

THE EDINBORO QUARTERLY



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COLLEGE ARCHIVES

The Edinboro Quarterly

THE EDINBORO QUARTERLY is issued in January, April, July, and October, by the Edinboro State Normal School. The April number constitutes the Alumni Register. The July number will be the Catalog. The other two numbers will be filled with announcements and general news matter.

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VOL. I.

NO. 4

TO THE ALUMNI

April 17, 1914, ushered in a new era in the history of the Edinboro State Normal. On that date the school was transferred to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and came under the full control of the State Board of Education. The six months since that event have been a period of quiet development. The largest attendance during any fall term in the history of the school attests the confidence of the people in the new management.

The confidence of the people of Edinboro in the school is complete; their pride in its achievements is growing daily.

We take pleasure in giving below the personnel of the State Board of Education and the names and addresses of the able men and women appointed by that honorable body to serve as Trustees.

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A PLEA FOR PLAY

Almost everyone realizes the recreational value of play, but few seem to realize its educational value. It is an accepted psychological and physiological fact, that play through the connections of the nerve cells develops the motor areas of the brain. Education may be defined as the development of an efficient personality. Without play, no matter how well trained at home or at school, the child's personality can not be developed to its highest efficiency.

The child's first play is exceedingly simple; he piles pebbles or blocks, digs in the sand and in various ways adjusts himself to his environment by playful experiments. Later, he begins to imitate in his play and becomes in turn an Indian Chief, a stage driver, a motorman, an engineer, a soldier, and a "cop." In the games of early childhood, the ego is conspicuous, but later, as a member of a baseball, football, basketball, or hockey team, the boy learns that he must sacrifice his own interests for those of his team. In handling these more highly organized games, the play leader, teacher, or parent has a fine opportunity to influence the morals of the child, to develop the qualities of alertness, aggressiveness, sympathy, friendship and courage.

In our modern school systems, about one-tenth of the school time is devoted to physical training, and many teachers still retain the old fashioned idea that physical training should consist entirely of arm stretchings, trunk bendings, and leg movements by command or by counts. As a result, the time allotted to physical training is usually devoted almost entirely to these "setting up" or corrective exercises. Dr. Sargent of Harvard, and Dr. McKenzie of Pennsylvania tells us that, whether the child enjoys this work or not, he gets a certain amount of good out of it. Of course we know the blood is taken

from the brain to the muscles by these exercises, and that the respiration and heart beat are quickened; but how much quicker and more pleasantly these results could be obtained by a good active game of kickball or a relay race. The so-called educational or formal gymnastics are drudgery to the active child, when conducted by any but the most expert physical training teachers. The small boy wants to work off surplus energy by standing on his head or doing a forward roll, and the small girl wants a singing game, or a lively folk dance.

Many educators and parents say there is plenty of time for play outside of school, without introducing such fads into the now overcrowded curriculum. Plenty of time, that is true; but Forrest lives in one end of the town and Clair lives in the other, and John has chores to do, and Bill has to peddle papers after school. Another important factor is that there is no one to lead and direct them in their play outside of school. The parents haven't time and the teachers won't take the time.

Develop the play spirit in the adult, and then the adult will see to it that the child gets plenty of good healthful play. The problem of developing the spirit of play in the adult can be easily solved by sending an efficient physical director to every teachers' institute and having him teach some of the more popular games to the teachers, who, in turn, take the games home and teach them to their pupils and to the adults of the community.

If the cities need recreational centers, the country needs them far more. There are two reasons given for the boys leaving the farm. The first is that the work is too hard. The second, and the real reason, is that the farm is too lonesome in the winter. The quickest way to start the "back to the land"

movement is to develop recreational centers in every rural community. It is a hard problem to get people together in the country, but the union school will solve this problem. If there isn't a union school, the town hall should be used as a place for play during the winter. Besides the athletics conducted at the recreation center, there should be literary, debating and dramatic club work on different nights, and mixed dances should be conducted once a week under careful supervision.

Leisure is the time during which we

form character; as character is formed greatly by choice, let us choose to spend regularly a part of our time in good, vigorous, wholesome play that promotes happiness and rounds out character. How little we expect of a boy who does not play vigorously and how true it is that such a boy seldom develops into a virile, aggressive man, fearlessly meeting the battles of life. Give the boys and girls a chance to enjoy play, well directed, and the possibilities are greater for better men and women, and a stronger nation.

AN EXPERIMENT IN DEMOCRACY

From the first day that I assumed charge of the Edinboro State Normal School as principal, the system of student government by a body of rules and regulations laid down by the faculty seemed contrary to the spirit of a Normal. Further, my experience in a private boys' school had led me to regard the system contrary to the spirit of democracy, our whole system of government, and all modern ideals of education.

The spirit of democracy in school life was already abroad in the land, and my own conviction deepened that, if there is any class of students in the world who should learn to govern themselves, it is those who are preparing to govern others.

Not only from the standpoint of ideals and purposes, but from the standpoint of personnel of the student body, all Normal Schools, and particularly the Edinboro State Normal School, is an ideal place for student control and government. The majority of our students are now of college grade, three-fourths who enter having been graduated from four-year high school courses. I doubt if there can be found anywhere a student body of greater earnestness of

purpose, alertness of mind, and eagerness to learn. More than ninety-five per cent of the students who enter this school come with a definite purpose and a reasonably clear conception of what to do to realize that purpose. Out of a student body of three hundred and fifty, there are then not more than fifteen, I doubt if there are ordinarily more than five, who are not willing and anxious to do what is best for them and for the school. To formulate rules to regulate the five mean-spirited, low-purposed students and impose them on the three hundred and forty-five boys and girls of fine spirit and high motives is degrading, both to them and to the faculty. This has been forcefully expressed by Mr. Gerald Stanley Lee in "Crowds," Chapter X, page 486. In making some reflections on the American temperament, he writes as follows:

"The government of the next boys' school of importance in this country is going to determine the cuts and free hours, and privileges not by marks, but by its genius for seeing through boys.

"And instead of making rules for two hundred pupils because just twenty pupils need them, they will make the rules for just twenty pupils.

"Pupils who can use their souls and can do better by telling themselves what to do, will be allowed to do better. Why should two hundred boys who want to be men be bullied into being babies by twenty infants who can scare a school government into rules, i. e., scare their teachers into being small and mean and second rate?"

"The first trait of a great government is going to be that it will recognize that the basis of a true government in a democracy is privilege and not treating all people alike. It is going to see that it is cowardly, lazy, brutal, and a mechanical-minded thing for a government which is trying to serve a great people to treat all the people alike. The basis of a great government like the basis of a great man (or even the basis of a good digestion) is discrimination, and the habit of acting according to facts. We will have rules or laws for people who need them, and men in the same business who amount to enough and are American enough to be safe as laws to themselves, will continue to have their initiative and to make their business a profession, a mould, an art form into which they pour their lives. The pouring of the lives of men like this into their business is the one thing that the business and the government want."

For years, we teachers and educators have been preaching democracy and discrimination in the treatment of boys and girls, but we have gone right on in the mechanical, supposedly easy way of formulating rules for the bad boys and girls and imposing them on good and bad alike. This is not only undemocratic, it is unfair, unjust, and unpedagogical. It violates every principle of adaptation to individual cases. Further, it restricts growth in one of the most important fields. We all agree that the great aim of education is complete growth. In a Republic, where anyone may come to govern

all, growth in self control and personal responsibility is especially important. In a school consisting of students preparing to train children for citizenship in the Republic, the importance of this growth in responsibility is much greater.

When the present administration took charge of the Edinboro State Normal School, there was, as in all the Normal Schools of this State, a great reverence for rules and regulations. We did not abolish all at once, but began gradually to increase the freedom of the students. There was a good deal of criticism on the part of our enemies and a good deal of doubt on the part of our friends. There was a special storm of criticism when the rule that all students must attend church was abolished. Many of the well-intentioned people who criticized would doubtless agree with the abstract principle that there is no moral growth without personal responsibility; that the student who does a thing because his teachers compel him to do it, will get no moral strength from his act. Yet when it came to the concrete application, the old adherence to rules and mechanical obedience led them to criticize.

For three years, student freedom and student responsibility have been gradually increased in this school. We feel sure that any impartial observer will have to admit that the spirit of right conduct has increased in more than direct ratio.

As in all co-educational schools, the relation of the boys and girls has been a vexed problem. Up to three years ago, there was a rule that boys and girls should not walk nearer to each other than ten feet, on the campus or streets of the town, without special permission. The inconsistency of such a rule is patent to everyone. The school was saying, "Coeducation is a good thing in a limited way. We invite you, boys and girls, to come to this

school to recite together. It is a good thing for you to be together in the class, but as soon as you step outside the classroom, you must not be together."

If it is good for boys and girls to be together in the classroom, it is good for them to walk together on the campus, or on the streets, when they are naturally thrown together in going to and from their classes. If a rule forbidding this natural relation is necessary in a school for both boys and girls, then co-education is not only a failure, but a moral crime.

Miss Zola Gale, in the July, 1914, number of the "Atlantic Monthly" has given us a new version of coeducation. The writer very sensibly points out that the word coeducation should never have arisen, that we do not speak of co-play, or co-amusement, or co-aspiration, or co-destiny; that it is just as natural for boys and girls to be educated together as it is for them to play together or work together.

There is no doubt that there have been some evils of co-education. Every good thing has its dangers. Many crimes have been committed in the name of Democracy, yet we have not lost faith in Democracy; life itself has its failures and its sorrows, yet we cling to life.

Some of us have come to believe that the evils of co-education have arisen from the failure on the part of the American schools to do anything for the social life of the students. It is natural and healthy for boys and girls to want to be together, and it is the business of the school to give them enough social diversion to satisfy this instinct. Intelligent fathers and mothers do not attempt to repress the natural desires of their sons and daughters to mingle with the sons and daughters of other parents, but they do

everything to encourage this mingling in the open, so there will be no desire on the part of the children to resort to secrecy. When we teachers have fully learned our social responsibility, we shall give our boys and girls so much opportunity to mingle joyously in our presence that there will be no desire on their part to separate themselves from the social companionship of the whole school; there will be no more trysting places.

Less than a year ago there was organized in this school a Student Council. The definition of its powers and duties was purposely left very elastic. At first the Council did not assume much responsibility, and attempted little in the way of controlling student conduct. Personally, I hope the present year will see the Council supreme, and I am frank to say that the students of the Edinboro State Normal School have demonstrated that they can control their own affairs and conduct better than I can.

A new spirit is pervading the school; teachers and students are closer together than ever before; there is no more watcher and watched; the teachers are getting out of the attitude of policeman, and are becoming companions, advisors, preceptors; students are getting out of the attitude of perpetual violators of law and are becoming free and natural. In such an atmosphere the only teacher superiority is the superiority of culture, breeding, experience and wisdom. There is no pedestal placed teacher promulgating rules and imposing them indiscriminately on good and bad.

We are beginning to believe that all our boys and girls are naturally good; that they want to do right; and that they fail only because of habits formed in a bad environment, or through ignorance on their part, or a failure on our part to point the way.

RURAL SCHOOL METHODS

As one step in the differentiation of the work in Pedagogy, a class in Rural School Methods was organized at the beginning of the year. All seniors willing to prepare definitely for work in the country schools, were invited to join the class. Twenty-two volunteered.

The purpose of the course is inspirational rather than technical—to send out a few teachers imbued with a vision of country life and of the rural school.

“Among Country Schools” is used, not as a text, but as a source of inspiration. The course will consist of a small amount of original research, a great deal of discussion, and much reading of assigned topics. Every member of the class will be required to read all or part of the following books and pamphlets:

Cooperative Forces for the Improvement of Rural Schools, *Journal of Education*, August 20, 1914.

The Country School of Tomorrow—Frederick T. Gates.

The Folk High Schools of Denmark. School Hygiene, Dresslar.

The Educational System of Rural Denmark—Bureau of Education, *Bulletin* 1913—No. 58.

The Experimental Rural School at Winthrop College, Rock Hill Bureau of Education, *Bulletin*, 1913, No. 42.

The Status of Rural Education in the United States—Bureau of Education, 1913, No. 8.

Sanitary Survey of the Schools of Orange County, Virginia—Bureau of Education, 1914, No. 17.

Winnebago County Schools, Annual Report, 1912.

Efficiency and Rural School Survey of Lake County, Ohio, Survey, Vol. 30, p. 525., July 19.

Function of Normal Schools in the Special Training of Teachers for Rural

Schools, N. E. A. Report, 1912, p. 856.

The Rural School, its Methods and Management, by Culter and Stone.

Better Rural Schools, Betts and Hall.

Education Modernly Speaking, *Journal of Education*, August 27, 1914.

The Work of the Rural School, Eggleston and Bruere.

Farm Boys and Girls, McKeever.

The Readjustment of a Rural High School to the Needs of the Community, *Bulletin*, 1912, No. 20.

Education in the South, *Bulletin*, 1913, No. 30.

Cultivating the School Grounds in Wake County, North Carolina.

The New Country School, A Survey of Development, W. K. Tate, *Youth's Companion*, Boston, Mass.

A rough outline of the course is given below:

Statement of the problem:

- I. Increased cost of living.
- II. Need of Scientific Agriculture and Intensive Farming.
- III. The movement from the country to the city.

General aspects of the problem:

- I. What country schools must do for country life.
 1. Spiritualize.
 2. Socialize.
 3. Intellectualize.
- II. Weaknesses of one-room country schools.
 1. Too small to be social units.
 2. Poor teachers.
 1. Young
 2. Inexperienced
 3. Lacking in country ideals and spirit.
 4. Short tenure.
 5. Poorly paid.
 3. Lack of intelligent supervision.

4. Poor grounds and buildings.
 5. Lack of equipment.
 6. Cited course of study.
- Country school grounds.
- I. The ideal.
 - II. The real—suggestions for improvement.
- Country school houses.
- I. The ideal.
 1. The social type.
 2. The Manual Arts type.
 3. The mixed type.
 - a. Lighting.
 - b. Orientation.
 - c. Heating and ventilation.
 - d. Blackboards, desks, apparatus etc.
 - e. Drinking fountains.
 - f. Toilets.
 - g. Cloakrooms.
 - II. The real—suggestions for improvement.
- Survey of Erie County touching the following points:
- I. Population of each city, borough, and township, 1890 and 1900.
 - II. Attendance at one-room schools, 1914.
 - III. Teachers of one-room rural schools.
 - a. Preparation.
 - b. Experience.
 - c. Tenure in present school.
 - IV. School tax rate in each city, borough and township in 1914-15.
 - V. Photographs of Rural schools. Play and playgrounds in rural schools.
 - I. Theory of play.
 - II. Some simple apparatus.
- Enrichment of the course of study.
- I. Objections.
 - II. Answers to common objections.
- III. Agriculture.
- IV. Manual Arts.
 1. Carpentry.
 2. Cooking and sewing.
- Rural school libraries.
- I. Raising money.
 - II. Lists of books.
- Consolidation.
- I. Advantages (See weaknesses of present schools.)
 - II. Reports on consolidation.
- The inclosed plan for a one acre plot for a rural school campus was made by a member of the class. Miss Zons is not a landscape gardener and no attempt at accurate scale was made. The purpose of the work was to develop an ideal.
- It is hoped to have a rural school conference during the winter term, at which the results of the research, the photographs, the sketches and other work of the class will be placed on exhibition.

THE COUNTRY SCHOOL A SOCIAL CENTER

We are living in a wonderful age. An age in which each human being is trying to bring out the very best that lieth in him not for his own personal gain; but that he may reach far out and satisfy the cry of a people who are longing for a knowledge of the truth.

Each rising sun throws back a curtain behind which we see new mysteries

and problems, which we with God's help must conquer, if we would have a nation founded on the solid rock which no human power can overthrow.

One of the greatest problems to be solved today, and one on which the destiny of our nation hangs, is the country school problem. We can easily see that the country school is not keeping pace with the development along

other lines of country life. New and scientific methods of farming have been studied out by some of our greatest men, but the same old methods of teaching are used in our country schools.

The country boy of 1876 never dreamed of separating milk with a cream separator, or of talking to his friends in a distant city by means of a telephone, or of the inoculation of soils with bacteria for certain fertility restoring crops; but today he realizes all these things which have done much to make country life a pleasure, by removing the old drudgery and making each man independent.

But how about the child in the district school, has he been given the advantages of such improvements, or is he still trying to prepare to meet the demands of this new life by studying the same old text books that his grandfather studied one hundred years ago?

Each human being, however unconscious he may be of the fact, has a longing within him to be prepared for life; and the country school must give its children this preparation, if it expects to produce men and women who will be leaders in this great republic of ours. In the past, many of our greatest men have been born and educated in the country; but, unless we put better equipment into our country school, our boys and girls who are determined to do something worth while are going to be swallowed up by our well equipped city schools; and, if the city gives them the preparation which they are after they will love the city and look upon the country as a place not fit for man. All our broad and fertile fields will lie untouched, and soon there will go out from the helpless city a cry for food.

God has placed the riches of our land in the fertility of her soils, and, if it is not kept productive by intelligent minds, our nation will soon perish.

The country school of our forefathers

was a place not only for daily study but a place where men and women, boys and girls met to hold literary contests and debates and to hear the gospel preached. It was a center around which community life grew. It had fond recollections and sweet memories, which bound the men and women who spent their youthful days within its walls into a firm union. But how about the little school house of to-day, which stands closed five months of the year with the grass and weeds growing up around it like the trees in a large forest; and the other seven months the child goes, sits down in his seat, hears the same old thing day after day. He has left a beautifully decorated country home surrounded by trees and flowers and come to spend the day in a little school house which has no attraction about it.

True you may say they no longer have literary contests and debates in our best city schools, but, in their place, you will find they have put something else.

Athletics have taken their place and are spreading fast and far through the city schools of to-day, and are doing much to make boys and girls pull together, giving to our city school such a school spirit as they never had before. Class cheers and class songs ring in the heart of every city boy and girl. Each child's heart swells with pride at the very sight of his school colors floating under the American flag. This training not only makes them stronger physically, but enables them to grasp the things taught in the class room more easily.

The child in the nearby country school hasn't even a flag pole to be proud of; he doesn't know what you mean by school colors; he has never played a game of baseball. His industrious well-intending father says, "I can give him plenty of exercise, if that is what he is after, without playing ball." Too many fathers and mothers

think play is unnecessary in the country, but they never stop to think of the many subjects crowded into the school curriculum which their boys and girls will never need. But listen, my country fathers, you are going to lose the boy sooner or later who is forced to attend a dead school like that. He picks up the daily paper which our modern rural delivery brings to your door every day and reads of the wonderful games the nearby city schools have played. He reads it in the weekly and the daily paper until he is determined to have some part in the great game which the world is playing. He soon learns to play the game, and gets his fellow students interested in it, but his parents are not willing to provide the necessary equipment for the team. The school board can see hundreds of other places where they can use their money to a better advantage. If the teacher is one of these sleepy fellows who is afraid the ball might hit the smaller children and hurt them, we can clearly see how one of the boys who might become a great leader in the affairs of our nation has all hope crushed.

There isn't a boy in the country today who wouldn't enjoy a good football game or a good baseball game just as well as the boys in our city schools. And if he can't play it in the country, if he is a boy who will make a real man, he will go where he can play the game. When our country schools close at the end of a term's work, there are no exhibitions, no commencement exercises, to show the parents what their children are doing and get them interested in the work of the school. The teacher hasn't even the power to promote her own pupils. Frightened until they are by no means able to do their best work, they are sent to the nearby city High School to take an examination given by the county superintendent, who has never visited their class room but once or twice and knows very little about

what they are doing. We hope the day will soon come when county superintendents and school boards will put teachers into their schools whom they can trust, and leave to the country school what by right is hers.

Many people say it is impossible to do such things in our country schools of to-day. They are too small and have no equipment. But remember, boys and girls, no great service was ever rendered by men and women who faltered before such obstacles as these. What we need in our country school to-day is a broad-minded, thinking teacher, who is in sympathy with country life and is educated to teach country boys and girls, instead of a teacher who is simply practicing on the country children to get enough experience to teach in the nearby city school.

The old proverb, "the teacher makes the school" is as true as old, so it can be seen that the future of our domestic citizenship depends upon the ability, training and patriotic devotion of the men and women to whom the homes of the nation shall intrust the education of their children. Each teacher must be a citizen maker, who is able to transform the raw material of childhood into an efficient citizenship. It is an easy matter to get a teacher who can keep school in the country; but it is hard, indeed, almost impossible, to get a teacher who can teach school in the country by making her school a center from which each individual within its influence can draw knowledge.

In 1906, the president of a State Normal School said to his graduating class, "the world is full of people who can do the things that can be done."

The country school of permanent influence has never been set up in our state and rarely enough in any other state. Can you do it? There was a member of that class who determined

to do it, and she did. You may ask how? She did it just as you and I must do it if we make country school teaching a success—by consecrated service. She went into a one room school house, which had no equipment, and entered into the work which she was determined to do. She did not tell the people in the community that they must build a new school building and get a lot of new equipment. She asked for nothing better, until she had shown the community the need of better things.

She knew more people than the boys and girls in her school room and soon had their support. She knew the mothers who trained the children and the fathers who ruled their homes, and by thus going far out into the community, she knew its needs and planned her school accordingly. She established domestic science clubs for the girls and athletic teams for the boys, and the school showed so much spirit that the hard-working fathers got interested and found time to attend the games. She gave them a course in ag-

riculture, which they could use in actual life, and which showed them the importance of knowing how to farm. The power of this school was soon felt in the nearby districts, and all the small schools within its reach were closed and the children were hauled to the center of the community life. The people of this community had no trouble in keeping their boys and girls in the country. They saw the power which the real country school had in a community and continued to put improvements upon it.

After the teacher had been there six years, instead of the old one-room school house, there was a modern school plant, which consisted of a three-room school building, a manual training department, a domestic science department, a library, which had books of interest to the community, a gymnasium and a cottage for the teacher.

The solitary little spot on which the one-room school building stood had been transformed into a social center.

Just so must every country school become a social center before it can meet the demands placed upon it.

PSYCHOLOGY MADE POPULAR

Every art, every science, every vocation, every trade and handicraft has its special vocabulary, its own class dialect. The farmer speaks one language, the fisher quite another. The language of the master of the laboratory or experimental station is a thing for the uninitiated to wonder at and even to fear, but only the devotees of that particular science understand.

Thousands of such technical terms can be found in dictionaries, yet as a matter of fact they are not a real, live part of the English language. They name new instruments and new machines, new processes and new theories, new arts and new sciences. They are undoubtedly necessary in technical

discussions. They save time too, for it is certainly more economical to name a process than to describe it. But to the ordinary layman such terms do not exist; they form no part of his reading or his speaking vocabulary. The trades and handicrafts have the advantage over the arts and sciences in that the dialects of the former consist largely of native words that belong, by virtue of age and universal use, to the very fibre of our language. Hence they are more generally understood than other technicalities. The language of science, on the other hand, is familiar only to a few specialists.

Psychology has its peculiar jargon. It bristles with coined technical ex-

pressions such as psychic synthesis, cerebral thermometry, concatenated performances, hypnagogic hallucinations, ideo-motor activity, and so on ad infinitum. Such terminology is all very nice. Very wise and learned men make it and use it too, quite cleverly. But it is responsible for a great deal of ignorance and superstition in popular ideas of mental life. Explode such an expression as empirical generalization in the face of your grocer, with whom you are arguing about the price of eggs and you will "have" him; the last word in the argument will undoubtedly be yours. Ask your washer woman what she means by indulging in hypnompompic reflections at ten o' clock on Monday morning and she will look at you as wildly as if you had addressed her in Choctaw. Your seamstress who is clever enough to manage at one time a mouthful of pins and a wordy tale of a dream she dreamt last night, has never heard of unconscious cerebration.

The mystery of mind has gnawed at man's curiosity since the world began. Adam must have had faint wonderings about Eve's mentality in those first days in the garden. Perhaps he wondered why, whenever he yawned in the heat of the day, Eve followed his example with irritating promptness.

That same question troubles many a teacher today. Why, when one student in a crowded class room yawns unguardedly, do all the others hastily take out their pocket handkerchiefs, or not, as taste dictates, and do likewise? I dare say Father Adam never discoursed to his spouse upon the instinct of imitation or the power of suggestion. No doubt he only gave a contemptuous masculine grunt and yawned some more. But he must have wondered.

An upright man of the land of Uz, named Job, had a tremendous interest in psychology. In the midst of affliction he pondered long and hard upon the mysterious ways of the infinite

mind, as he sat a-scraping himself in the ashes. And I am almost sure that Job never thought in terms of psychic phenomena.

Neither do the butcher and the baker and the candle stick maker and all the rest of us common folks. But we all have our mind problems; we are all vitally interested in the tricks and ways of our minds and we want our questions about them answered in a language that we know. Why, we ask, should a simple operation like buttoning and unbuttoning a glove, braiding the hair, or tying a shoe lace, prove so difficult in the learning, and subsequently so absurdly easy that it requires no conscious oversight? Why do I sometimes laugh when I cry and again, cry in the midst of laughter? Why is it that the boy, who, at the age of eight, wades with the zest of a duck into every mud puddle he comes upon, when advanced to the dignity of eighteen years, long trousers and shiny shoes, avoids with scrupulous care the same gutter that once so invited him? Such fickleness can not be explained as physical change. It is the same boy. The problem is similar to that of Sir John Cutler.

"Sir John Cutler had a pair of black worsted stockings which his maid darned so often with silk that they became at last a pair of silk stockings. Now, supposing these stockings of Sir John's ended with some degree of consciousness at every particular darning, they would have been sensible that they were the same individual pair of stockings both before and after the darning."

Why can I remember clearly things that happened ten years ago while yesterday's events slip from me and leave no trace? And again why is it that in a crowded reception room I balance awkwardly upon one foot and with the other work devastation upon a lovely lady's gown? Alone in my room or out

on a country highway, far from the madding crowd, I find my feet perfectly unoffending, moving sedately with simple grace. Why, oh why? Why am I capable of lying in bed on a freezing morning in a room without a fire, my very vitals protesting against the ordeal of getting up, when all sorts of urgent duties are calling me, and why, when I finally jump out, do I accomplish the act in a flash, as it were, without any effort or struggle?

These are constantly recurring questions to all of us and these are matters that psychology seeks to explain. But the great majority of people cannot understand the explanation that the science offers, because it is couched in psychological Choctaw.

A sensible old Frenchman, a biologist, has recently sent out a book called *The Life of the Spider*, in which he has the courage to discard the technical classifications of his science, and present the dramatic life of the insect in the simple language of the people. His book

is very popular for the reason that he has made interesting things which were formerly known only to a few, easily accessible to millions.

There is no reason why the science of mental life cannot be made as easy for the ordinary mind to grasp and as popular in its appeal as Fabre has made certain branches of biology. Mental life is dramatic, too; its story is sometimes thrilling as a tragedy, and again as mirth-provoking as a comedy. William James has done bravely; it is a bromidism worth repeating that his psychology reads like a novel. But that is true of the book only in spots. He has not succeeded in getting free of the mazes of scientific jargon. When that courageous psychologist comes, who believes in making good things plain and easy, he will write his book in the language of the people and call it psychology made popular. Then we shall all psychologize mildly; we shall dabble in mind as well as in books and art, and find it the most fascinating of games.

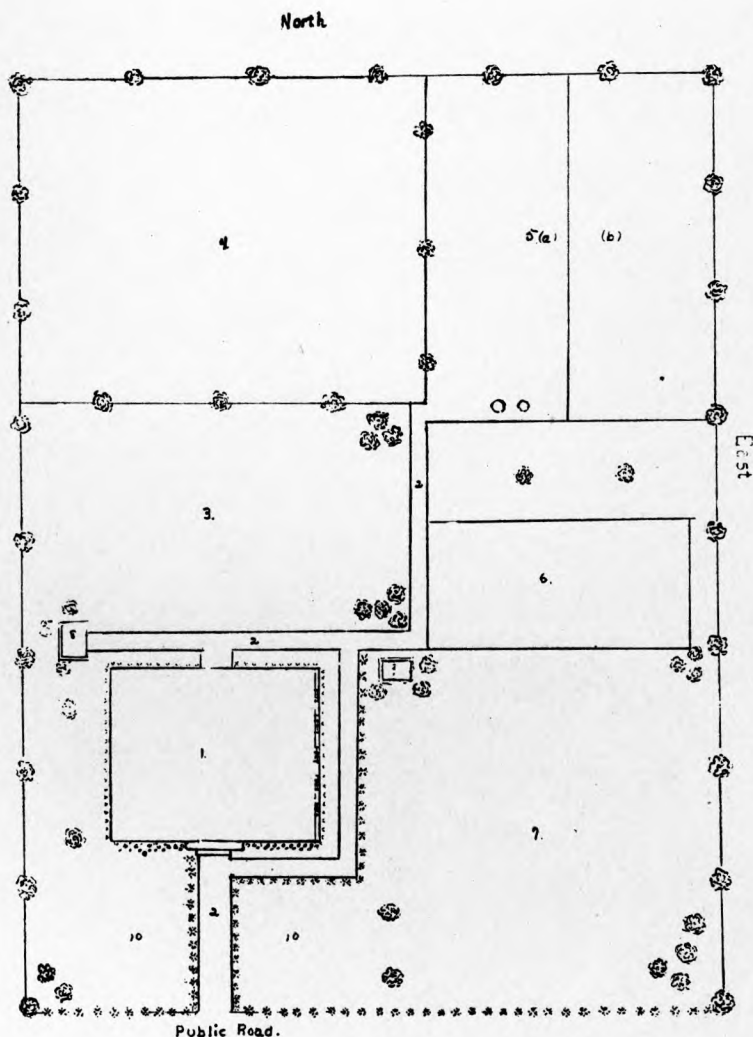
SOME EDUCATIONAL WEAKNESSES AND REMEDIES

If I were asked to state the pedagogical principle or doctrine that the normal school of my youth instilled into her pupils that had born the greatest fruit, I should unhesitatingly say the doctrine that whatever is amiss in a schoolroom, whether pertaining to discipline or efficiency in work, is directly traceable to the teacher. As a student, this seemed sometimes rather a hard doctrine, because we sometimes felt that the teacher was not solely responsible for poor results. Although the doctrine seemed hard, the results were good. Pupil teachers became introspective and self-analytic concerning inefficiency in work. As a result of such training, I have tried to seek for

cause of weakness in my own work, and in general in the teaching of subjects in which I am interested.

The necessity of such search is greater now than ever before, due to a wholesale criticism of the public school system. The press of to-day more strongly than ever before claims that the public school system is inefficient. Bok even goes so far as to say that it is almost an absolute failure. William Hawley Smith says that it fails in a large measure because it fails to educate all the children of all the people.

There is an element of truth in these criticisms. Some of them are just, and criticisms are good in so far as they lead teachers to self-analysis of



Plan of Rural School Grounds made by Miss Helen Zons

KEY TO PLANS

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. School house. | 6. Tennis court. |
| 2. Gravel walks. | 7. Girls' playground. |
| 3. Boys' playground. | 8. Boys' outhouse. |
| 4. Athletic field. | 9. Girls' outhouse. |
| 5. (a) School garden. | 10. Green lawn. |
| (b) Experimental plots. | |

method and to self-improvement, but they are useless if they suggest nothing concerning ways and means of improving the conditions adversely criticized. The habit of analysis leads one to search for methods of instruction that will both overcome the deserved criticisms of the past and remove the causes of the present shortcomings in our pupils.

That there are evidences of weaknesses in instruction is a fact well known to all teachers of experience. I have found it in all lines of mathematical study as well as in other subjects. In Arithmetic, one frequently finds pupils who can do mechanical work correctly, but who cannot work problems requiring thought. Two years ago in trying to plan for the best interests of the larger number of pupils who come here for review of elementary subjects in the hope of obtaining provisional certificates, I wrote to several county superintendents, asking for points of greatest weakness. In one reply, the superintendent said he could not specify any special point, that in Arithmetic he found them weak all over. Teachers of Algebra frequently find that students can do well all parts except problems, but that many fail ingloriously in problem work. In Plane Geometry, I find that a page of definitions is not mastered, frequently on account of the pupil's failure to get the thought. In conversation with co-workers, I find that the same condition exists in other subjects. In summing up the greatest weakness of the last two graduating classes, a co-worker said it was their inability to get the author's thought from the printed page.

With so many evidences of weakness, it is natural to inquire their cause. Possibly the teaching of mathematics has been especially defective. At any rate, an international commission on the teaching of mathematics was appointed some years ago and the Ameri-

can members of that commission have presented their findings in government reports. They say, "One of the most serious causes of poor work in Arithmetic in the United States to-day is the feeling on the part of a few city and state authorities that they are expected to initiate their brief term of service by having a few teachers prepare a new syllabus in the various subjects of the course. It is often considered that such a syllabus is to be commended the more in so far as it resembles all other syllabi the less."

The same commission finds four principal causes of defective Arithmetic teaching in this country and it will be noted that they apply equally well to other subjects, namely:

1. Lack of professional preparation.
2. Lack of professional contact.
3. Overwork, claiming that twenty-five periods a week is all that a teacher can do effectively.
4. Short and unstable tenure of office.

From the standpoint of the pupil, they report four principal causes also.

1. Immaturity. They cite as an illustration that in 1910 sixty-seven per cent of the first year high school pupils were either fourteen or fifteen.
2. Lack of preparation. This throws the burden of responsibility on the work of the grammar grades.
3. Aimlessness. That is, no idea of a life career.
4. Social diversions.

An excuse for giving these causes of poor Arithmetic teaching is that every cause mentioned operates with almost equal force in teaching all other subjects of the course. My own experience leads me to state that, in my humble opinion, there are at least three other causes more specific than the preceding.

1. Poor or improper methods of teaching Reading, beginning with the first grade and often extending through-

out the entire grammar school course. Too many teachers are satisfied if their pupils enunciate distinctly, pronounce correctly and give some attention to pauses, with no regard at all as to whether the pupil has obtained the author's thought. No pupil is a good reader who cannot get and give the author's thought. As a result of these poor methods, many pupils are unable to get the thought from the printed page. Any experienced teacher has heard too often the remark, "I understand it when you explain it, but I can't see it alone."

An amusing illustration of the results of the poor teaching of Reading was found two years ago. It fell to my lot to be asked to coach a group of boys who were preparing to give a farce to entertain a literary society. The leading comedy part was that of an Irish comedian. Mr. L., who had this part, was unable to commit his lines because a joke of any subtlety whatever was not gotten by him. It became absolutely necessary to explain all except the most obvious jokes, after which he had no trouble in committing his lines and interpreting the part to the satisfaction and pleasure of spectators.

A second additional cause is poor teaching of English and lack of emphasis, and in many cases, complete abandonment of work in formal grammar. Ten or fifteen years ago there was a revolt against formal grammar and the pendulum swung in the direction of the study of literature almost to the exclusion of grammar work. As a result, grammar is one of the subjects most poorly taught in our schools. (Let it be understood at this point that no reflection is intended on the work of our local high school or this school.) I have been interested simply from the standpoint of the effect of poor teaching of English on the teaching of mathematics, in Arith-

metic, Algebra, and especially in Geometry. Pupils come to me from various counties in this section of the State with varying degrees of excellence in their preparation. Many of them, I find, possess little ability to interpret a problem, being unable to see what is required and what relations are given that aid in the solution. The same is true in regard to Algebra. In Geometry, the weakness is even more apparent. One would think that by the time a pupil is ready to study Plane Geometry, he would be able to pick out correctly and instantly subject and predicate of a sentence, but if the subject has a participle modifier, I find they are very frequently unable to do so and this defect is vital to beginners in Geometry. Until they can distinguish clearly the hypothesis and conclusion of a theorem, they can do nothing worth while. One of the earliest propositions in Geometry is the one beginning, "Two straight lines drawn from a point in a perpendicular cutting off equal segments from the foot of the perpendicular, are equal, etc." When told that if the theorem consists of a single clause, the hypothesis is found in the modified subject and the conclusion in the modified predicate, many are unable to apply it, as in this particular instance. A large number of beginners will try to tell me that the predicate is "drawn" or "cutting." Hence it becomes necessary to stop in my Geometry work to teach a little English grammar. Also I find in the proofs that the pupils do not understand at all clearly the real force of the words "and," "but" and "then." Some even started a proof with the word "then." Before I can proceed, it becomes necessary to explain the force of these words, all of which, of course, detracts from the work of the subject itself.

A third additional cause of weakness is the ignorance of teachers or care-

lessness in allowing or encouraging inaccuracy in all lines of work, especially in mathematics. Inaccuracy of speech from an English standpoint has of late become something of a fad, especially the use of the first personal pronoun, as also the nominative for the objective in personal pronouns.

Since being asked to prepare this paper, I have noticed some amusing illustrations in the Erie daily papers. For instance, in a large display "ad" for a large dry goods store, the following: "For she who has but fifteen dollars for her fall suit." Another, a display "ad" of a large clothing store in Erie, "By special value we mean a greater value for the money than you would ordinarily expect." The following local was amusing, "Hazel Hunt and other friends attended a picnic last Thursday."

Inaccuracy in Spelling, as well as inaccuracy in statement, is too often passed over. As a teacher of Geometry, I am fond of a proper display of originality in demonstration of a proposition, but when one of my pupils recently spelled the name of the subject "Geomitary," I thought that this was as poor a display as I had ever seen and immediately decided that my Geometry class needed a few lessons in Spelling, and I proceeded to give them.

In Arithmetic, in speaking of inaccuracy, I mean inaccuracy not in result so much as inaccuracy of statement, although in drill work, inaccuracy of result needs more emphasis than it receives. For instance, any example in addition for the seventh grade is either all right or all wrong; nothing else should be considered.

At the beginning of this fall term, I dictated a list of twenty inaccurate statements to the classes in Senior Arithmetic, with the instruction to correct those needing correction and state the principle violated in each instance.

In each list dictated, two correct statements were included. It was somewhat amusing to find that the number of accurate statements was put by no one as lower than six, showing that many students had become so accustomed to incorrect and inaccurate forms that they no longer recognized them as such. Some of the remarks were characteristic. For instance, one young lady said, "But, Mr. Siddell, this is right. You are wrong. My teacher taught me that;" another, "My teacher was a Normal graduate. She should have known better than to have taught me those incorrect forms, shouldn't she?" So much for the last three causes of specific weakness.

Shakespeare says that it is a good divine who follows his own preaching. If I am not to condemn myself by a previous remark concerning the value of criticisms, it is necessary to point out some remedial measures.

The fundamental weakness of our present Normal course, to my mind, is in general too much academic work and too little professional training, and in particular the absence of any instruction in method in that most important primary subject, Reading. Hence I suggest for adoption in our Normal Course training and instruction in methods in Reading. Also I would advocate an increased amount of formal work in grammar in the Grammar grades; more Reading, and less dissection of approved literature. The change of emphasis in the character of the English work during the past ten or fifteen years has not brought the result its advocates claimed, namely, an increased love for good literature and more or less habitual reading of the same.

This conclusion was reached as a result of observation as a village librarian, at the same time acting as High School principal. Here I had the opportunity of studying the character

of the circulation of the library and it proved to my mind that the claim of the advocates of the change of English work had not been met. This was not due to the fact that the English work was in the hands of a poor teacher, for the teacher was unusually capable and efficient as an instructor in English.

Eternal vigilance in detecting and correcting inaccuracies of statement, as well as faulty English, will aid materially in overcoming the weakness. The moral aspect of this phase of the work is frequently overlooked. Inaccuracy of statement begets inaccuracy of thought and the teacher is responsible for the development of right habits of thought. Its relation to truthfulness of speech is too apparent to need emphasis. It will aid materially if teachers recognize the limitations and the dangers of accepting at face value any "born short" theory. There is too much "mollycoddling" of students along their supposedly "born short" lines. I grant that there is something in the "born short" theory, but it is unable to account for all shortcomings of all pupils, and in the hands of an inexperienced teacher, or one with a not too sensitive conscience, this over-worked theory is apt to serve as an sufficient excuse for the failure of that teacher to do efficient work. There is nothing in the subjects of Arithmetic, Algebra, and Plane Geometry which the normal individual cannot grasp, if his primary and grammar grade work

has been well taught. The exceptions to this, to my mind, are much more rare than any advocate of the "born short" theory is willing to admit.

Correction of faulty English and practice of correct forms should not be left entirely to the English classes, or the English teacher. Every oral or written recitation should be an exercise in English. Neither should Spelling lessons be confined to one phase of work. I have found this fall that the Spelling lesson in Geometry has proved helpful and more are to follow in the Geometry classes. Although we may not be the ones to teach Reading in the elementary schools, or teach others how to do it; although we may not be teachers of English in grammar grades, yet we can assist by insistence on accuracy in thought and expression in both oral and written work and by refusing to "mollycoddle" those who have either a congenital or an acquired disinclination for a certain line of work, remembering that a distasteful subject, if mastered, gives more real value and discipline to character if not to mind, than one altogether to one's liking.

Charles Kingsley is right when he says, "Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do which must be done, whether you like it or not. Being forced to work and forced to do your best will breed in you a hundred virtues which the idle never know."

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