

The American TEACHER

FEBRUARY, 1918

DO NOT CLIP
THIS NUMBER

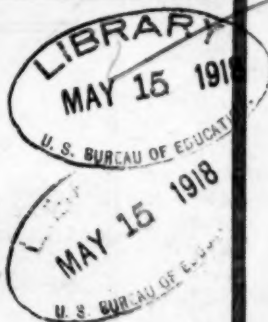
Thrift

Toward Democracy

Wanted—Teachers

Dobroye Notche!

Democracy in Education
Education for Democracy



The Teachers Conciliation Board

IT begins to look now as if the New York educational system is ready to take up with an idea which has been in operation for many years in France, in New Zealand, in Australia, and applied to the management of their great industrial undertakings, under governmental control, and also in operation in isolated spots in America itself—namely, the idea of grievances and other evidences of mal-administration being submitted for settlement to the workers themselves. To be sure, no board of control ever gives up its hold on the business it has to deal with, and never should, provided it truly represents the people. But sometimes, and indeed often, these boards grow autocratic—and dangerous, even to the people themselves; and destructive of the spirit of loyalty and coöperation of the workers. Then the work begins to get bad. Certainly it never has a chance to become good, with workers sullen and suspicious, and the board of control narrow and inefficient.

And now comes a high official of the supervising staff of the Department of Education of New York City, anxious to repair the errors of autocracy, willing to fall into line with the advancing spirit of the age. He proposes that the teachers themselves suggest a plan by which the teachers, the supervisors and the Board of Education may coöperate to solve the problems of group discipline and of coöperative administration. It

is significant that the teachers are asked to formulate this plan and to approve and adopt it after thoro discussion. Let us not waste time asking why we are asked! It is enough to realize that the first concession to an aggrieved professional proletariat has actually been made.

The first important step in this advance has now been completed. The plan is ready for submission to the Acting Superintendent of Schools, the proposer of this undertaking. It is altogether likely that he will examine it, and shortly submit it for discussion and approval or rejection to the 22,000 teachers of the city.

We may well expect that the age-long habit of workers who under oppression become cynical and suspicious will not be

thrown off in a moment. There will be opposition even to the concession that may have been demanded. There will be charges of trickery against officials who acknowledge the failure of the old system of official compulsion. There will be accusations against fellow teachers who have striven to bring this concession into practical form. Thus will the heritage of arrogance and autocracy extend its pernicious influence beyond the time of decay.

For those who understand, and see the vision of the future, there is patience—and sure knowledge of the ultimate triumph of all democratic endeavor.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Editorials	27
Toward Democracy, Benjamin Glassberg	34
Supervisors and the Schools, Abraham Lefkowitz	36
Wanted—Teachers	39
A Cooperative School	41
Teachers Coming of Age	42
What They Say	43
Religious Education, Review by H H Horne	44
Readings	45
Dobroye Notche	47
Soviets	48

The American Teacher

Vol. VII., No. 2

FEBRUARY, 1918

One Dollar a Year

Misplaced Sermons

WHY is it necessary to preach to teachers so often on the elemental decencies, on being human and sympathetic? Why must they be so frequently reminded to consider the individual child and to take thought of persons?

A body of men and women with the native interests that make for high class teaching, with professional training for high class teaching, would not need such frequent admonitions. A body of professional workers, aware of their responsibilities, and masters of their craft, would resent these preachments as impertinent.

The fact that we need these appeals to sound social and pedagogical principles, and the fact that we tolerate them so complacently ought to suggest that there is something fundamentally wrong with our business. Are there too many people in the teaching business who should not be in it? Are the conditions in the teaching business such that sound practise is too difficult of attainment?

It may be that boards of education and training school principals and supervising officials are at fault in their methods of selection and training. But we shall never have a profession until the workers take hold of both the responsibilities and the authorities of the business. Then we can do our own preaching to some purpose.

Educational Epoch

SUPERINTENDENT WILLIAM H MAXWELL is retired from active service after a long and useful career. Those who could not love him will still be able to admire him for his intelligent and vigorous struggles with the older obstacles to educational progress. He will be long remembered for his energetic assaults upon the ancient abuses connected with the appoint-

ment and promotion of teachers. It was his purpose to eliminate from the school business all taint of personal, partizan or sectarian influence. He was especially successful in establishing the principle of tested eligibility for appointment and promotion.

* * *

The schools of New York City have for many years enjoyed the advantages of a Board of Examiners for the determination of professional fitness on the part of candidates for teaching positions. It has had the advantage of using graded lists along the lines of approved civil service administration. For these Dr Maxwell has been very largely responsible.

* * *

The school administration of the city has not been altogether committed to the principle of appointment and promotion on a merit basis. Perhaps the temptation to hold in reserve particularly desirable positions was too great. Perhaps it was too difficult to formulate standards and tests for the various grades of supervisory positions that were kept exempt from the merit principle. Even Dr Maxwell himself was not always able to draw a sharp line between personal approval of a candidate and evidence of fitness. But he has rendered education a great service in bringing us to the point where we accept appointment, and promotion on merit "in principle," even tho we do not always apply the principle in practise.

* * *

The week after Dr Maxwell's retirement was decided upon by the new Board of Education, one of the newspapers, reporting a meeting of the Board, printed this paragraph:

There was an unusual number of candidates for vacant positions and for anticipated vacancies greeting the members of the board before and after the meeting.

We are not informed whether the principle of promotion on merit is to be repudiated.

Thrift

PERHAPS no single factor has done so much toward the success of the Government's thrift campaign as the organized and intelligent cooperation of the nation's teachers. Ignorant as are most people in the country, including teachers and business men, of fundamental economic principles, we were quick to sense the significance of saving as an element in national need. And we saved; and we got the children to save. Where a year earlier we accepted the merchant's doctrine that free spending up to the limits of our earning and borrowing capacity was a patriotic duty in that it "put money in circulation" or in that it "helped to give employment," we readily learned to reverse our attitude. And we have learned that the significance of saving lies not in the piles of dollars accumulated in the banks and loaned to the Government, but in the quantities of usable goods set aside for the use of our soldiers and sailors. We have learned also that the iniquity of waste is not to be measured by what the individual can afford but by what the country can spare. And this too is a reversal of the economics we have absorbed thru the newspapers and the advertisements.

The time will soon come to learn another lesson in thrift, and to transmit it to those who have the greatest need for it. This lesson also deals with the iniquity of waste. We must learn—and teach—that the waste of human resources is sinful; that it is unpatriotic to set boys and girls to work in jobs that are not worth the devotion of human beings; that the measure of waste is not the pittance the employer can afford to pay, but the amount a person needs for life. If any job does not pay a living, it is not worth doing. This is revolutionary doctrine, but we shall learn it along with the other lessons of the war. We must learn that whether or not the business man can afford to employ footmen and door openers and other ostentatious manifestations of superfluous wealth, the nation can neither afford to let people waste their time in this fashion, whatever they may be paid for it, nor can it afford to let

people go to waste; humans should be considered too precious.

We must learn that in the management of the schools, as in the management of business or of government, people must be put to doing the best work they are capable of doing; that it is iniquitous waste of human life to let people become perfunctory time servers, mechanical routineers, tired business men. The true wealth of the nation is its human beings. The true thrift of the nation means the most efficient distribution of our talents and our limitations, the most effective utilization of our capacities and enthusiasms and interests and devotions—not the accumulation of the largest bank surpluses, not the making of the largest profits, not the saving of taxes.

Let there be thrift.

The Parent's Point of View

AS NEGLECTFUL AS teachers frequently are of the point of view of the children, they are still more neglectful of the point of view of the parent. The parent whose letter to a teacher is printed in another column has a point of view which brings once more to the light the cruelty and inhumanity of educational systems that persist in holding their machine-like conceptions of duty.

It is no credit to the machine-like mentality in the schools that it happens at a particular moment of the nation's crisis to be striving to destroy Kaiserism in the world. At another time and under different auspices the same mentality would be on the side of autocracy in government just as it is all the time on the side of autocracy in education. It is not going too far to say that the support given to the cause of democracy in government by types of mind like that of the teacher and the assistant to principal described in the mother's letter is of no value. True democracy has no terrors for the innocent. That terrifying demonstration of false democracy so common now in the schools and in self-appointed groups like the now discredited American Defense Society does an immense amount of harm by disgracing one of the few countries where democracy has the chance to exist.

Along with the many other items of corrected vision which all lovers of liberties have listed to be taken up "after the war," we shall have to attend to this serious case of *strabismus* in seeing autocracy when the search is supposedly for democracy. Nay, we must attend to the matter now before it is altogether too late.

Congratulations

WORD came that Frank had resigned from his position in the school. Frank was an able fellow. He had been a good teacher. He was enthusiastic, he was energetic, he was studious, he went out and kept in touch with the world. He even thought. He was a good "disciplinarian" and he could keep records. He had all the virtues demanded by superiors, and a few others. And he had very few of the vices to which superiors object. The most serious of these was that he thought.

I felt confident that if Frank resigned it must be because he had something better in view. And I was right. Frank was giving up the school to become a button salesman. I could hardly believe it at first. It seemed so trivial. And I recalled the enthusiasm with which he could elaborate the possibilities of the school. However, he admitted the facts himself. And I congratulated him. He seemed pleased. His step was even lighter than it had been in the past. I recalled the lightness of his step on the day I met him and his wife of an hour, years ago. And I recalled the lightness of his step on that day when he announced himself at the head of the list, after some examination or other. And I recalled the lightness of his step on that day when he came back after a week's absence and announced himself the proud father of the most adorable—either daughter or son, I've forgotten. But now his step was even lighter. And I congratulated him. We chatted a few moments and passed on.

But that evening I could not sleep. I saw the substitute who would take Frank's class. I recalled all the substitutes I had ever known. Some of them were very good men or women. Some of them have proved to be

the makings of good teachers. But I recalled all the substitutes. And it suddenly came upon me that the good ones I had known were mostly of former years. I wondered whether I was getting old, and looking backward to the golden age. No, it was a fact. Too many Franks had been resigning to go into the pickle business or dentistry. Too many of the other kind had been drifting into the teaching business.

I congratulated Frank. We both understood. It was a good system to get out of. But I could not sleep the next night. I was thinking of all the children going to schools from which all the Franks had resigned. I was thinking of a nation made up of people who could not afford to keep people like Frank in their schools. I congratulated Frank. But afterwards I wondered what sort of people Frank's children would have to live with when they grew up. What kind of people will my children have to live with, when they grow up? I congratulated Frank. I cannot congratulate the children.

Teachers in Administration

THE chairman of the Salary Schedule Committee of the Kansas City Teachers Club, Miss Helen McMillan, informs us that the Board of Education and the City Superintendent have expressed interest in and intent to consider seriously two important requests submitted by the teachers. These requests have to do with the adjustment of salaries, and with the participation of teachers in the establishment of professional standards. The text of the memorial is printed elsewhere in this number.

The significant feature of the situation is the amount of thought given by the teachers to the question of standards. Miss McMillan writes,

The more we have talked among ourselves and with our supervisors about this proposed cooperative test of what is meant by different degrees of superiority under each of the thirty odd specific elements of efficiency on our rating card, the more we have become convinced that to-day's teachers ought not to be made the scapegoats of earlier and less definite tests of performance.

Teachers everywhere should, of course, be interested not only in learning whether their supervisors approve of them or not; it is of vital concern to them to know just what the criteria are according to which they are being gaged. More important is it that the teachers are demanding a voice in the determination of standards. Teachers everywhere will be interested to know the outcome of this experiment in education. It may be safely predicted that not only will the procedure which may grow out of this experiment be more satisfactory than the one now followed, but that the teachers taking part in this year of cooperative searching and inquiry will advance their professional growth much more than they could thru attendance upon any number of prescribed "courses." The best part of education comes from vital contact with real problems; this is just as true for the education of the teacher as it is for the education of self-made men who could not get along in school.

In connection with this Kansas City experiment we call attention to the work of the English "Teachers Registration Council," described on another page. This Council is analogous to a bar association or a medical association that has legal standing in the determination of standards, both technical and personal, for admission to practise. Many types of organization are possible for the accomplishment of the desired object; probably no form will be the best for all situations. The important thing is the recognition of the fact that the administration of education requires something more than an office manager and business experience.

To Dekaiserize Education

POLITICAL democracy is making tremendous strides abroad. Even in industry, where the spirit of kaiserism and Divine-Right-Baer are so strongly entrenched, the workers are asserting themselves to an unusual extent, industrial democracy being their goal. This democratic trend is manifesting itself everywhere except where it should manifest itself most—that is,

in our educational system. Democracy cannot flourish in the schools if the teacher "is too often the serf at the bottom of the feudal system without power of initiation, the victim of threats and subject at every turn to power that is *often ignorant and sometimes brutal*. Truly there will remain a fight against kaiserism when its manifestations in Europe are properly crushed."

The death struggle between kaiserism and democracy is on. The educational exponents of kaiserism are trying to crush the champions of democracy thru the inauguration of a reign of terror under the guise of "inquisitions," dismissal for "conduct unbecoming a teacher" and by transfers "for the good of the service." These punishments are not meted out upon evidence that would hold in any court of law, but upon the mere assertions or inferences of official superiors who are interested in crushing their outspoken opponents because they fear the undermining of their power and "leadership." Kaiserism answers its heroic critics by piling charge upon charge, suspension upon suspension, dismissal upon dismissal. Subserviency and sycophancy are becoming more and more prevalent. The tenure law is dead. Kaiserism, thru autocratic interpretation, has given it its death blow. Democracy is tottering. Will it fall?

The Teachers Union is now fighting the battle of democracy against the educational kaisers. Its members want to respect their superiors not because they are ordered to, but because those superiors have earned and deserve respect. To get the respect of their subordinates their acts must stand the light of day. The lips of every teacher in the system must be free to utter what his conscience dictates. Criticism must be encouraged and rewarded. Democracy is synonymous with truth and truth stands naked but unashamed! Truth and democracy flourish with publicity but autocracy and kaiserism with duplicity. School officials who cannot stand criticism of their acts are dangerous kaisers who fear democracy and hate the truth. Democracy means freedom of thought, freedom of action. The attack upon teachers for holding views is an attack upon criticism, upon democracy

by autocracy, and can have but one result if successful—intellectual subserviency! The Union is unalterably opposed to the autocratic ideal in education, and in industry as well as in government.

The Union proposes to prevent the crowning of autocracy by bringing about the triumph of democracy. Democracy can triumph thru the efforts of the teachers themselves. He who cannot rule himself is unfit to rule or to train others. The teacher must assert himself; he must aid in establishing educational democracy. He should oppose every attack upon freedom of expression. He must insist upon intelligent cooperation of teachers in school administration. Teachers, your efforts may prove abortive but failure is the key to success as the ills of democratic assertion will be cured by still stronger assertion. Today we are living thru an educational nightmare, the product of autocracy. Courageous and respectful self-assertion will usher in the new era of educational democracy and freedom. Join the army of educational democracy and help dethrone educational autocracy.

Punishment Before Trial

THE NEW YORK BOARD OF EDUCATION is not alone in the practice of suspending an employee before a trial is given. The custom is so common that it has been accepted as being proper.

In the recent "disloyalty hunt" in the educational system of New York several teachers have been suspended. In only one instance was a trial given before the order of suspension was imposed. In the case of the three teachers dismissed from DeWitt Clinton High School after a trial, the order of suspension was given on the unsupported statement of the associate superintendent in charge of high schools. This man reported to the Board of Education his informal findings concerning an involved situation in the high school, a member of the Board of Education made an emotional speech in which he said the DeWitt Clinton High School was a "hot-bed of sedition," and the Board of Education

without any investigation whatever, without even stenographic notes verifying statements of events, suspended the three teachers, incidentally branding them as disloyal.

The Teachers Union has sent a protest to the new Board of Education against the continuance of the practise of suspending teachers without pay before they have had a trial on the ground that suspension itself is a form of punishment. It was also pointed out that in the case of the three teachers the suspension created a condition of prejudice against the teachers and rendered it difficult for them to receive a fair trial owing to the state of the public mind.

The reply of the Board of Education maintains that "teachers against whom charges are brought are not suspended unless the circumstances are such as to make suspension, in the judgment of qualified officials, necessary. The Board appreciates your position and your point of view, but sees no present reason for changing the established practise."

Naturally such a reply opens other questions than the main issue itself, but these may be passed over. The suspension without pay not only punishes; it condemns as well. And it also removes from the hand of the accused an important means of defense—an income, and all before he has had a chance to meet his accusers.

The risk of injustice being done by preliminary suspension is too great for a democracy to submit to this autocratic system of prejudging. The three teachers were suspended for *disloyalty*. They were tried for *conduct unbecoming a teacher*. Between the time of the suspension and the trial the initial charge of disloyalty was abandoned. But the authorities took no trouble to disabuse the public mind of the general conviction that the teachers were traitors of some kind. Under these conditions how valuable is the "judgment of qualified officials"?

Until the indictment, "conduct unbecoming a teacher," can be made on the authority of teachers themselves it will have no important disciplinary value. That and the counter indictment, "conduct unbecoming a superintendent," are but means of calling names.

Business and Democracy

PERHAPS you have been invited to sign a loyalty pledge in the style of the following:

I,, solemnly promise:

- 1 Never to disgrace the arms of the country;
- 2 Never to forsake our comrades in the ranks;
- 3 To fight for the common welfare, alone or with others;
- 4 To leave our country and our city in a better state than I found it;
- 5 To obey the magistrates and the laws and defend them against attack;
- 6 To hold in honor the sacred principles of freedom embodied in the Constitution of the United States.

You may be interested to know that this particular pledge form was first given publicity by the Chamber of Commerce and Commercial Club of Seattle.

It is an excellent pledge form. No improvements suggest themselves. On the contrary, we feel that it is too good. It is certainly too good for its authors. For example, the people who promulgated this pledge with a glow of patriotic fervor are the same people who gave a complimentary dinner and auto ride to the crew of the Russian auxiliary cruiser "Shilka" last December. This ship had arrived in the port of Seattle loaded with a regular cargo and revolutionary doctrines. It seems that the sailors had been infected or intoxicated with the words of our own President and of other advocates of the New Freedom. The crew was a self-governing body that elected its officers; decided questions of food, wages, hours and others that are usually left to the discretion of the "business" men; and this self-governing body was responsible to the Sailors' Council of its port of record.

The Chamber of Commerce and the Commercial club gentlemen gave these syndicalistic or socialistic bolsheviki crew a complimentary dinner and auto ride, by way of inducting these poor foreigners into the ways of democracy. The Russians had not been a year without their Czar. But this was only a small part of the program of introduction to democracy. The other part consisted of hir-

ing detectives to follow the strangers about while on shore leave; the use of the local authorities to prevent the sailors visiting the meeting places of radical and progressive labor unions, including the Union of Russian Workers; the prevention of their speaking at a public meeting arranged especially for the sailors.

The business men of the community, thru their union, call upon all good citizens to obey the magistrates and the laws, to uphold the Constitution, to sacrifice for the benefit of the community. They reserve to themselves the right, as business men, or perhaps they accept the obligation, as business men, to corrupt the magistrates, to pervert the laws and to exploit the community.

Too often in the past, in Seattle and in other American cities, have the business men, whether as Chambers of Commerce, or as Merchants Associations, or even under the name of Civic Club, as business men, disgraced the arms of their country by unloading upon the people worthless munitions and guns. Too often in the past, and the not very distant past, have they forsaken their comrades—our comrades—in the ranks, by committing them to the risks of war and of industry and of transportation with inadequate protection. Members of Chambers of Commerce have not, ordinarily, the opportunity to get next to our comrades in the ranks; but they have excellent opportunities to forsake those comrades by sending them paper shoes and shoddy clothes and sick food. Too often this opportunity has been embraced—not by the unions or by the I W W, suspected of advocating sabotage—but by the business men, members of Merchants Associations.

Too often, within the memory of children, have business men fought for the common welfare by corrupting not only elected officials, but large sectors of the electorate; and the common welfare for which they fought was that common to the members of the club—the welfare arising out of the exploitation of the voters and the other people.

Too often, in the past and to this very day, have the business men urged upon us the honor and the glory of cooperating with them to improve the city or the state; but im-

provement meant only piling up fortunes for these business men at the expense of the rest of us. These improvements did indeed serve to show higher "averages" of welfare; but they served also to conceal the misery and suffering of the people.

The sacred principles of freedom embodied in the Constitution of the United States have meant to men trained for "business" chiefly the liberty to carry on business undisturbed. But the world is changing. Freedom, after the war, will have something to offer to men and women who are not in business. Freedom will call for new ideals of democracy. The new day will not tolerate the control of the people's lives by a handful of more or less benevolent, more or less honest, more or less arbitrary business men. No doubt Chambers of Commerce will have useful functions to perform. But they need not expect in the future to continue, as in the past, to control the lives of their respective communities by controlling the making and the administration of the law, and by controlling the press and the schools.

If we are to have democracy it will be when sailors and seamstresses and teachers are free to hold meetings and attend meetings, to think and to speak, without leave from the business men.

In Time of War

SIR H A L FISHER, Minister of Education in the British Cabinet, in the Educational Bill recently introduced in the House of Commons called for an extensive increase in the part that education should play in the life of the community. Among other things the bill provides for further restrictions upon the industrial employment of children during the elementary school age, and for the gradual introduction of a system of compulsory day continuation classes for adolescents. Local education authorities are empowered to give assistance to nursery schools, and in other ways to help the physical and social welfare of the children committed to their charge. Attention to physical welfare is a special and distinctive note of the bill. The duty of providing for all forms of

education is imposed upon the councils of counties and county boroughs. Exemption from school attendance between five and fourteen years of age is abolished.

England has learned from much sad experience the wisdom and the necessity of such measures. The fourth year of a great and devastating war does not prevent her from setting manfully to work to improve her educational machinery. Must we in the United States wait until similar experience forces upon us the realization of the need of bringing our educational system in line with modern conditions, or shall we instead, for once, profit from the experience of others?

Teachers and Other Servants

ALL English Civil Service employees earning up to £500 have been granted a war bonus amounting to 10 per cent of their salaries, with a minimum of £42 a year. Teachers alone have been excluded from this grant. *The London Teacher*, in calling attention to this, remarks, "Teachers do not grudge civil servants the recognition of the existing financial strain, but they cannot help feeling that they apparently are the one class in the community, engaged in useful and creative work, whose services are practically unrecognized."

The American Teacher

Democracy in Education Education for Democracy
Published monthly, except July and August, by

THE AMERICAN TEACHER COMPANY, INC.,
70 Fifth Avenue, New York City

GABRIEL R. MASONPresident
CHARLOTTE E. LEEVice-President
JAY D. LESTERTreasurer

Edited by

CORNELIA W. CLEAVELAND	HENRY R. LINVILLE
BENJAMIN GLASSBERG	J. EDWARD MAYMAN
BENJAMIN C. GRUENBERG	SAM SCHMALHAUSEN
FRANKLIN J. KELLER	ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ

At the time of expiration, a bill will be found in the copy. Subscribers are requested to give prompt notice of changes in address.

Remittances should be made in postal money-order, express order, draft, stamps or check (New York exchange).

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, ONE DOLLAR FOR THE YEAR—
FOREIGN, \$1.10.

Entered as second-class matter, February 21, 1912, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y.; under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Toward Democracy

BENJAMIN GLASSBERG

THE leaven of Democracy is slowly working its way thru our educational ideals and practise. Educational authorities in Boston, Minneapolis, Detroit and Cleveland in the last two or three years have seen the light of Democracy and have enlightened thereby the administration of the schools. The City Council of Chicago after an investigation of the city schools urged that the educational machine be tempered to some extent by a Teachers' Council. Los Angeles is the latest to acknowledge the essential truth of the dictum that those who submit to authority should have a voice in the determination of laws and policies.

In New York City, in spite of many well directed assaults upon our educational machinery, autocracy has hitherto firmly held its ground, becoming, if possible, more enamored of its right to persist unchanged in the midst of an ever increasing democracy in our political affairs.

Within the last few months a slight tendency in the opposite direction can be discerned. This is true in spite of the attack upon those who have been holding the mirror up to the educational machine and relentlessly pointing out its but too glaring faults.

During the past four years educational policies in New York City were fixed by a group of politicians in control of the Board of Estimate, relying upon the investigations of a staff, none of whom had any standing whatever in the world of education. The judgment of the city superintendent, district superintendents, principals, teachers and parents were brusquely and impudently brushed aside as worthless, when they conflicted with the judgment of the Committee on Education of the Board of Estimate. Members of the Board of Education had to subscribe to the decision of this Board of Estimate before receiving their appointment. A system that was in all essentials a fraud was foisted on the schools, deliberately and in spite of the emphatic disapproval of those who were most likely to know and were most concerned. Here, if ever, was the utter defiance of the democratic principle so clearly enunciated by President Wilson.

The November elections witnessed the complete defeat of this administration. It is significant that one of the first acts of the incoming administration was the announcement that all educational matters were to be left in the hands of the Board of Education; and that the Board of Education in consulta-

tion with superintendents, principals and teachers would work out the solutions of pressing educational problems.

Very soon after election also there appeared a pamphlet entitled "The Problem Confronting the New Board of Education of the City of New York." It is an incisive analysis of the evils of the educational machine together with a very definite program of reform. The author of this pamphlet is Arthur C Perry, Jr, who has served in the public school system of New York City for over twenty-five years as teacher, principal, and district superintendent.

A new note—the note of cooperation—is struck immediately in this pamphlet. "It is to be assumed," he says, "that it will be the ambition of the new Board of Education to give the people of the city a better public school organization than they have ever had before, and that it will seek and accept all the light which may be shed upon its problems. Every schoolman should feel the obligation to contribute. The opinions of no one individual can be rated as infallible or complete, but in the common interest the opinions of all ought to be brought forth."

Then follows a clear, bold portrayal of the causes of the widespread dissatisfaction in the schools, to be found both among teachers and the public. So frank and open a treatment of the subject by a high school official is indeed welcome and wholly desirable.

"The incoming Board of Education faces an unrest more or less vocal," he points out, "on the part of both the public and the teaching staff." It must apprehend and analyze it.

As to the unrest on the part of the teaching and supervising force, the fact must be faced that there is practically no city-wide esprit de corps.

Several factors have brought this about. Teachers have a cynical attitude as regards the administration of the schools. There is no enthusiasm for their immediate employers, the Board of Education. Their feeling is widespread that they must protect themselves against unfriendly administration, that their employers have little interest in their welfare, and that to gain ordinary consideration they are obliged to use the pressure of legislative enactment or public opinion.

He illustrates with the fact that the men principals of elementary schools have not had their salaries increased in eighteen years, altho the dollar has greatly depreciated in value, and their duties have greatly increased. A more happy illustration might have been the salary of the elementary school teachers and the munificent increase lately granted

them. He adds that such a condition would be difficult to parallel in any industrial, commercial or professional organization in the country. Yet this is the fact, and no Board of Education has voluntarily recognized it or made any serious attempt to deal with it. This is but a single instance; and not all instances, by any means, concern salaries.

Next to the question of salaries, that of promotion is regarded as of greatest importance, among the causes of unrest among teachers.

Teachers have a skeptical attitude as to recognition of professional merit. They indorse the civil-service idea in theory but have little confidence in the methods of the Board of Examiners. Eligible lists for higher positions so far vary from common knowledge as to relative merit that teachers fall back upon the rather uninspiring maxim that virtue is its own reward. The teachers see cases of faithful service and unusual ability overruled by meticulous tests. They note solemn official rulings by the Board of Examiners that a teacher is unqualified to do work that he has already been doing with official recognition and approval.

Dr Perry here expresses what undoubtedly a great many teachers feel to be the case, but realizing that in the deadening race for promotion, they will have to face this same omniscient Board, have prudently kept their opinions under guard. Occupying so strategic a position, this Board is so placed as to be practically immune from criticism on the part of those who are most capable of detecting their failings. But, of course, this is true of other elements in the system as well. The final cause of unrest is ascribed to the system of supervision:

Teachers feel, too, that much of the supervision of their work is of a hypercritical rather than of a constructive nature. They feel that in many cases originality and initiative are less desired than conformity with the particular crotchets of official superiors. It is pointless to deny intention to foster this spirit among teachers and supervisors; the fact is that there is abroad an attitude of subservience on the part of many and of disgust on the part of others because sycophancy often seems to be rewarded. In sheer pity, one sometimes wishes that a law might be enacted compelling band wagons to carry destination signs in plain sight, so that those scrambling to get aboard might avoid accident.

Our readers by this time will be saying, "Why, we know all this; we have read it all before in *THE AMERICAN TEACHER*." This is very true. But our readers should realize that the educational authorities have persistently and consistently refused to admit the essential truths of our analysis of the existing educational ills. Our efforts have been contemptuously brushed aside. If there is one sentiment universally held by the teaching

corps, it is that the one who gives expression to the ideas put forth in this pamphlet is to all intents and purposes a "marked" man, professionally speaking. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that these ideas have won the public approval of a district superintendent. There are probably others among the supervisory officials who agree with Dr Perry but are not yet prepared to say so.

Dr Perry submits a definite set of proposals that should be carried out with the hope of removing the causes of discontent.

1 The Board of Education must be financially independent of the City of New York.

2 The highest supervisory officials should be relieved as much as possible from giving attention to petty details, so that they will be free "to determine the large issues of policy and government with which alone they should concern themselves." This is to be accomplished—and here comes the revolutionary suggestion—by placing "as much authority, discretion, and initiative as possible in the hands of the teacher" and by holding him responsible for their proper exercise. He urges that the same attitude be taken toward principals also.

3 The aims and ideals of the schools should be formulated in a clear and concise manner—but in a democratic manner. This is to be done with the advice of the professional body. These aims and ideals should be carried out in every class room, but—and here again, the new note of cooperation is struck—the aims once determined, are not to be considered as final expression of human wisdom. "Every teacher and supervisor in the system ought to recognize it as a duty to offer suggestions, thru regular channels, as to modification of the code at any point at any time." There will thus be "no danger that their powers of initiative will be weakened."

4 Still another suggestion in line with educational progress is the proposal for the creation of a committee on experiments "whose function it would be to direct and evaluate educational experiments in organization, etc."

5 The necessity of enlisting the aid of public opinion is clearly recognized. There is a suggestion, therefore, that the Board of Education make known its aims and purposes to the public either by appeals thru the press or thru public meetings.

6 That the experience of the teachers can be made use of to the advantage of the schools, is very forcibly asserted. "The Board must recognize the tremendous amount of intelligence and enthusiasm lying latent in the more than twenty thousand members of the teaching and supervising staff and now

going pitifully to waste. This force must be developed, encouraged, and commandeered for the general good."

"Every teacher with an idea should get a hearing without recourse to any extra-legal organization."

"There need be no fear that greater liberty granted the teacher will lead to laxity of discipline." It is this fear, however, that has militated so powerfully against the introduction of some degree of cooperation among the various elements of our educational machine.

If the Board of Education consciously encouraged teachers to think, criticize and suggest, it would not matter so much what the machinery was whereby such criticisms and suggestions could be offered. It seems to me that by means of teachers' councils in each school, or district councils and representatives of the teachers sitting on the Board of Education, there would be a regular definite channel for such suggestions and criticisms.

To create a proper esprit de corps, Dr Perry urges the adoption of the following proposals:

(1) The Board of Superintendents must be freed from routine drudgery so that every member may become a true educational leader—and the term is used advisedly in contradistinction to educational driver.

(2) The Board of Education should create a Committee of Teachers' Interests whose function it shall

be to study the conditions surrounding the teacher's work, and to initiate legislation and regulations that shall make the teacher able to render a maximum of service to the pupils.

(3) The Board of Education should set the example of administering in a spirit of confidence in those whom it directs, and insist on this principle being followed all down the line.

(4) The Board of Education should study the methods of promotion now in vogue and endeavor to make effective the policy of the office seeking the man. The methods of examining candidates for higher licenses should be studied and improved.

(5) As to the higher supervisory positions outside the touch of the Board of Examiners the same spirit of confidence must be instilled.

The center of the whole question of promotion should be shifted; the entire supervisory force should become actively earnest in discovering talent and bringing it forward to larger fields of service; teachers should feel that merit is recognized for its own sake and not because it has been self-exploited. The result would be a powerful gain in the spirit of the teachers which would express itself in greater and more intelligent devotion to the pupils for whom, and for whom only, the school organization exists.

It is devoutly to be wished that the new Board of Education will give this program their serious consideration. Another step—and a real one—will then be taken towards Democracy in Education.

Supervisors and Schools

ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ

DeWitt Clinton High School, New York

DR ALBERT LEONARD, superintendent of New Rochelle Schools, believes that the chief function of both principal and superintendent is to transform poor teachers into good teachers and good teachers into better teachers. If this standard is correct, then the teachers of De Witt Clinton High School who were questioned as to the indispensability of principals or superintendents justly reached the conclusion that both were superfluous in our educational system.

Whatever may be the theory of supervision this is doubtless true. The average district

superintendent gets into the quicksands of routinization, strives feebly to extricate himself, gradually sinks deeper and deeper, sees the futility of it all and eventually ceases his struggles and becomes a typical supervisor. His inspirational influence on the teacher is nil since his classroom visit lasts usually a few minutes a term, sometimes but a few minutes in several years. His visits result in such illuminating remarks as "Don't you think you lack variety in drill?", "Why is that boy inattentive?", "The alignment of the third row can be improved." Some of the superintendents have never read such

books as Boris Sidis' "Philistine and Genius" or Edmond Holmes "The Tragedy of Education" or Bertrand Russell's "The Principles of Mathematics." What inspiration can one get from a superintendent who hasn't read a single educational, philosophical or political work produced within the last ten years? How few, indeed, are the superintendents who are aware of the great economic forces that are revolutionizing the world! If any of these supervisors find a teacher who tries to actualize his instruction by drawing his inspiration from the world forces around him, instead of from dead books, he promptly issues anathema against the teacher as a brainless radical or dreamer. It is no wonder then, that to the average teacher a superintendent is as welcome as the bubonic plague. Why then a superintendent?

While a sound educational system can achieve anything with a humane, inspired, liberal-minded and enlightened superintendent, still an educational system may be efficient, to a remarkable degree, if the principals carry out their mission of inspiring their teachers and helping them to develop to the utmost whatever abilities they possess. But what does our average principal do? In the high schools and to a considerable extent in the elementary schools, he shuts himself up in his office where he sees parents, bulldozes pupils, reads numerous letters, prepares his lectures, carries out the requests of his superiors; and occasionally he visits a class room to inspirationalize the teacher with such illuminating remarks as, "You have paper on the floor," "Your window is open two inches," "You do not seem to know the apperceptive mass of the child," etc. His constructive influence consists, in many cases, in handing the teacher a slip once every five months containing her rating. This rating is not based on the teacher's excellencies but rather upon her minor deficiencies as ascertained in one of the principal's short spasmodic visits at some inopportune time. Fighting and aggressive, thinking teachers suffer most from this carping criticism which has but one object, that is, to impress upon them the futility of fighting the System. Whatever inspirational advice is given is couched in

Delphic phrases. You may be incidentally reminded that a mediocre rating does not damn you eternally because if you vegetate long enough within the benign influence of your principal, slavishly carry out his ideas, and put your brains in cold storage, you may become an "A-A" teacher. That is, you have reached perfection—you have become an intellectual nonentity shining by the reflected glory of your chief.

What inspiration can be gleaned from a high school principal who knows nothing of our leading publicists, whose sole function in life is to ascertain how many of his teachers can be forced into intellectual strait-jackets or brutalized into acquiescence in all things devised by himself? What inspiration can be derived from one who feels that his teachers have nothing worth while to contribute to the solution of an administrative or educational problem, who feels that teachers have no right to criticize their superiors? What inspiration can be obtained from a principal who believes it is not the function of the teacher to question why, but to obey or die—that is, lose all chance of promotion? It is such a principal that killed "Inspiration." It is such supervision that has made our teachers "growth-proof." It is such misleadership that has so deadened and mechanized our teachers that they are not in any danger of catching liberal ideas, of being inspired by the noblest thinkers, of having the noblest aims, of believing in the nobleness of their mission. To get an "A-A" rating, to have no intellectual difference of opinion with their superiors, to punch the time card daily, and above all, to complete their clerical work, seems to be the sole duty of the teacher inspired by our visionless autocrats. Knowledge of life, of its moving forces, of its leaders, are left to those foolish radicals who seek trouble, who fail to see any particular virtue in letting "well enough" alone. Under *such* leadership to vegetate is to succeed, "to hold views" is to fail.

The goal of our inspired educational leaders should be to make our schools worth while, to make them real training centers for life, to have them inspire the pupils with a desire to alleviate the conditions of their

brothers and sisters and not to transform our schools into educational factories which turn out mediocrities doomed to eke out a miserable existence. These ends can not be achieved unless teachers are given an opportunity to elect supervisors because of their ability to lead and to inspire their fellow workers, because of their ability to win their respect and devotion and not because they happen to be a 42nd cousin of Boss Mulligatawny or because they belong to a certain church, or synagog or club. What we want is not pull but vision; not mechanization but initiative; not uniformity but variety; not pedagogs but social leaders; not bosses but co-workers; not autocrats but democrats. We need supervisors who look upon their teachers as their equals in intelligence, who are interested in the great political and economic movements of the day, who are eager to cooperate for the amelioration of the conditions of their fellowmen. We need men and women united by the bond of brotherhood, working shoulder to shoulder for a common end—the development of a truly American citizenry imbued with the idea that government exists by the consent of the governed, for the purpose of safeguarding the rights of the many from the rapacity of the few. We need teachers and preachers who will instill into our future thinkers, poets, artists, and workers the dignity of socially necessary labor, the spirit of social service, rational and loyal obedience to the principles of American democracy as enunciated by Jefferson, Lincoln, and Wilson. We need social prophets animated by Jesuitical zeal to make this life a paradise by engraving on the minds of the “gods” entrusted to their care “I am my brother’s keeper; his success is my success; his failure is my failure.” We can bring all this about if we run our educational system as a co-operative enterprise.

An idle dollar is a slacker, but a misspent dollar is a traitor. So says Mr. Vanderlip to the assembled state teachers at Syracuse. He ought to tell that tale to the distinguished citizens who are spending (or not) the people’s money on education.

A. M. I.

The Stage an Educational Force

EDUCATORS have long recognized the educative significance of the stage. It remains for the administrators of schools to learn a lesson from the theatrical manager. In his introduction to Stuart Walker’s *Portmanteau Plays*, Edward Hale Bierstadt says of Mr Walker, “One of his chief personal exactions is that the actors shall be treated not as actors but as human beings.” And he relates an incident that should be part of the history instruction of every candidate for the honors and responsibilities of management:

A well known theatrical manager rushed up to Mr Walker after the first performance, and eagerly exclaimed:

“Walker, where did you get that cast? I never heard of one of ‘em before, but they are wonders!”

To which Mr Walker is reported to have replied—sadly—“I got six of them out of your companies.”

In the interests of education, the stage ought to be encouraged.

Z

This is the Official Organ
of the
American Federation of Teachers
(Affiliated with American Federation of Labor)

OFFICERS OF THE A. F. OF T.

CHAS. B STILLMAN, President
1225 Sedgwick St., Chicago, Ill.
ETHEL E BEERS, Vice-President
3414 S. Paulina St., Chicago
C C WILLARD, Recording Secretary
7218 Cornell Ave., Chicago
MARGARET SNODGRASS, Corr. Sec.
1061 Dakin St., Chicago
F G STECKER, Financial Sec.
1618 Lake Ave., Wilmette, Ill.
JAMES A MEADE, Treasurer
2628 Sayre Ave., Chicago

TRUSTEES

Henry R Linville George J Jones
Anita Bailey Wm. T McCoy
Lydia J Trowbridge

Wanted, Teachers

The Normal schools and universities of Illinois are being beset by board members and superintendents for teachers. As a result of inroads are being made on this year's senior class.

THIS is from an educational magazine published in Illinois. In the same number of the magazine is an advertisement to the effect that teachers are wanted—not for teaching, but for better jobs in other lines. A dozen institutions in every state offer to train you, by mail or thru class work, for civil service positions paying from fifty to two hundred percent more than your present salary as teacher.

In Washington, D C, the teachers have been resigning from the service at such alarming rates that the board of education has decided to waive the formality of an examination. Anybody who is willing to take the job; anybody whose appearance and language are not altogether impossible, anybody that knows enough to fill out an application blank, will be received with open arms and fulsome flattery. The children must be kept in school; there is no other place in which to keep them. It does not matter much what happens to them in school, and one keeper is about as good as another, and very much cheaper.

In Cincinnati two lists of eligibles have been exhausted, and the shortage of teachers has become desperate. In cities thruout the country, in towns and in institutions, the shortage of teachers has given trustees and commissioners serious concern.

In New York City the number of candidates for license to teach in the elementary schools has been steadily decreasing for several years past. The number of students in the city's training schools for teachers has been steadily decreasing until those at present under instruction are only half as many as were registered four or five years ago.

Toward the end of the school year in the spring of 1917 Superintendent Maxwell issued a call to the high school teachers,

urging upon them the desirability of placing before their brighter students the advantages of teaching as a career. We do not know how enthusiastically the teachers responded to this call; we do know that the number of high school students who are seriously considering teaching as a career is smaller both relatively and absolutely than for many years past.

One incident in a large high school may indicate current tendencies, to those who have an eye for such indications. An unusually capable girl came very close to the heart of her teachers because of her qualities of mind and character, and because of her great need for assistance, economic and other. She intended to become a teacher. She was encouraged in her ambition. She managed to obtain a scholarship in a university and sufficient financial assistance to see her thru. She came back to her former teachers after graduation. They presumed that now she would arrange to prepare herself for teaching. She had thought it all over. "No," she declared simply, "I have decided to study medicine. I still love teaching, and think it's the finest kind of work. But I have seen too much of how you and the others are treated. I shall never be a teacher."

The ablest students in the high schools and colleges are not the most cunning. They are not shirkers, they are not the ones who are looking for a chance to get something for nothing. But neither are they altogether simpletons. They may have their heads in the clouds; but they are not altogether blind to what is going on about them. These ablest students have ideals, they have devotion, they are prepared to make sacrifices for ideals and for principles. They hear the call to service, and they would not close their ears to that call. But they have a little practical sense. They realize that a live accountant is worth more to the community than a dead teacher; that even teachers must have a material foundation for their spiritual efforts; and that material foundations can be obtained today only in exchange for a certain

sum of money.

If the community is content with the kind of teachers that can be purchased in the open market for the sums offered, then nobody need complain. But any community that is content with the existing situation is committing spiritual and economic suicide. It does not matter much that teachers starve, literally as well as figuratively. Other people are also starving. Teachers constitute but a small fraction of the community. There are many people in every town who are worse off than the teacher, in every way.

It does not matter much, so far as the teachers are concerned. Those who do not like it either get out, or they grin and bear it. Very few, if any, are actually killed by their hardships. And at the worst they can always be replaced. It is true that over 150 towns in Iowa happen at present to be quite without teachers. But that is only because of the socialistic state interference in local affairs, which restricts the towns in their selection of teachers. If they were not so particular they could get plenty of young women, at the prices offered, to keep school.

It does not matter much that teachers complain and grumble. Somehow the day goes by, and another day. Somehow the children grow up and take their places in the life of the community. The teachers play such a small part in that life, that their discontent and unhappiness are comparatively trivial.

It does matter, however, despite the book-keeper's showing in favor of underpayment, that the children grow up as they do. It does matter that so large a proportion of the nation's teachers are not even first class high school graduates. It does matter that the community continues to stew in its own ignorance and provincialism and darkness. It does matter that even the cheap teachers, who somehow manage to get along on their miserable salaries, give so much of their thought to the question of money.

We are fighting for democracy. We are fighting for the future of the nation. We are doing our fighting against immense difficulties that have nothing whatever to do with military preparedness or leadership. We are fighting with the handicaps of universal

ignorance of the very elements of economic relations. We are trying to organize the thought and the will of the nation for better production, for better administration of the product, for better organization of our forces, for better coordination of our activities—all this and more with a people brought up by cheap teachers, by raw teachers, by undisciplined teachers, by undemocratic teachers, by visionless teachers. We are going to win this war, in spite of the handicaps; but let us face the facts.

It would no doubt be just as true to say that we shall win the war because of the schooling we have received in the past. Unquestionably the teachers of the present and their teachers before them have contributed tremendously to the power and effectiveness of the nation at war. It is not desired to disparage the services rendered by teachers of all grades. It is nevertheless true that we are not getting progressively better teachers in proportion to our national resources. It is not sufficient that the "average" teacher of today is better equipped than the average teacher of yesterday. It is not enough that the average school life of the child is a year or two or three years longer than the average school life of his parents. It is not enough that our average per capita expenditure for educational purposes has doubled in a generation. The great question is, are we providing teachers and facilities commensurate with the needs of the children—needs recognized today but never suspected by former generations? Are we making provision commensurate with the resources of the nation? Are we actually civilizing ourselves, integrating ourselves, humanizing ourselves, as rapidly as conditions will permit?

Almost any one can place before a group of impressionable youth the glories and compensations of his particular occupation. Teachers can do it. Our duty to the children, as well as our duty to the community and to ourselves, requires that we present the facts as to the teaching business without too much color borrowed from wishes and faded hopes. The facts at present are very decidedly against the teaching business, except for young men and women who have independent

incomes, or for young men and women to whom the wage of a domestic servant would mean comfort. Such people are no doubt good citizens and estimable individuals; but democracy can not endure unless something decidedly different is provided for the guidance and training of its youth.

A Cooperative School

A SCHOOL of several hundred pupils without principal, superintendent or board of directors, where committees elected by the students from their own number decide everything, from the question of fees and salaries to the selection of a faculty and the determination of a program of courses and a schedule of classes—this sounds like a fragment of some Bolshevik Utopia but is in reality a bit of present-day New York. And it is not a butterfly experiment, either, but is attaining the rank of an established local institution, having been in practical operation for a year and more.

In the fall of 1916, a group of students, in revolt against the commercialism of the average privately owned preparatory school determined to organize a night school of their own to prepare them for Regents and college entrance examinations. Permission was secured from the Board of Education to use Public Schol 63 on Fourth Street near Avenue A, the only condition being that the venture should be purely cooperative, with no element of profit in its management.

In the first year of its existence, "The Students' Cooperative Educational Institute" has traversed the rocks and shoals that are the usual fate of newly launched ventures, but it appears now to be entering on clear sailing. A reorganized faculty, including the tried and true of the old staff, with such new blood as Theodore Muller, MA (Columbia), of the High School of Commerce, for ten years teacher of science for the Philippines Government, and Dr Frederick A Blossom, formerly of the faculty of Johns Hopkins University and Bryn Mawr College, has been enlisted for the current semester, while improved methods of publicity have brought about a heavy increase in the student enrolment.

As an experiment in simon-pure democracy in education, as well as a relatively new application of the principle of consumer-cooperation, this East Side undertaking is in a position to make history and set a precedent full of interesting possibilities.

Making School Administration "Safe for Democracy"

SINCE our country is in a titanic war "to make the world safe for democracy," we should promote liberal methods of administration in our nation's greatest democratic institution—the public schools. Liberal principles should prevail actually, never as a complacent abstraction, in schoolroom relationships and administrative councils. For sound democracy there should be in school conferences, large or small, systematic representation of the citizens of the system—the children. Manifestly, the direct representatives of the children are the teachers, who are in daily contact with them and have fresh and vivid impressions of their needs.

As constituted at present, have the members of educational conferences, in which far-reaching administrative policies are determined, actually taught children during the week, or month, or year, or decade? Does it really happen that nearly all of them are separated from actual teaching by several years of time and several degrees of station in the school hierarchy? Another poignant question, is there any resemblance between non-representative conferences, school hierarchies, and—"autocracy"? In the second place, are conclusions scientific which are reached without the voice of the teacher—which is our nearest approach to the voice of the child—and consequently without first-hand evidence, up-to-date observation, and authentic testing of results? The interesting developments of this department might well include conferences where board members could counsel directly with teachers.—From address delivered by MRS O SHEPARD BARNUM, Vice-President, California State Board of Education, at a meeting of the Department of Administration.

The Seattle Program

THE objects of the school board of Seattle are stated to be as follows:

To furnish *convenient, comfortable, sanitary and safe school buildings*. The buildings erected for several years past both for elementary and high schools have been of fire-proof construction. Attempt has been made by the board to provide them *with the most approved heating and ventilating system*.

To provide such special features as will enable different needs to be more clearly satisfied than by ordinary means and methods. Among these special features are:

1 Industrial or prevocational classes for both boys and girls, in which shop work and the operations of the household are given much greater time and attention. These classes have proved very popular, there being now nearly 2,000 grammar-grade pupils enrolled in them.

2 Auxiliary teachers for helping forward those pupils who can make up lost ground or gain additional ground by receiving special help.

3 Medical inspection and the school clinic, thru which the physical difficulties of school children are cared for, so they are made better physically and therefore fitter for study and progress in school work.

4 Two parental schools, one for boys and one for girls, by means of which the delinquent are brought under favorable conditions for better citizenship, and the regular schools relieved of an embarrassing charge.

5 Special schools in which subnormal types of children are given instruction and training suited to their capabilities and needs, a thing that can not be done in the ordinary school. At the same time, the regular schools can do their legitimate work much better when not handicapped with misfit pupils.

6 Evening schools for the assistance of either youths or adults who feel the need of schooling of which they have been deprived. More than 4,500 have enrolled in the evening schools this season. Any subject in the day-school course for which there is sufficient demand is taught.

Note—Italics are ours.

Teachers Coming of Age

THE Salary Schedule Committee of the Kansas City Teachers Club presented a memorial to the Board of Education, after conference with the City Superintendent, who approves the requests and suggestions in principle. The text of the memorandum follows:

1 We request that the Board of Education in recognition of the fact which it has on several previous occasions officially and unreservedly stated, namely, that the purchasing power of the teachers' salaries is very much lower than was intended when the present salary schedules were adopted shall consider the difference between what each salary was intended to buy and what it now can buy as a difference which should be made up by the Board of Education.

2 We request that this difference which now represents a sacrifice too great for individual teachers to continue to bear without injuring both themselves and their schools

be treated by the Board of Education as an emergency need which must be taken care of by the same kind of action as when the Board of Education recognizes the increased cost of coal, not by buying less coal but by paying the actual cost for coal.

3 We request that the question of higher qualifications for teachers and of recognizing superior teaching results be taken up by the Board separately and independently of the question of making present salaries mean what they were intended to mean when fixed in 1912.

4 We request that before deciding which teachers are superior and how many and what proportion ought to receive the money recognition for superiority in teaching and for possessing credits, the Superintendent and Supervising Staff be asked to test out thoroly by actual trial upon all teachers in all schools different ways of ascertaining and judging the quality of teaching results.

5 We request that before any teachers are finally classified for salary increases and for recognition as superior, every teacher in the system be shown specifically point for point according to the tests employed by their principals and supervisors, where and why she is strong, where and why she is weak, and that she then be given a year in which to prove by class room service what her best work is.

Following the above requests, the teachers' petition had these two concluding paragraphs:

In presenting this request to the Board of Education, the teachers are not unmindful of the difficulties which confront the Board as Trustee for children to be taught and for money to be spent. We appreciate that the source or sources of salary increases are a matter that requires further definite study. At this time we hope only that the Board will early announce to the community that whatever else must wait, or whatever radical steps must be taken among the minimum essentials for successful work in the schools, is to radically help the elementary school teachers meet the rising cost of the necessities of life, and the other equally pressing costs of the increased qualifications which the Board is demanding.

The Salary Schedule Committee was especially commissioned by the Teachers' Meeting to assure the Board of Education and the public that as a body we unqualifiedly concur in the belief of the City Superintendent and the Board that superiority should be recognized and that professional growth should be stimulated, required and aided. Nothing will be withheld by us of effort and service, which will insure progressive improvement.

Teachers Registration Council of England

THE Teachers Registration Council was authorized by the Education Act of 1907, and established by an Order of Privy Council in 1912. This body consists of forty-five representatives chosen by the various teachers associations of England. It is charged among other things with the duty of forming and keeping a Register of such teachers as satisfy the Conditions of Registration established by the Council.

At the first meeting of the Council in July, 1912, the members were addressed by the President of the Board of Education (Mr J A Pease, now Lord Gainford), who said:

Their object would be not only the formation of a Register of Teachers. There were many other spheres and fields of usefulness for a Council representative of the Teaching Profession. He hoped that they would be able to speak with one voice as representing the Teaching Profession, and that the Board would be able to consult with them. So long as he was Head of the Board they would always be most anxious to cooperate with the Council, and would attach due weight to their views.

It is important to realize that the Council represents the whole body of teachers, and that the Register is only a means to an end, namely, the establishment of a united Teaching Profession. Teachers of all types have many interests in common, and should have the power and acknowledged right to express their opinion as a body on all matters affecting their professional work. Unity is the first condition of progress towards a larger measure of self-government for teachers, and this self-government in its turn begins when teachers themselves have agreed to maintain a Register of those qualified to practise their calling.

In addition the Council has been invited by the Board of Education to consider and report upon several matters of importance, such as the Draft of the Introductory Chapter of the new edition of "Suggestions to Teachers," the proposals concerning Examinations in Secondary Schools, and the Regulations for Technical Institutions. The

Council has also urged upon the Board the necessity for abolishing the Examination for Acting Teachers and for removing all disability from those who have passed this examination during its continuance. It has framed proposals in regard to Reconstruction in Education, and has taken every opportunity of claiming for teachers the treatment due to members of a recognized profession. In particular it has asserted the principle that teachers should not only be consulted freely, but should have an effective voice in all matters relating to their work. The Council holds that free exchange of views between administrator and teacher is of the utmost benefit to education.

WHAT THEY SAY

A Parent's Letter to a Union Member

Dear Mr —:

Knowing you are one of the teachers who are fighting to uphold our cherished liberties in this country, I want to relate the following concerning my experience with some of the so-called patriotic teachers.

I have a child in Public School No. —, Brooklyn. Since the children returned to school in September the teacher of my child's class has been talking to them about the war, saying all *Americans* are in favor of the war, and she will not be happy until every German on the face of the earth is wiped off by this war, that every German in this country ought to be put on a ship and sent back where he belongs. She says they are all traitors, and cannot be trusted in this country, and also that all Russians are fools. She says Russia ought to have a czar, because the Russians don't know how to govern themselves. She says America is the greatest country, and that all those who do not agree with President Wilson are traitors, and ought to get out of this country because they don't stand by the country and the flag. All Socialists who are not in favor of this war are traitors, and ought to get out of the country. And so she continued for about eight weeks.

One day in denouncing the Germans, saying she would not trust them from here to the door, a boy in the class timidly said, "Miss —, I'm German." She answered, "I wouldn't trust you from here to the door."

When my child told me that, I decided to go to the assistant principal that afternoon. I told the assistant principal that I was taught to love the public school in a spirit that was to me sacred, and I didn't think that such hatred should be uttered in view of the fact that our country and schools have people who happen to have been born in every part of the world, but have come here because this is supposed to be a land of democracy. I claimed that in such a land it is not democratic to talk as the teacher did, especially to children.

I told the assistant principal that it was not in a spirit of condemnation I came to her, but that this country and the principles of democracy and the schools were part of me, and that I didn't like to see such things done or said. I believe patriotism need not necessarily mean hatred. She answered that she was glad that I came to her, and that she knew I meant well, but she said every child must be taught to be patriotic as they understand it. She was very glad to see that the Board of Education is taking those strict means with the teachers who are not patriotic. She said every teacher with socialistic ideas will be dismissed from the schools, and that before long every person who does not uphold our stand in this war will be put under lock and key. I told her it seemed useless to make her see my point of view, and so I left.

I then went to see the teacher of my child's class, and asked her how my little girl was doing? She complained how some of the children have socialistic ideas. She said she would have none of those ideas in her room. I knew that when she threw out abuse of the socialist candidates the children defended them. However, she never suspected my little girl, since she is at present neutral. While speaking to the teacher the assistant principal came up and said, "We stand by our flag and country, don't we Miss —?" The teacher answered, "Sure! and those who don't ought to get out." Then after a few commonplace remarks, I left wondering that such spirit is tolerated in our schools toward children and parents.

To the Editors, THE AMERICAN TEACHER:

What is all this talk about requiring teachers in New York to inculcate instinctive obedience?

If it is already instinctive, how are you going to inculcate it? And if you are going to inculcate it, how can you make it instinctive? Apparently it is not necessary for superintendents to be scientific; it is necessary only that they be sufficiently vehement.

B F TUCKER

Religious Education and Democracy

Religious Education and American Democracy by W S ATHEARN, Professor of Religious Education, Boston University. 394 pp. Boston. The Pilgrim Press. \$1.50.

HERE is a book written by a man who knows the facts (there are over six hundred classified bibliographical references), who has convictions, a vision, and a program, and whose style is simple, strong, and clear.

Dr Athearn thinks democracy can not live without religion. "The safety of democracy demands *intelligence* and *godliness*." This principle is not argued, it is asserted axiomatically. The conclusion of the book presupposes it.

The state, by means of secular education, can not alone make good citizens. "I am convinced that the greatest task before the American people today is the building of a system of religious education which will assure the religious development of every citizen."

The author's central constructive idea is that the church must build a system of schools parallel to the state schools from kindergarten to university that the democratic citizenship may not only "think clearly" but "act righteously." The public schools should not teach religion. "Great armies of freemen may make the world safe for democracy, but it is the task of the schools to make democracy safe for the world." (p. 21)

The problem of correlation of church and public schools is analyzed, existing solutions are reviewed, including the Gary plan, and the conclusion is reached that the correlation is to be effected strictly as a community enterprise.

At this point the book is based on experience as well as theory. In Malden, Mass., the author is carrying out a community plan of religious education supplementary to the public school system. Malden has a community council board, superintendent, and school, of religious education. There are twelve faculty members, 445 students, and 800 children in training to demonstrate methods in use in the school. "It may be said of the plan that it is in successful operation and it seems to stand all the tests of practical application." (p. 137)

To effect this plan on a national scale existing educational agencies must be unified. Each denomination is to supervise its own schools. The entire program is to be democratized: "It means taking the entire teaching body into your confidence and letting

them share in the formation of policies which when once adopted are rigidly enforced. The professional growth of teachers is best secured by this policy."

The work of state colleges is to be supplemented by a program of instruction and spiritual guidance to be given by the church, and church colleges must improve their religious teaching.

The graduate school and seminaries of the country must organize work in religious education to provide the necessary scientific leadership.

Even this brief outline of the author's argument will show that the problem of religious education is here conceived in a large administrative way as a community matter. It makes other plans for encouraging religious education, such as academic credit for work in religion, look like pygmies.

Big plans face big difficulties. Some of the practical, perhaps not insuperable, difficulties in the way of such a dual system of secular and religious schools are the lack of community leaders, such as Dr Athearn himself is in Malden, the lack of trained teachers for the religious schools, the lack of time for the two parallel systems, the lack of sufficient and suitable texts for a curriculum in religious education, the lack of parental interest to secure attendance at the religious schools and to finance the project, the lack of suitable buildings and equipment, and the lack of any other nation's experience as a guide in following this solution. The history of education is full, however, of just such difficulties which have somehow been overcome when the need was great and sufficiently felt.

HERMAN H HORNE

New York University.

READINGS

Democracy at Work

Annual Report of the Education Department of the State of New York, 1917. Volume 2 on Elementary Education.

PONDEROUSLY, with heavy tread, sometimes hesitating, sometimes even stopping or retreating, civilization moves forward. One would have to seek far for any proposition of general application to which it would be more easy to secure common assent than that which predicates that every human being should have the opportunity to develop to the full those faculties and aptitudes which will

make of him an efficient and useful citizen. Even more, that he should be equipped for the intensest enjoyment of all that is good and beautiful in life. Yet in practise there is nothing more patent to the educator than the neglect society shows for her children. Poverty alone cuts off millions from their rightful heritage. But the poor are with us, altho not for always. The coming years will tell.

In the meantime New York State has pushed two salients into the wide front of ignorance. Despite much adulation of the little red school house (by those who got away from it) the sad fact is that as an educational institution it ranks as a failure beside the large city school with its varied equipment and manifold facilities. Therefore the state department has brought pressure to bear wherever possible to force consolidation and to provide transportation for pupils to large central buildings where they can enjoy not only the superior physical plant but can be taught by better prepared and better paid teachers. The report brings this fact home to the lay reader by presenting numerous pictures of the old and new conditions.

Another feature of the report is a section which groups numerous reports and illustrations of institutions for defective, dependent and delinquent children. Incidentally legislation is recommended to insure to these unfortunates who have ignorant parents or who have been born in unprogressive or poverty-stricken communities the full benefit of the largess of an enlightened state.

The state is unquestionably doing noble work, but we must hope for better reports. If volumes like these are to repose upon library shelves and there be forgotten except for the researches of the special student, then we have no quarrel, but if they are to convey useful information to the layman and the teacher, we respectfully submit that they will never do it. Piling up individual reports and pictures into a one thousand page volume will never do anything toward stimulating pedagogical curiosity or touching the popular imagination. Nor does it even supply adequate material for scientific research, as we can well attest who have plumbed the depths. There must be selection, there must be emphasis, there must be economy. Individual reports must be digested, summarized. The arts of the advertiser must be used—parallel columns, variety of type, diagrams, impelling questions addressed to the reader. Pictures must not be given in bewildering profusion, even to the extent of repeating some, as is done in this volume. The original purpose is only defeated thereby.

We should suggest cutting down the size to three hundred pages and using the money thus saved to secure wider distribution among the teachers in the field. There are too many fine things being done and too many fine men doing them to allow the results to remain buried in dust covered volumes among the whitening bones in our pedagogical morgues.

F J K

Oxford at Home

The Oxford Stamp, by FRANK AYDELOTTE.
New York: Oxford University Press. \$1.20.

IF the author of this little volume is a fair example of what Oxford does to our American Rhodes Scholars, there is nothing to be feared from English conservatism in education. If we could be sure of such a product in every case, there would be nothing to do but ship all our students to the other side, unless Oxford itself were imported. In a sense, the latter is what is actually happening. The spirit is being brought to us by some four hundred graduates. The influences which Professor Aydelotte would especially commend for use by our universities are those which first, would give the social life of the schools an intellectual value; second, would make our sports more sportsmanlike and more nearly universal, and third, would enable students to study subjects instead of taking courses, the emphasis being placed upon thought rather than upon information. By more nearly approximating the conditions of ordinary life, by placing the student upon his own responsibility, and periodically setting severe tests, the English University accomplishes this. That it would suffice for any but a selected type of American student is doubtful.

In a series of essays on the teaching of English the author sets forth his theory along with successful practise. In brief it rests upon the assumption that the study of English literature should be of the thought and not of the form, that it should be a searching into the opinions of the great writers upon social, religious and scientific questions. As for composition, he is at one with Stevenson, who in speaking of his article called "Roads," says, "It is quite the best thing I have ever done, to my taste. There are things expressed in it far harder to express than in anything else I ever had; and that, after all, is the great point. As for style, *ça viendra, peut-etre.*" The emphasis upon thinking is refreshing, subordination of form to meaning

almost novel and revolutionary when it is remembered that this startling pedagogical idea was actually practised in the class room by Professor Aydelotte.

The core of the problem is attacked in a delightful essay on "English as Humane Letters," with the practical applications worked out in "An Experiment with the Freshman Course," and "The Problem of English in Engineering Schools." Most interesting and enlightening is his interpretation of the "sedulous ape" theory of Stevenson. He shows that R L S did not become a stylist by the mere imitation of words, but that his voracious reading was, above all, thoughtful. And it can well be said of the writer of these essays himself that all of which he discourses has been most potent in his own thinking, for not only does he show a keen appreciation of the relation of his subject to life, but that it has become so much a part of him that his own style has a freshness and beauty that make his volume not only a strong stimulant to the progressive teacher but a keen pleasure to the lover of literature.

F J K

GREYLOCK

DURING the past summer seventy-five boys spent two full-breezed months at Camp Greylock, in the Heart of the Berkshires. There under the direction of Dr. Gabriel R. Mason the youngsters played in the fields, swam in the lake, hiked over the hills, worked on the farm, studied in the outdoor classrooms, and camped out under the stars. In these ways they found health, culture and the joy of living.

Prospectus on Request

Gabriel R. Mason, Ph.D.
1107 Forest Ave., New York City

DOBROYE NOTCHE*, or THE TRIPLE DAMNED

A Nightmare in Three Spasms

Scene, a dismal swamp, completely surrounded by false lights, vulgarly called "Will-o'-the-Wisp." In the center, a black pit leading to outer darkness. At the edge of the pit a draped figure in the posture of a judge, having an Accusing Finger in one hand and a headsman's ax in the other.

Preceding the entrance of the Dreamer in each spasm, a blare of trumpets is heard, and the false lights blink in unison.

SPASM ONE

(Blare and blink)

Enter, **THE DREAMER**: Your pleasure, Sir.
(Business of friendly but dignified greeting.)

THE JUDGE-LIKE FIGURE: Look me in the eye!
(Draws drapery aside from one side of face.)

DREAMER, looks; barefaced but unashamed.

THE J-L F: Tell me, now. Would you permit the students in your class to discuss political issues?

THE D: *(Thinking himself still in America.)* Why yes, of course I would. *(One of the false lights fades away. Dreamer is somewhat taken aback, but quickly recovers his composure and continues.)* You see, that is the only way students can learn to think clearly and logically about important public matters.

(A bat flies across the bottomless pit—seen only in silhouette—and extinguishes another of the rush-lights.)

THE J-L F: Sir: You are not fit to be a teacher! Students must not express ideas; they must only receive ideas. Guilty! *(He points the Accusing Finger, the nail of which is sharpened in the semblance of a goose-quill; and with the butt of the ax pushes DREAMER into the pit. All the false lights suddenly flare up. As the lights gradually assume their normal intensity, DREAMER is heard bumping against the sides of the pit in his descent.)*

END OF SPASM ONE

SPASM TWO

(Blare and blink, as before)

Enter, **THE DREAMER**: Yours to Command, Sir! *(Business of dignified, but formal, military salutation.)*

THE JUDGE-LIKE FIGURE: Look me in the eye!
(Draws aside the drapery from over left eye.)

DREAMER, looks; steadily but modestly.

THE J-L F: Attention! Would you permit the students in your class to discuss political issues?

THE D: No, Sir, I would not. *(One of the false lights expires suddenly. Dreamer gasps, but quickly recovers, and continues.)* You see, it is not within my sphere of duties to entertain discussions of political issues.

(A low buzzing sound is heard, like the noise of a tea-party about to take leave; the lights bob gently up and down, in perfect unison. A screech-owl performs music appropriate to its species; the lights stop bobbing; perfect silence.)

THE J-L F: *(arising from tree-stump on which he had been sitting, and raising the Accusing Finger.)*

Sir! You are not fit to be a teacher. Whatever your subject, you must do your share in enlightening the students on these matters that are so essential to good citizenship. Guilty!

(Smites DREAMER on side of head with flat of the ax, and sends him tumbling into the Pit. False lights flare up, as before. They gradually assume their normal dimness, to the sound of a trembling civilization.)

END OF SPASM TWO

SPASM THREE

(Blare and Blink, as before.)

Enter, **THE DREAMER**: At your Service, Sir.
(Business of formal, but obsequious salutation.)

THE J-L F: Look me in the eye! *(Points to a small hole in the drapery over his right eye.)*

THE D: looks; modestly, but without enthusiasm.

THE J-L F: See here! Would you permit the students in your class to discuss political issues?

THE D: Yes, your Honor, I would. *(The lights shake their heads at an uncertain angle, but in strict unison. DREAMER hesitates for a moment, but only for a moment.)* You see, I must teach them the truth about political issues.

THE J-L F: You mean, that you would teach them the universally accepted doctrines of the plurality party? *(The false lights stop twinkling, as in breathless suspense, still in unison.)*

THE D: No, your Honor. I mean that I would set them right whenever they expressed unsound views. I would lead them to see the truth as I see it. *(The lights begin twinkling again, and shake their heads as before, but in the opposite sense.)*

THE J-L F: You base creature! *(Shrieking, and pointing the Accusing Finger.)* You have no right to use your position and authority and power as a teacher to mold the plastic mind of youth into conformity with your pernicious doctrines! Away with him!

(Raises ax to smite DREAMER, who falls over into the Pit. Lights flare up, and gradually assume their normal dimness, to the sound of a tottering throne of all the Russias. At the conclusion of the crash the false lights suddenly die out, leaving all in perfect darkness.)

The Dreamer awakes at the other end of the Pit, surrounded by Russian peasants and workers, who greet him in the name of democracy. Dobroye Notche. Curtain.

* That's a way the Russians have of saying Good Night!

SOVIETS

JUST think of it. An organization of our affairs which rests on the assumption that you know more about your business than I do. An organization which takes for granted that you and I want not only what is coming to us, but want also to give others what is coming to them. An organization that expects you to know what is good for you, rather than know what is good for others.

How would it work? How would it work to have people in the shoe factory determine policies for working and living together in the shoe factory? How would it work to have lawyers determine standards of admission to the practise of law, standards of performance, of payment, of ethics? How would it work to have teachers establish professional standards for themselves?

It's so strange. It's so hard to imagine. It is easier to continue as we have been accustomed. Let the lawyers set up standards for teachers. Let real estate dealers set up standards for lawyers. Let bankers run the whole business. It is easier.

But democracy is knocking at the gates. Whether we like it or not, the revolution is upon us. We shall have to assume responsibilities, we shall have to take counsel together, we shall have to make decisions, we shall have to become experts. The world has looked to America for lessons in democracy. If we are good teachers, we should be prepared to learn from Russia.