

^{the} American Teacher

Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy

OFFICIAL ORGAN, THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

VOL. V. No. 8

NEW YORK, OCTOBER, 1916

50 CENTS A YEAR

The Workers

What is this that Life has done to us
if it makes us measure men's deserts

By their Money
By their Knowledge
By their Brains

Must men beg if others control the
Wealth?

Must they submit if the Schools have
no Message for them?

Must they starve if better Brains live
elsewhere?

Are they Men who Serve,
Or Parasites that Absorb?



What They Say

Editors, **THE AMERICAN TEACHER**:

Your movement appeals to me as fundamental. It is the only rock upon which the teacher can build self-respect, happiness and power. I have for several years entertained in a general way the idea suggested by your work and until I received your paper had thought seriously of publishing a magazine similar in purpose to **THE AMERICAN TEACHER**. A mental survey of the public school teachers economic and professional condition in this country is pathetic. The weakness, timidity and lack of solidarity among teachers as a class is to say the least a monumental waste in this wonderful century in which wealth, power and democracy accumulate. Something to fight for, to suffer for, the teachers need, if they are to gain the respect that is their inheritance. Your movement, to me, is in keeping with the spirit of the age, and must win.

A H FORMAN.

Mars, Penna.

Editors, **THE AMERICAN TEACHER**:

Your welcome letter received and read with joy; for I am more than glad there is a Teachers' Union so strong. I would hardly have believed there were so many teachers in New York so gifted in heart and in head as to see the light and so bravely act by it. Heartiest good wishes.

RUFUS W WEEKS.

New York.

Editors, **THE AMERICAN TEACHER**:

You are surely to be congratulated on **THE AMERICAN TEACHER**. We think it is great stuff.

CHAS B STILLMAN.

Chicago.

Editors, **THE AMERICAN TEACHER**:

I have carefully read the September issue of **THE AMERICAN TEACHER**, and I wish to congratulate you upon the excellent material

which it contains, and on the general get-up. It is a very inspiring issue.

ROY C CLAFLIN.

Washington, D. C.

No body of workmen seeks more earnestly to improve their workmanship than do the teachers of the public schools. No other profession spends as much time in self-improvement as the teaching profession. Few school officers and patrons know how much of a teacher's time outside of school hours is given over to effort to make herself a better teacher. While teaching school she is always attending school. In order to be a good teacher she must ever be a good student. If she grows stale as a student, she grows stale as a teacher. In order that the streams of knowledge may be kept fresh and refreshing for her pupils, she must ever be drinking at the fountains.—F G BLAIR, State Superintendent, Illinois.

History is the record of past achievements. Are these to mark the limits of human progress, or are they to serve as starting points for new adventures?

NOTICE

BEGINNING with the new year, the subscription price of **THE AMERICAN TEACHER** will be increased to one dollar. It has become impossible to manufacture the magazine cheaply enough to warrant a continuance of the low rate at which we started. Present subscribers will of course have copies sent to them to complete the period for which subscription has been paid. Renewals and new subscriptions received before the last day of December will be accepted at the old rate—fifty cents a year. We advise you to subscribe now and take advantage of the old rate.

THE AMERICAN TEACHER,
(Incorporated)

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The American Teacher

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OFFICIAL ORGAN, THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

VOL. V. No. 8 NEW YORK, OCTOBER, 1916 50 CENTS A YEAR

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PUBLIC*

ELLA FLAGG YOUNG

I SOMETIMES wonder whether it is possible to have the schools and the management of them on an upward trend, and to keep at that for years. I am not so sure that political parties have much to do with it, whether the schools go up or whether they go up and down like that. It depends upon the people.

Six years and a half ago, when I began to hear a good deal, in very close relation to the Board of Education as to what was thought of the teachers and a federation, I was of the opinion that there wasn't any very positive feeling one way or the other; and then, in a couple of years, there was a change in the political regime and the Federation was in the ascendancy. And then, without any change in that regime, the affairs turned the other way. It was simply the people that happened to be in power. They had the same Mayor thru it.

I can't help feeling that there is a tremendous piece of work to be done by us or to be done by affairs in educating us, so that we know how not to become cheap politicians and yet at the same time to be a part of the community, the city, the town in which we live; so that

we are understood to be workers who are of value and our work is understood—not simply that we are teaching children to add and subtract and multiply and divide and spell and write a little and so on, but that we actually are *workers* in that community. And we do not know much about that. If none of the Chicago Federation teachers were here, I should not hesitate to say that I believe the leaders in that Federation know more about that than any other group of educational people in this country. Since they are here, I cannot say it; but I have said, and I stated it at a large meeting in the Legislature of Illinois, that I thought the Federation had developed a knowledge of the principles underlying the government of this country such as teachers had never had before, and I have not changed my mind, altho that was four years ago.

There is a long, hard, rough way before us. It is useless to think that by joining any organization, by getting into a league with several organizations, that we are now going to be able to move along steadily. We have taught the children and we say in the school room that nothing is worth having that is not worth working for. Now, the thing for us to do is to take that home to ourselves and stand together, as I said this morning. The greatest trouble there is comes from

*From Address delivered at Mass Meeting called by the American Federation of Teachers during N E A Convention, New York, July 6, 1916.

those people who curry favor and who will say anything in order to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.

Just make up your minds as to what the right thing to do is and then stand by it. The women have had a hard time learning that. It has been in teaching as it is in Suffrage, a long time. It will be so for a long time. Every young woman does not believe in suffrage, because, to say that she does not believe makes the gentleman think that she probably is a woman of good sense; and it is the same way with regard to belonging to federa-

tions. I think there is quite a temptation for teachers to feel that by saying they do not belong to federations, they will get from the Board all that they want. That covers the whole ground and that is one great cause of our difficulty. But if you know why you belong to an organization and why organizations are together, and what the teachers' organizations are trying to do in this world, and the stand which we are trying to take in the community, then you will be able to lead those young girls in the way which Mr. Loeb described this morning, "right into the federation."

FREEDOM, IGNORANCE AND POVERTY*

IDA L M FURSMAN

President Chicago Teachers' Federation

HOW COMES it that the Chicago teachers are in what appears to be the lead in this movement of affiliating the work of teachers with the work of other people who do things that are worth while in the world?

Some time ago, I happened to find myself in Switzerland. That is quite a long way from where we are tonight, but it is surprising how similar the conditions are. I was there on this occasion, especially to study the schools of Switzerland, with a view to seeing what they had done in the way of providing for industrial education. I went up to Geneva from Paris and I started the very next morning in the schools. I was very much pleased and exceedingly surprised to see how far ahead of us they were in their industrial education. And when I exclaimed about it, they said to me: "Oh, this is nothing. We have done a few things. But we have done nothing to compare with what they have done in Fribourg. In Fribourg they have suf-

fered for the cause of industrial education, for the cause of teaching manual work to the children." I went on to other of the larger Swiss cities, and finally I got to the little city of Fribourg, and there I found, indeed, something of the sacrifices that those people had made, in order that the children, that the boys and girls, might be put in a position to earn a better living. They were sadly in need of a chance to earn a better living.

As I listened to the tales of how people who had very little of this world's goods had given comparatively large amounts and started in a private way to demonstrate what could be done and how these boys and girls could be fitted to earn more money, if they only had the right kind of training, I was very deeply impressed with the fact we all know—that if we would accomplish anything we must be willing to make sacrifices.

There was something else, tho, that impressed me every day that I was in Fribourg. It was in the fall of the year. The days were short and the windows of my room at the hotel were right above a cobblestone street. Early in the morning, long before the break of day, while

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it was still black night, I heard passing under my windows the ceaseless tread, as it seemed to me, of countless numbers of wooden shoes. I never can convey to you the impression made upon me by the sound of those wooden shoes, as the workers of Fribourg started in the black night to do their day's task for which they collected the beggarly wage that you and I know was theirs.

Now, those conditions I saw all over Europe, and I came back to America firmly convinced in my own mind that if we loved our land we would never allow those conditions to come here that are so well entrenched in that old land. That was the beginning perhaps of my sympathy, my deep sympathy, with the problems of the working man, the working woman, and the working boy and girl.

From the outside, as you look at the problem in Chicago, and if you listen to some of the people who talk to you, you hear that the Chicago teacher wants to grab something for herself. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Chicago teachers are banded together, not to work for material substance for themselves, but to work for the great cause of truth and justice and decency for all people, including working people. It is very true that if you and I work for that, we must begin with our own problem. You know perfectly well that you cannot go out and settle the affairs of your neighbors if you are not able to settle your own affairs. The Chicago teachers, some years ago, saw very plainly that the two things that were very hard to meet in this world today and caused great trouble to everybody, were widespread ignorance and poverty. The ignorance that I speak of is not the ignorance that teachers generally speak about. It is not the ignorance that children have of grammar or arithmetic or higher mathematics or Greek or Latin roots. It is not that kind of ignorance. It is the kind of ignorance of which teachers themselves are guilty. Many teachers who know these things of which

I speak and know them well, thoroughly well, if you like, seemed to be absolutely ignorant of the world in which they live. They were ignorant of the conditions under which money was appropriated for the schools. They were ignorant of how their own school system compared with other school systems.

In that very matter of having enough or not enough money, they found out upon investigation, for example, that their own large and splendid city, the second city in the United States, was thirty-fourth in what it spent per capita for education. They found, on examining the conditions of education in their own state, that down in the mining districts one young teacher would be entrusted with the care of 70 children; and those 70 children were speaking seven different languages. And they found that for such a teacher they were unable to secure a minimum wage law that would entitle her to three hundred dollars a year. They found, on a comparison of the wages of teachers with the wages of unskilled labor, that the unskilled laborer had the advantage over the teacher.

They concluded that things would never be bettered in the schools until people decided that the schools were worth paying more money into. If you think a thing is really worth while, you are willing to pay your money for it. In Chicago we have learned that we must put our hands in our own pockets; we must be willing to pay our own money for this cause of organization that is so dear to us; we must be willing to go down and agitate for larger sums of money to be appropriated for the education of the children, in order that teachers of a high order may be employed, in order that buildings may be sanitary, that they may be put up in the right way and kept in the right condition; in order that all of these things may be done and in order that a teacher who has given a large share of her life, a number of years to the public good, may have at least some little thing be-

tween her and starvation, when that teaching period is ended. When the teachers began to talk that way, they found that if they were going to give themselves and have other people give to this cause, which they saw now as a big and splendid cause, they must begin at once to educate the public.

One of the things they found out immediately was that the taxing laws of the State were not being lived up to. They found that the five public service corporations had franchise rights and privileges in the streets of Chicago worth \$200,000,000 on which they paid not a dollar of taxes.

Those teachers, without a vote and almost unorganized, just the beginning of their organization, set out to compel those big corporations to pay somewhat near their just share of taxes into the state treasury. Wonderful to relate, they were successful, and it was from that source that the nine millions of dollars mentioned here this morning have been turned into the public treasury during the last fifteen years as a result of the teachers' work. In that act, they earned the everlasting enmity of those five big corporations and of the men who control them.

Now, if I should stop right there, you would know why the big business interests of Chicago and the Middle West have fought the Chicago Teachers' Federation. That is a sufficient answer. But even that was not enough. While the teachers were engaged in this suit to compel the corporations to pay, the Board of Education reduced the pay of the teachers in the middle of the year. They took one week off the school year at the beginning and another week off at the end, and they took our pay for all the single holidays; and then to make it even worse, they reduced the pay of all the experienced teachers \$7.50 a month. Then the very last straw was that they did not reduce that pay until February, but they dated back the cut to January, so that I myself, and every experienced teacher in Chicago, when she received

her February check, received it minus \$15 of what she expected. Fifteen dollars out of your monthly check, without any warning, is no joke; and the teachers did not think it was a joke.

Some of the teachers refused to sign the payrolls; some signed under protest; some signed that they had received partial payment. In every one of those small ways we showed our indignation at the action of the Board. It was just as Mrs. Young said this morning. The school management committee and the other committees of the honorable members of the honorable Board of Education folded their arms and smiled and did nothing.

But the teachers did not smile. They sat up and took notice and went and consulted a lawyer.

We said to him, "Now, have we a contract with the Board of Education or have we not?" He began to examine the law and he finally said, "I shouldn't be surprised if you have, and we will go into the courts and find out." So we did go into the courts, and the courts decided that we had a contract and they decided that the Board of Education would have to pay back to us all the money that it had illegally withheld from us.

When the present president of the Board of Education was discussing a few months ago the amount he would like to reduce our pay and how it was absolutely necessary that he should, some kind individual, familiar with the history of the last twenty years in the Chicago School Board, told him that he could not legally reduce the teacher's salary, because the board had done it once and the teachers had recovered damages. I was there at that meeting and the restlessness that Mr. Jacob Loeb evidenced this morning was as nothing to what he showed that evening. It was on that occasion that he paced back and forth and declared that he would fix it so that they could hire and fire teachers and he would see whether teachers were under contract and could not be dis-

missed at any time. It was at that meeting that Mr Jacob M Loeb asked if the teachers had actually brought suit against their employers, the Board of Education, adding that if his employees brought suit against him he would dismiss them.

The tax suit, the back-salary suit and similar activities of the teachers have not met the approval of all the members of the Board of Education. We try to be just as good as we can be, but the worst of it is that for a long time in Chicago we had among us some great educational leaders and they started us to thinking not only about these things mentioned in the beginning, the Greek and Latin roots and the higher mathematics, but they started us looking out upon the world in which we lived; to seeing things in the world in which we lived and putting two and two together and coming to conclusions of our own. And when some of these great educational leaders were taken from us by these very powers that cut our salaries and did all these other things to us, when they were taken from us, we already had the habit and we still kept on thinking a little and coming to a few conclusions of our own. And they never have been able to break us of the habit.

Now, it is a very dangerous habit. I am here as an example of the awful effect of ever having an idea of your own. I would advise the people who are sitting here never to attempt anything of that kind, because if you do, you will be sure to suffer for it one way or another. That is really our high crime and misdemeanor. We not only think of things but we go out and tell them. We tell about these people who do not pay their taxes. We tell about these conditions in the schools that need looking after. We told about the poor teacher who did not have anything to live on after she had spent years and years of service in the schools; and we told it so effectively that after a time we had a pension system established and that has made some people very much aggrieved. At first

they seemed to be rather pleased with it. They thought it would be a good place to push off teachers that they did not want. But it did not seem to work that way exactly. And now that we have accumulated a reserve fund of \$1,012,000, they just can't stand it to see that fund in the control of the teachers, and most of them women teachers.

Most of the men in Chicago are ambitious. Some of them wish to be successful business men. Others wish to be successful politicians. Now, even less than a million dollars would go quite a long way towards helping out those ambitions. Even the interest on a million dollars would go some distance towards helping them out. So, in one way or another, these same interests have sought to gain control of our pension board, but the fact that we had a strong organization and the fact that we have leaders who know the danger of anybody controlling that board except the teachers themselves, have so far prevented these people from gaining the controlling hand on our board.

At the present time our board consists of six members of the teaching force and three members of the Board of Education. When a few days ago the board decided that the valuable services of some of us must be dispensed with, on account of our affiliation with the organized labor movement, four of the people dispensed with were members of our Pension Board. That meant that four would go off the board immediately, and that left the board with just five—three members of the Board of Education, and two members of the teaching force. Fortunately for us, however, our term of office did not expire until midnight of the 30th day of June. On the afternoon of the 30th day of June, we had a meeting of our Pension Board. Everybody was there except one member of the Board of Education. Two of the members who are our friends were present and six teachers were present.

The Pension Law provides that any vacancies occurring during the year shall

be filled by the Pension Board. So we did all the routine business and then two of the teachers who had been dropped, resigned, and the people who were left on the board promptly filled their places with the right people. Then we elected those right people to the two offices that otherwise would have been vacant. Now, we feel that we are quite safe. Our pension is all right. We have four of our own people there and all of our own people fill the offices, and everything is all rights; and no person needs to feel at all sorry for the Chicago teachers. On the contrary, my advice to you would be, if you want things to be really interesting and exciting, if you want to get a lot of new emotions and sensations, step right into the labor movement.

I want to say, however, if you do get in, don't get in gingerly. You cannot afford to get in just a little at a time. If you want to go in for a bath or a swim, you jump right in. That is the only way to get into the labor movement.

Sunday night, when I arrived in your beautiful city, we took a little drive around with a nice slow horse and a man who would talk to us. The man talked to us as if he owned all of the wonderful and beautiful and splendid buildings in the city. He pointed them out with the pride that an old resident has. We saw the home of Mr Carnegie; we saw the homes of the Vanderbilts and the Astors and Schwab; and the home of the man from Montana who came here and built a marble palace and seldom lives in it. We saw all of those wonderful and beautiful things. It was a very delightful drive. Then I began to live in a hotel more palatial than I had ever inhabited before. Then I attended the meetings of the greatest educational body on the continent. But at noon today I walked out of a little restaurant, and on the corner I heard the playing of a band; and I went to the curb to see what it was. I stood and watched again those marching feet, like the feet that I heard in the little city of Fribourg. The shoes were not wooden

shoes, but the faces were the faces of the workers. "Sixty thousand cloak-makers out on strike!" That was one of the legends that I read on the signs that they carried; and I tell you, fellow teachers of New York—not all your beautiful buildings, nor your wonderful hotels, nor your gorgeous receptions, nor your splendid educational facilities and conventions, not all of those together impressed me as did those sixty thousand marching workers of the world. I could see in their faces what had been their struggle. I know in my own experiences in the school rooms of Chicago what are the things that the little children must submit to because of the dire things that the fathers and the mothers are experiencing.

Many a time, in a Chicago school room, a little child has been unable to bring one cent, one single penny, from home, to help pay for the little gift he was making for father or for mother; and the little head has gone down on the desk and bitter tears have come into his eyes because he could not do his little share, tho the teacher had provided most of the material and the little child has explained that the father was out of work; that he had gone to look for work on a bitter cold day, without an overcoat. And oftentimes, that man is the man who makes the overcoats other men wear.

This is the tragedy of our civilization, and until that is corrected, teachers, we dare not keep our noses always inside of a text book. Let us wake up and know the world in which we live. Let us join hands to banish from our splendid country the two foes to freedom—ignorance and poverty.

We hear much of the "morale" of armies, and of all that is done to keep it at the desired pitch. What are we doing to keep up the "morale" of our working people?—Charlotte Perkins Gilman, in the "ForeRunner" for October.

DANGEROUS TENDENCIES IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM E GRADY

Principal P S 64, Manhattan, New York.

WHILE I DO NOT know much about the situation in Chicago, other than what was told to us here this evening, I think it is well worth while for the teachers of New York City to study that situation very intently. I have no personal quarrel with educators in New York, with political administrators in New York; but it does seem to me for the past year or two, we have been drifting in a direction that may throw you on the shoals; that may eventually put you in about a similar position.

Legally, the Board of Education in New York City is neither a state department nor a city department, and yet it seems to me that the whole tendency of happenings during the past year or two has been to reduce the Board of Education, the Department of Education, to a city department. That is contrary to the general spirit of administration thruout the country, and it is in absolute contravention of the law, and of the legal decisions of the State. Those decisions and that law are founded on rock bottom common sense. Obviously, the affairs of educating our young people are affairs of such momentous consequence, that they ought not to be unstable. They ought not to be built on slight foundations. Take a city of this tremendous population, with an army of nearly a million children. It should have policies that are definite, that are clear out, that are above the clamor that may arise out of a political situation. According to the newspapers, President Churchill put it yesterday that our passing elections should have no more effect than the rumble of a distant cart upon flowers growing in a conservatory.

Now, if you were to permit the re-

duction of your educational department to a city department, in opposition to the express law of the State and the decisions of the State, you would have a condition that in my opinion would be most deplorable. The stability, the dignity, the effectiveness, that have characterized our education in the past would largely be forfeited, with no particular gain to offset the loss.

In terms of an efficiency program and with the best intentions in the world, a political organization or administration may feel convinced that a particular type of school organization, call it by any name you will, is the best type of organization to have in the city; and there may be a conscious attempt, a publicly stated attempt, to enforce that plan of organization, city wide, in spite of the fact that educational experts are not convinced that the immediate adoption of such a plan is advisable. If, however, the center of gravity lies in a body called the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, representing the city administration, rather than in a board of technical experts to whom such a work is properly delegated by law—if the center of gravity is in one place rather than in the other—you are bound to have evil results. You are bound to have policies adopted on the basis of considerations other than those that are for the best interests of the children as determined by careful experimentation. Interests of economy based on so-called efficiency plans not only affect children but affect the status of teachers.

With all due respect to a committee on the Board of Superintendents who submit a report on this longer school day and this longer school year, I want to state that in my opinion that report should not have the slightest weight unless they are quite certain that it is the

* From Address delivered at Mass Meeting called by the American Federation of Teachers during N E A Convention, New York, July 6, 1916.

THE PENSION PROBLEM

PAUL STUDENSKY

Bureau of Municipal Research, New York City

I. The Establishment of a Retirement System, the Different Objects Sought and the Conflict of Opinions*

IN THE absence of a retirement system, the average employee who approaches old age faces a difficult situation. The amount of money he has succeeded in setting aside during his working years frequently is insufficient to secure for him an income on which he can live with reasonable comfort. The older and weaker he grows, the closer he clings to his position, fearing that if he resigns or is dismissed he will be in actual want.

Difficult, too, in the absence of a retirement system, is the position of the administrators of the government. On the one hand their duty to the public is to eliminate the old employee who drags behind and retards the entire work causing loss to the community. On the other hand, they see the injustice of dismissing an old employee without any provision for his maintenance and care after he has exhausted his forces in serving the government. Altho in theory the government places the responsibility for saving and providing for old age upon the employee, the administrators frequently feel that the government is in a way responsible for the support of its employees when they are worn out. In the absence of a retirement system, the only thing the government can do for its employees is to retain them on the payroll, altho they are no longer fit to do the work. If dismissal is threatened, employees frequently exert political pressure to be retained. The government in

the absence of a retirement system may vacillate between the two alternatives, sometimes retaining the dead wood on the payroll and making the service less efficient, at other times dismissing an invalid and perhaps doing an injustice to its employee.

The only effective remedy for this condition is the establishment of a retirement system. Sometimes the employees themselves, for the sake of their own welfare, establish a retirement association supported by membership dues. As the disbursements from their fund almost invariably increase after a few years and threaten to exceed its income, the employees finally call upon the government to contribute to the fund and to save it from depletion. Thus the teachers of Boston in order to supplement their own fund, which was badly depleted, secured in 1908 the establishment of a fund supported entirely by the city; the New York and Brooklyn teachers secured in 1898 a city subsidy in the form of a 5% contribution from excise taxes; and the Buffalo teachers in 1909 procured for their fund a city contribution equal to their own.

Frequently the government itself, to promote greater efficiency, establishes a retirement system free from dues on the part of its employees. As the pension payment increase, the government finds itself compelled to request the employees to participate in the expense. Austria presents an example of such a case. The government of Austria established in 1870 a retirement system for teachers without requesting them to contribute. In 1896, however, it introduced deductions from salary amounting to 3% and

* The present article is the first of a series which will treat of the fundamental principles of the pension problem which apply generally to all branches of the public service, to teachers, police, firemen, clerks and laborers. Those who desire to read further about the pension problem are referred to Mr Lewis Meriam's Handbook on Retirement from Public Service which will appear in November.

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ON A CERTAIN INSOLENCES

Doubtless with no intention of being impertinent to constituted authority the National Education Association at its business meeting held on July 7, 1916, elected as one of the vice-presidents for the ensuing year a Chicago teacher who had been dropped from the service by the Board of Education of that city. If the people of Chicago do not know what large numbers of grade teachers of the country have learned thru the fact that Miss Frances E Harden has been and still is the President of their national organization, of her exceptional ability and clear social outlook, then Chicago needs to be shamed into protecting her own invaluable servants by the contempt of public-spirited persons throughout the country.

It may be that Chicago expects its Superintendent of Schools who gave the highest rating of "superior" to Miss Harden to stand by his judgment as well as his guns and make a fight for his own professional standing as it is in vitably involved in the case. But Shoop has had his head in the sand, and can neither see nor hear the looks and the words of professional disdain that find expression thruout the land. What is the matter with Chicago, or that part of it which cares, that it continues to employ a valueless superintendent of schools, and submits and has submitted for years to the domination of an infamous majority in the Board of Education?

A MEANS TO BREAKING SHELLS

THERE SEEMS to be but one way for teachers to learn to extend their vision beyond the pettiness of scholastic environment and the environment of picayune school administration. And that way lies in the direction of connecting our sympathies and our understanding with the great social movements that depend so little upon inspiration and guidance from us.

We submit to our readers as concrete evidence of the value of long association with the labor movement the address delivered in New York by Mrs. Ida L M Fursman, President of the Chicago Teachers Federation, and Vice-President of the American Federation of Teachers. We can neither be our brothers' keepers nor find ourselves welcome in their midst unless we work with them and try to understand them and the conditions in which they live.

It may be difficult for our readers to believe that Mrs Fursman has been dropped from service by the Board of Education of Chicago, but such is the fact. But then it may not be altogether surprising that a teacher in such close sympathy with workers should be gotten rid of in the swiftest manner possible by the unscrupulous interests that have been clutching at the throat of Chicago for a great many years. We await with hopeful anticipation the judgment of the Supreme Court of the People of Illinois on the cases of high-handed dismissals.

WHERE DO WE STAND?

"BEING fifteen hours on call, getting from twenty-six to thirty cents an hour for the time actually on the car, standing sometimes for the whole day on the platform without a meal, reaching home at midnight, day after day, Sunday and all, will bring you \$20.30 a week if you work 10 hours a day for seven days in the week. If you have an accident you are liable to have to wait three hours at noon reporting to the boss, who believes the passenger, or the inspector, and never takes the word of the motorman or the conductor. If the "shoo-flies" looking for promotion get you while you seem to be infringing a rule of the company you have no chance, for there is no appeal from the word of a superior. If he says you are wrong, then you are wrong.

"If the woman passenger seeking to take her dog on the car resents your assertion that the company does not allow dogs to be carried on the cars, you are liable to be reported as being "fresh." If she reports that you are fresh, then you must seek her out and ask her forgiveness. While seeking her you are suspended without pay. If you cannot get her forgiveness you may be laid off permanently, or you may be 'sent to school.'

"'School' means that you sit in a room studying the rule book without speaking to anyone, like a bad boy with his face to the wall. You can't read a newspaper even. The New York Railways Company has made big, healthy men write a thousand times in a book, 'I did not turn my ventilators,' 'I did not turn my ventilators,' etc. There isn't any prescribed punishment—everything depends upon the mood of the boss. Perhaps you'll be set to scrubbing the room."

Doubtless hundreds of teachers who have been put to some inconvenience during the recent carmen's strike have expressed themselves bitterly against the men, and have used the little influence they have in the community to secure to a group of municipal vampires an unyielding hold on the body politic. If there are any teachers who would listen to the story of the men, let them read what one of them, Donald Wilhelm, has written for the *Independent* of September 25. The foregoing details are taken from that story.

"The people that understand what we are in for," says Wilhelm, "are the poor people that see a motorman going up the line at six o'clock, coming down to pick 'em up at eight and still on the job at nine in the evening." Teachers know too little of the economic tragedy of the lives of corporation employees. Let us learn in all humility about the conditions under which these men exist. And then let us realize where our proper allegiance belongs, to the men whom economic necessity compels to submit to degra-

dation, or to the unscrupulous highwaymen who have the upper hand and will never yield it until the people arise in their might and throttle them.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES

THE DELAY in the opening of schools on account of the prevalence of poliomyelitis in New York City gave the teachers an unprecedented opportunity of running the biggest university in the world for a period of two weeks. The 21,000 teachers gathered in their respective districts to attend lectures and conferences that dealt with a host of topics, some relevant and interesting, others less so. Here and there the strain of continuous attendance for a period of five hours daily was mitigated by "sociable" and "entertainment" features. For the most part, however, the time was profitably spent.

The plan was organized hurriedly, and by men who had had little or no experience in taking a large view of the teacher's place in the community. There was much said about giving scope to the initiative of the teachers; but there was little evidence that this initiative was desired. And it may be said also that there was little evidence of any initiative suffering for lack of opportunity. Neither the teachers nor the higher officials of supervision and administration have yet accustomed themselves to think of educational situations as joint enterprises that demand the best thought of all concerned. We still depend upon one group to formulate plans and issue directions, and upon the other group to follow instructions. Nevertheless, the institute indicated possibilities that are well worth studying and cultivating in the future.

Those in charge of the institutes had many suggestions to offer, but little in the way of inspiration or vision. It is not likely that the rank and file of teachers could have done better in the time at their disposal; but with the experience of this year behind them they should be

able to do much better, for they have two advantages in their favor—they are in direct touch with the children and with their needs, and they are considerably younger than their official leaders, that is, they are so much farther from petrification. In so far as there is need for the counsel of superior wisdom and experience, we should select the leaders with reference to their expertness and wisdom, and not accept at random men and women whose names happen to be well known in the community—for all sort of adventitious reasons—or who happen to be available. But in so far as the institutes are to be conducted on sound pedagogical principles, provision should be made for an abundance of "self-activity" on the part of the teachers, rather than for a surfeit of passive resistance. Most important of all is the provision of experiences that tend to broaden the outlook of the teacher, that will stimulate him to take an active part in the social, economic and political movements that engage the thinking world.

Too long have the teachers of America lived lives of seclusion; too long have they permitted themselves to be led by brazen inferiors; too long have they tolerated the bombast of the politician and the arrogance of the exploiter. There is sore need for the emergence of teachers into the larger life of the community. There is sore need for the development of competent and trustworthy leadership. Teachers' Institutes, initiated by a dreadful epidemic, may yet come to be blessings in disguise. There is offered by this experience a suggestion for a permanent institution that will not merely furnish valuable aid in the solution of technical problems, but will furnish a training school for independent thought, fearless expression and effective leadership.

STANDARDS

THE SUCCESS of running the educational business of a large city, like that

of running any other business, depends upon differentiated and specialized abilities working in harmony for the good of the whole. Without harmony, much less without special ability, modern business cannot get along. When the head of a business concern seeks to fill an important vacancy, he has before him carefully worked out standards that he expects the applicants to measure up to. The demands of his business preclude the possibility of sacrificing special ability to personal or political preferment. The implacable standards are there. The measure is applied very rigorously. The successful applicant is the one that has attained the highest rank in accordance with the preconceived standard.

Just now the New York City Board of Education is confronted with the problem of filling three very important vacancies in the upper reaches of the service. One of these is that Associate City Superintendent of Schools, another is that of Director of the Bureau of Reference and Research, and the third is that of Chief Statistician in the Superintendent's office. The salaries attached to these offices are comparatively big. They range from \$4,000 for Statistician to \$6,500 for the Association. Both position and salary are attractive. No doubt they are also attracting.

If the Board of Education has formulated any standards, the 21,000 teachers and the public know nothing about them. Those who do not "know the ropes" fear to enter the race because they don't know the odds against them. Some are digging trenches that may prove to be mere blind alleys. Others, either because of principle, timidity, or inexperience, will not enter a race the rules and regulations of which are not publicly announced. A great deal is heard about applying business principles in the administration of public affairs. Progressive public officers actually try it. A Board of Education that would be progressive and fair must apply it. If you have standards apply them. If you have not, formulate them. And if you don't know how let those who do take over your tasks.

DANGEROUS TENDENCIES

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expression not merely of a political body interested in effecting certain economies to the extension of teacher service, but that it really represents the consensus of opinion of teacher organizations as well—on the assumption that the teachers of this city are of sufficient breadth of vision and sufficient honesty to advocate what they know to be best for the children submitted to their care.

A thing that happened recently illustrates a trend that is extremely dangerous. You have a bankrupt pension fund and it is alleged—I don't know on what basis—that an investigation to determine the competency of teachers has as its real motive the elimination of superannuated teachers, thereby saving a salary that is a maximum salary and thereby saving a pension that would have to be paid were that teacher retained in the system, and retired in accordance with the intent of the law. Now, those things are possibilities. I do not say that the statements I make represent an actual condition that is so flagrant that it calls for specific action; but I do feel that they represent tendencies, and I also feel that if the tendencies persist, if a Board of Education is reduced to a city department, if the control of educational policies is to be left largely in the hands of a political body, that in the long run you may well need the careful thought that you have given tonight to this Chicago situation.

THE PENSION PROBLEM

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increased them ten years later to about 4% of salary.

In many cases the employees and the government agree to establish and to support jointly a retirement system which will promote both the welfare of the employees and the efficiency of the service. For instance, in the United States among 92 state and local retirement systems for teachers, 78 systems are now supported

jointly by the teachers and by the government.

It must be noted that in this country retirement systems have been generally established without actuarial estimates of their future liabilities and the adequacy of the income provided to meet them; they have, therefore, either approached insolvency¹ or, if a clause has been provided compelling the government to cover any deficiency that might develop, they have become an increasingly heavy burden on the community².

At the establishment of a retirement system different points of view frequently clash. The employees on the one side seek to obtain greater benefits for themselves; the government, as an employer, seeks to increase the efficiency of service. The old employee approaches the end of his long career and wants immediate relief; the young employee contemplates no immediate retirement and takes little interest in what contingencies might affect him thirty or forty years hence, but is anxious that his immediate burdens shall not be increased; he even demands an increase of wages instead of a retirement system. The highly paid employees are interested in benefits proportionate to their high salaries, whereas the low paid often take the position that the government need not

assist the fortunate ones who receive higher wages and who might, therefore, take care of themselves, but should increase the proportion of its contribution to the lower paid and provide uniform benefits according to the average need. Finally different branches of the public have varying interests in the system. All shades of opinions may be represented, from that of the taxpayer, who objects to paying anything to protect the government employee from contingencies against which he himself is not protected, to that of the more broad-minded citizen who seeks in the retirement system a measure which will not only improve the quality of the public service but also prove of general utility as a type of social insurance.

An employee or a member of the government will sometimes have a broad social viewpoint, but such a point of view is frequently lacking. Too often each of the groups mentioned judges the pension system from its own narrow outlook from which only a part of the situation can be seen. Yet, each one frequently thinks that his is the best and broadest viewpoint, that he has grasped the entire problem and that all others are wrong. Thus, the conflict goes on. A successful retirement system must, therefore, be one which succeeds in reconciling the conflicting interests and at the same time is a measure of social progress and is financially sound—the latter an important prerequisite too often ignored.

Who shall bear the cost of a retirement system? In this country this question arouses a most heated discussion. On one side are the advocates of systems supported entirely by dues from the employees themselves. On the other side are those who demand that the systems should be operated entirely at the expense of the government. Between the two camps is the constantly growing number of those who favor a compromise in which the

¹ The teachers' retirement funds of New York, Boston, Providence and Newport, Rhode Island.

² The New York Police Pension Fund presents an interesting illustration of such a condition. The fund was established in 1857 and was provided with an inadequate income consisting of rewards and sale of unclaimed property. A number of laws increased the income by the application of various new revenues. One of the laws (1892) provided that any deficiency must be supplied by the Board of Estimate. The first deficiency amounting to \$197,000 appeared in 1904. During the 11 years since 1904 the annual deficiencies have rapidly increased reaching in 1915 \$1,465,800, or almost 60 per cent. of the total amount needed for the payment of pensions during that year (*Report on the Police Pension Fund of the City of New York, 1913*, and *Report on the Nine Pension Funds of the City of New York, 1916*).

cost is borne jointly by the employees and the government. In pension terminology the first system is called "wholly contributory," the second, "non-contributory" and the compromise system "partly contributory." Each of these systems will be discussed in a separate article.

WHO ASKED THE TEACHER?

A SIGNIFICANT fact that stands out in the controversy between the adherents of the two systems of school administration in New York City is the thoro neglect to utilize the first hand evidence which teachers in the Ettinger and in the Gary Schools possess. In our present system the only agent which in the last analysis applies any administrative or instructional theory is the teacher. The one agent in our educational system which has persistently been neglected in all these conjectures on the relative worth of these two plans is the teacher. Who is at present better prepared than the teacher to tell us whether the child's academic progress is enhanced or retarded in these contending systems; whether the program overtaxes the child's effort; whether suitable and profitable work can be devised for so ungraded a group of children as is gathered in the assembly? Is the shop training vitalized manual training or aimless busy work? Does departmentalized instruction in all grades make for effective teaching? Is the supervision in a Gary-ized school so lax that it encourages irregularity of attendance and truancy? These are only a few of the long series of questions that can be answered by teachers because of their intimate relation to the actual operations of one or the other of these systems. Who, more than teachers, know the human cost of these experiments and the human consequences of these theories?

P. K.

CHICAGO NOTES

The Pension Board consists of three members of the Board of Education and six members of the teaching staff, elected by the teachers. Nominations to the Board are made by primary ballots. The primary ballot for this year was completed on the fourth of October, and showed an overwhelming sentiment in favor of the representatives endorsed by the Chicago Teachers' Federation and by the Federation of Men Teachers.

The total vote cast was 6,564, an increase of 300 over the vote of last year. The highest vote, 4,888, was received by Mary M Abbe. The highest vote received by any candidate last year was 4,602. The highest vote received by a non-federation candidate this year, 2,002, was cast for William Hornbaker; last year the highest non-federation vote was 1,826.

The results of the primary canvass are as follows:

FEDERATION CANDIDATES

For a Three-Year Term—

Mary M. Abbe	4,888
Caroline Baldwin	4,453
Mary C Kingsbury	4,381
Mary A. Swett	4,509

For a Two-Year Term—

Charles B. Stillman	4,618
Catherine Stokes	4,438

For a One-Year Term—

Anna G Baer	4,723
Alice A Deering	4,569
Sue J. Reid	4,493
Wilma Rhinesmith	4,562

NON-FEDERATION CANDIDATES

For a Three-Year Term—

Josephine Hutchinson	1,966
Frank L. Morse	1,981
Katherine Ruec	1,615
Wallace H Whigan	1,835

For a Two-Year Term—

William R Hornbaker	2,002
Carrie E King	1,835

For a One-Year Term—

Olive Cooper	1,847
Isabel A Johnstone	1,788

Helen Maine 1,728
 Flora E Williams 1,744

"The result of this primary indicates that the teachers will not submit to the tyranny of the board of education," said Miss Margaret Haley, secretary of the Teachers' federation.

The principal opposition to the federation candidates was represented by activities of the Chicago Teachers' League, which the federation members regard as representing the group of teachers "in right" with the administration forces in the public schools.

The victory of the federated teachers means that they will continue in control of the \$1,000,000 pension fund. The election of Nov. 8 cannot go against them, as there are none but federation nominees.

HELP NEEDED

THE FEDERATION OF MEN TEACHERS and the FEDERATION OF WOMEN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS are engaged in a struggle to maintain teachers' rights to live, to be reasonably secure in position and salary, to secure decent working conditions, to gain for teachers their due influence in the shaping of educational policies, to raise the efficiency of the schools.

The civic bodies of the city are calling upon the Federations for expert advice and direction in the movements for a re-organization and democratization of the schools.

One of our number, Mr Franklin C Donecker, has been removed from his position, apparently because he stood up for our interests as trustee of the pension fund, a position in which we placed him by our votes. We, as a simple matter of justice, should see that his pecuniary loss, at least, is made up to him.

The fight is on. The suits are in the courts. The legislature will be in session this winter. Money is urgently needed. This is the fight of all the teachers. All can help by contributing toward the fund necessary for the work.

TEACHERS' UNION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

A. LEFKOWITZ, *Representative*

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS intended for publication in this section must be submitted to the Press Committee by chairmen or members, and must fall under one of the classifications mentioned below.

TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

Are you alive? Are your committees doing the work allotted to them? If you are, please keep the Press Committee informed.

FELLOW UNIONISTS:

Are there any teachers in your school who have not signed the protest to Mayor Thompson concerning the dismissal of the Chicago teacher? If so, get after them.

Did you as an individual, persuade at least one teacher to join the Union? If not, get after yourself. All together for the cause.

SOME PROGRESSIVE SCHOOLS

Manhattan Members

De Witt Clinton High School..	35
Manhattan Trade School.....	23
P S 188.....	23
P S 169	20

Brooklyn

Commercial High School.....	30
P S 144	25
P S 84B	24

Bronx

P S 4	41
P S 27	41

Delegates get together and see if you can't break some records in so worthy a race.

NEW YORK teachers are waking to the relation between wages and the cost of living.

OPEN FORUM

PARENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

THERE IS in New York City, a Federation of Parents Associations whose object is to urge the Board of Education to do those things that are in the interests of the children, such as providing plenty of room, small classes, sanitary surroundings, etc. The separated associations had found difficulty in dealing with the Board, on one occasion having been refused an opportunity to voice their opposition to the Gary work-study-play plan.

This shows the necessity for a closer relation between the parents and the Board of Education. As members of the Board of Education are appointed by the Mayor, it is possible that the ideas and policies of one man may dominate the Board; therefore, the Mayor's appointments should be ratified by the parents of each district, or, better still, the nominations of the members of the Board should be made originally by the parents subject to the approval of the Mayor.

This method is evidently so democratic and effective that it ought to be immediately inaugurated by an act of the legislature. Every assemblyman should be urged, by the parents' associations in his district, to bring about such a plan of representation, whereby the parents can have the right to say something about how their children are to be educated.

There should then be a close relation between the teachers and the parents, the two main forces in the educational world. As matters now stand, the teachers have no opportunity of telling the parents what is the matter with the schools, and even if they did, the parents would be almost powerless to remedy the evils. Here is where the Teachers' Union can do a big work; it must arrange joint meetings with the parents' associations (as it has already done) and work for a school board controlled by the public. Then we may look for a sensible education of the children.

L E F

THE LATEST RATING BULLETIN

ACCORDING to a certain bulletin issued by the superintendent's office, an "A" teacher must have the well modulated voice of Calve, the enunciation of Demosthenes, the eloquence of Webster, the appearance of Beau Brummel, the tact of the Vicar of Bray, the polish of Chesterton, the regularity and punctuality of Hegel, the subservience of Micauber and a steeple-chase smile.

In addition to the above qualities and accessories, she must see to it that her underfed, defective, and sub-normal children are attentive and interested when square root, moods and tenses and mensuration are taught! In addition her roll books, progress books, plan books, observation books, physical training records, etc., must be accurate, neat, detailed and as profusely illustrated as *Puck*.

Enough, say you! Alas, no. The principal must ascertain if she be a marked success in discipline and instruction; that is, if her influence on the child's character-building extends beyond the building line. How will he get the facts? Why, by hiring a psychological detective.

If, perchance, there be one member of our profession who meets all these requirements, he or she must still stand the test of loyalty and courtesy to his or her superior officers.

Having qualified in these respects does she get an "A?" Oh, no. She must perform the following miscellaneous and trivial duties: distribute pupils according to size, hearing, sight and the other senses; ribbon, rule, correct and file all classwork; spend half of her salary decorating her room.

Aw, who wants to be an "A" teacher? If you do get a copy of this circular from your principal, hire your nerve specialist and pitch in.

Whatever is traditional is safe; it is at any rate not fatal. But it is not necessarily either sane or desirable.