

the proceeds in brick and mortar, instead of in teachers? The wretched underpayment of the teaching profession of Virginia is a disgrace—not only to the State's sense of justice, but to the State's intelligence. Nothing could be more shortsighted, more stupid, more certain to react ruinously.

Not less surprising than the declining popularity of teaching among Randolph-Macon girls is the increased interest in other professions. Interior decorating, of course, which twelve of the girls have chosen as an art career, may appeal to them solely because it offers a congenial outlet for artistic impulses. It hardly offers opportunities for as large a percentage of the students as propose to follow it. In industrial chemistry, the choice of fourteen girls, it may be that the fascinations of that branch of chemical science allure. Seventeen girls propose to enter library work, which, by the way, is notoriously underpaid, and sixteen are interested in medicine.

Journalism, curiously enough, attracts half as many girls as teaching, but whether it offers good openings for women at this juncture may be doubted, since there is an undeniable prejudice on the part of many newspapers against utilizing women as workers. The exceptional girl, however, who can write good "features" and develop departmental work on a newspaper, is distinctly in demand.

A very encouraging item of the Randolph-Macon statistics is that eleven girls, more than 4 per cent. of the class, propose to take up secretarial work. Here, surely, are possibilities, very real possibilities. Business executives and busy professional men need assistance of a type rather difficult to procure from the rank and file of typists. They need women of good education, training, familiarity with business and social usage; and where they find such women, they are usually able to give them good salaries. The girl, for her part, not only has a respectable income, but sees business or professional work from a wide and informing angle. Ten years hence, as men see the advantages of competent secretaries, this will probably be one of the best fields open to young college graduates, and will serve, in addition, as a training school for women executives.—*Richmond News-Leader.*

## IX

## CORRESPONDENCE

## AN ILLUMINATING VIEW ON EDUCATIONAL MATTERS WITH ITS ANSWER

(Letter to the Harrisonburg News-Record)

I want it distinctly understood that I am not opposed to education or good roads, but I am opposed to the way our money is spent and the kind of results obtained. I claim our present system of education is a miss-education. Any system that makes people shun manual labor and makes the recipient look for jobs that carry with them white hands and nice clothes with plenty of leisure is not in consonance with my ideals of true economics. Some one that had the true ring said, "Toiling hands alone are builders of a nation's wealth and fame. Titled laziness is fed and fattened on the same." I have always been opposed to paying anything out of the public crib for schools except the common free school, to run for five months in a year (with compulsion). I contend that a common English education is all that is essential. If any want more let them pay for it. Take the University, Blacksburg, etc., and see the class of aristocratic spendthrifts that are turned out to prey upon the laboring class. I say, not one cent from the public treasury for their support. I contend the teachers now are getting more than they earn for the few hours that are taught. What little time I went to school, in "Ye Old Days," the teacher put in a square day, often supplemented with the rod. What we ask is fair return for the money spent. Not like the fellow at the boarding house that passed his cup up the seventh time for coffee, which elicited the question, "You must be fond of coffee?" and who said, "I am, or I would not drink so much water to get a little."

Respectfully submitted.

R. J. MASON

Bridgewater, Va.



## REPLY TO MASON

X

Editor News-Record:

What a pity it is that among humanity's great throngs there must be, every now and then, a "Mental Misfit," one who has straggled so far behind the procession of intellectual progress, whose thought is so completely out of step with the times, that he should rise up among his fellow men and cry out for a five month's school and the reduction of teacher's salaries. Ye Gods, how else are we to account for such mental brush heaps from whose tangled thought such odious ravings are emitted, other than to class them as "Nature's Mistakes"?

If R. J. Mason, of Bridgewater, with his contracted mind and contorted ideas, is a product of such schools as he advocates in last Tuesday's News-Record, then let us do away with schools altogether rather than return to his kind. Some one has truly said that "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," and as this case would indicate, the less it is the more dangerous it seems to be.

Imagine, if you can, a nation made up of such miscellaneous misfits as he who advocates the closing of our high schools and universities, the limiting of our public school term to five months and the reduction of teachers' pay. Imagine our legislative halls filled with such "giants of intellect," and you would have a government chaos that would, by comparison, make Russia look like a highly organized world power in the advanced stages of civilization and efficiency.

Perhaps the Almighty intended that some portion of this world, such as Russia, should be set apart as an International "Mad House" within whose boundaries we should confine the ravings of "Unbalanced Radicalism"; and a shame it is that we do not protect intelligent civilization by some such method. It is indeed fortunate that the rural sections of America, such as the "Valley of Virginia," have advanced in general intelligence and have such a fortitude of purpose that the mental eruptions of "One Mason" are looked upon by the people generally about as they would look upon the antics of a sun-worshiper, which because of its ridiculousness causes a faint smile of pity and is soon forgotten.

A SCHOOL PATRON

## THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

The inevitable has happened. A textbook on the junior high school has appeared. Superintendent Bennett of the public schools of Pomona, California, is the author. When one recalls that ten years ago there was but a single textbook on the whole high school movement and that there are now a score or more of excellent volumes in this field, one welcomes the appearance of this pioneer book on the junior high school.

## THE BOOK AND ITS CONTENTS

Mechanically, the writer has not seen a less satisfactory book in some time. It is bound in cheap brown boards like the early books on "pedagogy," with the title on the back very much askew, so that one's first impressions are not at all good.

One finds the paging unattractive and notices that frequently lines are very unequally spaced even to the point of interfering with the reading. The table of contents and the thirteen-page bibliography bear every evidence of being the work of a novice in the printer's art. Moreover, poor proof-reading seems to have allowed a rather unusual number of misspellings to creep in, together with such unfortunate mistakes as the use of two different plurals for curriculum. There is no definition of the much-used term "course of study," although several related terms are carefully defined. A second edition will give the opportunity to make these errors of effect a less prominent feature.

Superintendent Bennett as a practical school man urges upon his fellows (p. 129) that they compete more definitely with the "college professor" in placing their contributions before the educational public, a very desirable thing indeed. This book, however, one finds a rather curious admixture of the theory and practise of education; some co-operative plan of writing whereby those parts dealing with the principles of education might be treated by students and the practical ex-

*The Junior High School*, by G. Vernon Bennett, 224 pages. Warwick and York, Baltimore, 1920. \$1.25.