youngsters? What is not good enough or vital enough for our children in the public school is certainly not worthy of our approval *outside* of the public school.

Since the irresistible tendency of social progress in all enlightened countries has been away from religious education and decidedly towards an all-inclusive secular education, our inevitable conclusion is part and parcel of the verdict of history. Religious denominational education is not a suitable discipline for children, either in the public school or out of it. We must firmly resist any invasion of the Public School prerogative by agents of denominationalism.

It is the sacred duty of our public school system to teach the child every aspect of culture necessary to his manifold self-development. If religious instruction is pertinent, let it be honorably and frankly included in the curriculum. If it is irrelevant, why allow the school system to encourage schemes of denominationalism?

S.

We need your co-operation. Get another subscriber.

When in doubt, pay for her subscription yourself.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

An Appeal to Thotful Teachers

FELLOW TEACHERS:

These are the days that try your souls.

You are disheartened.

A hundred forebodings mar your joy in life.

Large Classes distract you.

Small salary discourages you.

Meddling Super-Vision humiliates you.

The longer school day already hangs like an ominous shadow athwart your dreams of cultured leisure.

A diminished summer vacation challenges your security.

On every side innovations unconsidered by you, untested by your judgment, stand ready to be imposed upon you at the touch of an official button.

And there you are, idle, impotent, ludicrous, the laughing stock of your superiors.

YOU count for nothing.

You fret and fume and utter imprecations dark against the Evil One.

And all to no purpose!

You simply do not count.

Do you know why?

Because you have not ORGANIZED your protests and your plans.

In this age of publicity, there is only one effective way of focusing attention upon your problems: Public Discussion.

The best medium for public discussion today is the Representative Magazine.

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Show your good sense by subscribing and making this Journal your organ of Protest and Prophecy.

Preparedness is the watchword of the day.

WAKE UP!

SAM SCHMALHAUSEN,

Circulation Manager.

THE AMERICAN TEACHER,
129 Lafayette Street, New York.

