

file curriculum

The task of the school is to do for each individual those things he most needs and which are not done by any other agencies. "Ill fares the child when school leaves to the home what the home leaves to the schools".

Education should make it possible for each individual to be an intelligent participant in an ever changing society. Education in the United States should enable the every individual to live creatively to the optimism of his capacity in a representative democracy. The school as an agency of a representative democracy has as its function the development, the perpetuation, the improvement and the realization of democratic ideals.* To accomplish such an aim the school should be conducted on a democratic basis. Education need not undertake to realize a democratic way of life by solving certain problems but by developing desirable attitudes while the individual is meeting situations in the classroom, on the playground, in the home and in the community.

Children face situations that require decision. Education must help them to choose wisely. Some situations which are generally common are: What is the safe thing to do here?, Which of these foods shall I buy?, What is a well balanced meal?, How much of advertising can I believe?, Where can I find out if this is really a good toothpaste?, swim suit, soft drink, etc.?, Why do we have to pay taxes?, What is best to wear tonight?, Why are we so poor?, What is the use of going to Sunday School?, Why do I have to wash my teeth? These and similar situations

*Course of Study "Point of View"

are often left to the child entirely or taken from him completely. Either is undesirable. Education should help him make the decisions wisely. He will gain skill in making similar decisions. He will get understandings of why and how that will give him desirable attitudes.

Frequently it is necessary to bring children face to face with situations which exist but of which they are not conscious because of very limited home training. The desirable reaction to these situations should be a product of realization through observation, reading and experimentation. It is not well to require certain behavior but let it develop through understanding.

Some specific examples of the democratic way might help to explain my philosophy of education, (Which is, that the school should do all for the individual that other agencies leave undone).

1. In a class room where the more advances pupils help the slower ones there is a boy who slaps his book shut if any but the teacher offers to help. That boy has an attitude that should change if he is to be a desirable person. He may let the pupil help if the teacher demands it. But the feeling will be just the same. The teacher is faced with a problem of developing the right attitude.

2. Children of one seventh grade class have heard their parents berate the schools because of taxes. They, too, object to any taxes. The teacher has the job of helping these children to see the benefits derived from taxation as well as the possible abuses under taxation. This requires reading, discussion, attendance at council, supervisors' meetings, etc.

3. There is a family in one school with sound white teeth but they have never owned a tooth brush. So to say "Keep your teeth clean and they wont decay" will not go over with them. Cleanliness and personal hygiene must be achieved by developing a desire to be attractive to others.

FORCED EDUCATION

By Ben Wand

Criticism of our schools has gained ground rapidly in recent years. There is widespread dissatisfaction with the nation's public school system, extending from junior high schools to the Liberal Arts colleges and universities.

The average man who criticizes the schools doesn't know what is wrong. He only knows that this country has unparalleled physical facilities for education and the most expensive public school and college system in the world. When he goes to employ a boy or girl just out of high school or college, however, he usually finds a youngster who is without work experience of any kind, one who has everything to learn about work habits and the job given him. Twelve to sixteen years have been spent in school, years that have taught the applicant little or nothing about how to live and how to work.

Out of every five boys who go through colleges other than professional schools, such as medicine or law, probably three should never have gone at all. They lose four precious years out of their work lives without gaining anything more than a career in athletics, a fraternity pin or how to wear clothes and handle a fork. This boy was cut out by nature to be a clerk, that one a mechanic, this one a truck driver, that one a sailor, a carpenter or a typesetter. These three out of five spend four years studying dry books and listening to dryer professors discourse impractically on practical and impractical questions, and come out of college with a mass of undigested facts which serve no purpose other than to confuse them. If lucky enough to find an employer, the average college boy tries to fit himself into a job for which he probably has no natural ability.

It seems to me that the trouble with primary education is the slavery of the junior and senior high schools to the autocratic combination of the universities of the land. Today, from the time boys and girls enter junior high school until they graduate, their courses are pointed to meet university entrance requirements. High schools do not train boys and girls for LIFE. They train them only for COLLEGE. Our high schools don't teach our children what they should learn about the mechanical and domestic arts, from the building trades to cooking and sewing, except in a negligible way, but require them to study foreign languages, algebra, and similar subjects, whether the pupil can assimilate them or not, just so they can meet university entrance requirements.

How much more sensible it would be to require for college entrance only the ability to pass an intelligence test and to be not less than 17 or 18 years of age. An then to so change our high schools as to give boys and girls the opportunity to learn about mechanics and marriage, money and morals, government and the fundamentals of business.

But that course would endanger the University System. It would undoubtedly reduce by 50 per cent the number of those who go to colleges and universities and check the demand for new buildings and more tax monies year after year, causing perhaps thousands of university professors, unequipped for any other purpose, to lose their jobs. That would be tragic for the professors but not so great a tragedy as the harm that is being done every year to the boys and girls of each succeeding generation who are going to college when they ought to be at work.

Nothing could be further from the truth than that all who enter college possess equal mental capacity. The state universities are filled with boys and girls who could not pass even a subnormal intelligence test and who are sent there by fond parents because it is "the thing to do." This is not true of the professional colleges, but even these are receiving far too many pupils of inferior mental capacity and ambition and turning out far too many doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants and what not for professions which have already reached a saturation point. My chief complaint is against the Liberal Arts colleges of the hundreds of universities of the land which fail to educate boys and girls for the jobs of life and which furnish the spawning grounds for more damnable isms than arise from any other source.

Today this country has more Facilities and less education than at any time in its history. I am not be able to prove this statement but I dare anyone to try to disprove it. The proof of my statement is revealed in the evidences of sloppy thinking which is threatening to destroy all that the people of this country have most cherished for 150 years—their personal freedom, their independence of government care, their system of free enterprise.

The millions who subscribe to government ownership, government competition with private business, maximum working hours and minimum pay for workers, \$50 per month pensions for all over sixty, an unlimited national debt, public relief for the inefficient and unthrifty, subsidies for pressure groups and a third term for the most extravagant president in American history, all present conclusive evidence that educational processes are failing to meet what we have a right to expect of them.

I am not one of those who find fault with the addition in recent years of courses in music and art in the public schools. Rather, I favor them to the extent of thinking that every high school pupil should be encouraged to play some instrument, sing in the glee club or study some form of the fine arts. Some understanding and appreciation of music is vital and a potent influence in the life of every person. But the sad inability of the average high school graduate to write a good letter, to be able to spell correctly the words he uses or to be able to add, multiply, divide and subtract without error seems to me without reason and wholly inexcusable.

My real quarrel is not with the way university processes of "education" are conducted but with the manner in which they rule the high schools of the nation. Autocratic domination by universities of primary schools should be smashed. The basic purpose of primary schools—the public grade and high schools—be to train boys and girls for daily living.

It is time to begin the effort to free our public schools from college domination. When that is done, class consciousness and class strife will be greatly reduced. Then boys and girls will no longer feel that they simply "must go to college" in order "to be somebody." And one of the most desirable results will be a greater respect for those who work with their hands and not with their white collars.

noon, Mon.
 Much of this you've heard before. But you
 want it for reference as time goes on.
 I enjoyed being in Loudoun. Everybody
 was friendly.
 4:30 PM. (a long day but I enjoyed it)
 I'll be home tomorrow.