

THE TEACHER SHORTAGE

During the early part of the fall term the Secretary of the National Education Association received reports on the supply of teachers from fully 40 per cent of all the teaching positions in the United States. The results show a teacher shortage throughout the country, including teachers below standard, of 15.5 per cent. This means for Virginia a shortage of probably more than 2,000 qualified teachers.

Revolutionary movements accompanied by violence and other spectacular features attract our attention, but sometimes more dangerous movements, going on silently and unobtrusively, contain more elements of real danger for a State. We cannot understand how legislators or other State officials can refuse to see a real menace to Virginia in its shortage of public school teachers.

SAMUEL P. DUKE

X

CORRESPONDENCE

THE USE OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR
TRAINING SCHOOL PURPOSES

When the State Normal School for Women was established at Harrisonburg, one of the first questions that arose was whether or not it could be arranged to use the local schools as the training school for the young women who were to go out to teach.

Up to that time the idea was new, as almost every normal school had its "Practise School," or "Model School," as they are called, built on its own campus and conducted as a part of the institution---entirely separate and apart from the local public schools. After a full discussion of the plan, and clear and definite understanding, it was agreed that the Normal School should make the experiment on a few of the rooms at the Main Street School, and if the results should prove to be for the best advantage of all concerned, then more rooms---as many as might be needed---should be available for practise teaching. At first two rooms were thus used, and the results proved so satisfactory that more were taken into the plan, until at present there are three for the junior high school, three for

the grammar grades, four for the elementary grades, and one for the kindergarten---a total of eleven rooms in which teacher training is carried on, with as many critic teachers to supervise and to do critic work.

This fact indicates that the plan succeeds well, so far as the Harrisonburg schools are concerned. The Normal School can use more rooms if it so desires, when it feels the need of them.

There are many things which make such a combination of effort desirable:

1. It gives experience under actual school conditions to the young women who are soon to go out to teach. No attempt is made to select children for these rooms, nor is there any attempt to have fewer pupils in them. Actual conditions prevail at all times, and no thought is taken to make any difference in rooms thus used and those not so used. The young women meet the difficult problems and help to work them out to the best possible advantage to the children being taught. All understand that the school is for the children, and not for any special advantages of the Normal students.

2. The plan unites the forces and combines the efforts of all parties to the one end---to make the schools of Harrisonburg the best possible. This is what the local authorities demand, and it is the desideratum of the Normal School as well. The result is that everything is done that is possible in order to have the very best schools under the combined efforts of all concerned. There is no rivalry, no jealousy, no divided efforts; every one is loyally and enthusiastically working to the one single aim---to give to the children of Harrisonburg every advantage under a modern and progressive school system. Not only is this true with regard to those connected with the schools, but it is true as well among the parents and friends and the community generally. The community is thus tied up with both institutions.

3. It is a distinct advantage to the schools of the city. By this means it is possible to obtain for the children teachers who could not otherwise be had. It makes it possible to pay these better salaries and thus to secure teachers of unusual preparation and experience. The association with the young women who come to us from the Normal School---young women who in a few months will go out to teach in the very best schools in this and other states, and who, every moment, are putting forth every effort to do something that will be of special help and benefit to the children with whom they are working---is most inspiring and helpful.

4. It stimulates the teaching force to do superior work. The faculty of the Normal School is ready at all times to give any help and advice to any teacher, as well as to any child, in the system; and since they have had special preparation and training, our teachers are wont to put forth their best efforts to meet the standards set by those who know good schools and know when teaching is of a high order.

5. It solidifies community interest. The entire plant and equipment of the Normal School is offered to the city schools to be used just as if it were a part of the system. Similarly, the plants and the equipment of the city schools are used by the Normal School in every way desired. Each welcomes the widest possible use of the other's equipment, grounds, buildings, and libraries. Thus all are in position to get the benefit that is to be had at both places, with the result that much unnecessary actual expense and outlay of money and energy is saved. Harrisonburg feels that the Normal School is its own school, while the Normal School feels that the city school system is a part of that institution. If this arrangement did not exist, there would be a clear line between them and much that is now done could not possibly be accomplished because of rivalry, jealousy, and misunderstanding.

The question is often asked: "Is the arrangement of advantage to the city schools?" My reply is that it is. Reasons can not be given here beyond the fact that the teaching done by Normal students is done under the strictest supervision of the critic teacher, in charge, as well as under the supervisor of teacher training of the Normal school and under the general direction of the principals and the superintendent—and the further fact that these student teachers are graduates of the best four-year high schools and have had, in addition, nearly two years of special training at the Normal School, and are eagerly being sought to go out into the state to take the very best places as teachers—and the further fact that every lesson to be taught is thoroughly prepared and planned and submitted to the teacher in charge before it is presented to the class. These facts alone make it evident that every precaution is taken that each lesson shall be taught well and thoroughly. Much of this student teaching is far above that done in the majority of the schools in the State.

So far as Harrisonburg is concerned, the arrangement has been, and is, most satisfactory and helpful in every way. Both the Nor-

mal School and the city schools are being benefited, and neither would wish to see a change made in the situation.

WILLIAM H. KEISTER

XI

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The list of honor students for the first quarter 1919-20 is as follows: Those whose average grade is A: Degree students—Nellie M. Critzer, Afton; Dorothy McK. Spooner, Farmville; Post-graduate—Vergilia P. Sadler, Scottsville; Seniors—Linda S. Berrey, Criglersville; Iris Fay Glascock, Buffalo Lithia Springs; Catharine Harrison, Harrisonburg; Nella S. Roark, Alta Vista; Juniors—Louise F. Coleman, Roanoke; Arline Cutshall, Roanoke; Lillian A. Miller, Baltimore; Specials—Mrs. Wm. G. LeHew, Harrisonburg.

Those whose average grade is nearer to A than to B: Degree student—Mary McK. Seebert, Lexington; Postgraduates—Sallie L. Browne, Stanardsville; Elise A. Loewner, Harrisonburg; Lena M. Reed, Penn-Laird; Seniors—Lelouise Edwards, Norfolk; Rosa P. Heidelberg, Rustburg; Marion B. Nesbitt, South Boston; Mary J. Phillips, Bedford; Allie Mae Brindel, Roanoke; Thelma Miller, Roseland; Juniors—Iona Wimbrough, Chincoteague; Louise Houston, Fairfield; Chloe Peck, Roanoke; Anne B. Gilliam, Petersburg; Charlotte Morris, Gaylord; Emily Round, Manassas; Preparatory students—Margaret McDonald, Roanoke; Mary C. Harris, Pendleton; Celia P. Swecker, Monterey; and Harriet W. James, Mobjack.

This list is made on the basis of the new grading system adopted this session: the grade A indicates "Excellent" and represents approximately the numerical grade of 94 to 100.

Matters move apace in the affairs of the Dramatic Club. On Tuesday, January 20, ten "dramatic goats" were admitted to membership in the Stratford. First they were banqueted, and then initiated, but the latter word is a tame expression for the circus that went on under the

Stratford

Dramatic Club