

ized tests. Such scores could only be derived by applying the scale widely to samples obtained in the same manner in various grades of the public school. Of little less interest are the differences in the range of scores of each group.

In conclusion it may be said that it is the hope of those who were engaged in this experiment that it may prove an incentive to others to form scales in this field. The hemming stitch or buttonhole-making would prove desirable and relatively simple projects. Such an objective standard, even though only semi-scientific, will prove to be of very definite help to any teacher in judging the achievements of her pupils, and will, like the standardized tests derived in other school arts, form a splendid concrete motive for her pupils for self-criticism and improvement. The co-operative plan used in its derivation has very real advantages in bringing together the interests of the various departments of any institution.

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II

MAKING THE MOST OF THE SCHOOL ENTERTAINMENT

In the good old days the Friday afternoon "speaking" was the "high-spot" in the week's events. The children, even the tiniest tots in the "A B C" class, had studied their pieces arduously and had been put through agonizing rehearsals by hopeful relatives. Now, at last, the supreme hour was here, and dressed in their stiffest, most uncomfortable "Sunday-best," they sat waiting their turn. It was a dramatic moment, tense with possibilities. What if one FORGOT!

The public entertainments were similar to these weekly programs, the only variations being the giving of ready-made dialogues, the formal reading of carefully prepared essays,

This is an introduction to a series of articles dealing with school programs. Each will be an actual description of an entertainment worked out by a group of children in our training school.—Editor.

or the presenting of plays written by some one else and memorized down to the last gesture.

These exercises afforded practically no opportunity for the functioning of the play instinct; neither did they give any constructive expression to satisfy the child's dramatic hunger. Yet, because they gave some training in facing an audience, and because they came at a time when the child's life was very barren, they were well worth while.

In far too many schools today the exercises are of this type. They are something apart from the regular procedure, put on either to raise money or to show the children off to the community. The children are trained in a set, stilted task, by a weary teacher. Each has his particular bit, unrelated to the whole; the chief motive is personal success; attention is upon self or upon the audience; the thrill that comes through losing one's self in a piece of creative work is entirely absent. In fact, a brief survey of the situation brings one to the question: does the school entertainment merit a place in our school procedure? Let us attempt an enumeration of the values of such work, if it is properly managed. First, it affords a powerful motive for the regular school activities. Children love to *do* things, to write plays, to dramatize customs of other lands, etc. Here they meet problems vital to them and are willing and eager to do extra reading, even extra writing, because they see the need. In fact, the teacher whose fifth grade stages "John Smith" without her getting considerable investigation of colonial Virginia from them is letting a golden opportunity slip. This is only another way of saying that when the school program is a direct outgrowth of every-day lessons it lightens the burden for the teacher, and spurs the children on to greater effort in related lines.

Second, this type of program furnishes a place for constructive expression upon the part of the children; it gives them a chance to realize themselves with their bodies, with words, with materials. Our school practise is still too far behind the maxim, "learning by doing." We have allowed the formal side of school work to usurp the center of the stage. Even our now-rejected aim of education, acquisition of knowledge, did not warrant this. Modern psychology has emphasized the fact that, besides sensory and as-

sociation nerves, the child has motor ones as well; that the muscles, the entire machinery of movement, yield sensations of the richest possible connotation; that, as a consequence, a child's ideas of a thing are best acquired by active experience with it; that knowledge becomes power only through use. Full realization of these truths makes the teacher on the alert for projects to be worked out in the school, thus not only using the knowledge gained, but forcing the child to supplement and enrich it. The school program can be made to meet these conditions satisfactorily, but something besides recitations and songs will have to be admitted.

Third, such programs as this will be a means of socializing the grade or school. In a group activity such as putting on a play of their own construction, planning a field day, or dramatizing an excursion to a cotton mill, the children lose themselves in the spirit of the thing. They PRACTISE working together and there is a possibility—if the repetitions are sufficient—of their actually acquiring the habit of co-operative effort—a necessity in the realization of our dream of the future America. Many occasions arise when the class is divided in its desires, the matter is settled by vote, and the losing side makes a manful effort to be good losers, going to work for the good of the cause with as much zest as if they had won—a microcosm of democratic America. Again, although such projects offer an opportunity for any child having an idea, or the ability to carry out even a small part of another child's idea, to participate; just as surely do they furnish the gifted child a chance to realize himself to the fullest extent, training him for future leadership. This opportunity for the upper quartile is a matter being given much attention by our educational leaders just now.

Fourth, the school program may be made to be of inestimable value in the solution of one of our great national problems—the use of leisure time. As a nation our spare time is not making us better men and women to the extent that it might. On the one side, it is too often stimulation rather than recreation, excitement rather than happiness. On the other side, there are numbers of people, especially in the rural districts, who do not know how to play at all. Better the most lurid melodrama that the "movies" afford

than no change from the day's gray grind. The importance of community recreation of the highest type is fully recognized today and concerted efforts toward better things are being made. There are several definite movements to arouse interest in pageantry; the Y. M. C. A. and other agencies are endeavoring to perpetuate the community sings that arose during the war; certain colleges, also social centers in cities, are organizing groups of amateur players into "Little Theater" movements; numbers of cities now provide art galleries or visiting art exhibits; there is even a society for the promotion of folk dancing. But although the results from these movements are excellent, they are spreading slowly and will continue to do so until the school accepts full responsibility for training Americans to LIVE as well as to MAKE A LIVING. If people are to sing, to dance on the green, to produce plays and pageants with local talent, it will not be by compulsion, but because the American school gave training for the leisure that a democracy demands for its citizens. Accepting this responsibility will give great emphasis to the school program, for most of the worthwhile activities of leisure time group themselves around it. If we clarify our ideas here, there will not be an added burden for the teacher, rather will the school procedure be unified and simplified. For play is distinctly educative; it means stimulating the child to greater effort, not amusing him. In fact, no other type of school work is of more educative value than this group of borderline recreational activities, such as pageantry, organized handwork, games, etc. If properly directed, they mean sustained effort in the face of difficulties, and are, when viewed from that angle, work; but the happy abandon with which the class loses itself in the scheme, and the high type of creative imagination involved, mark them as differing from a child's play only in superior organization.

When the school program is a direct outgrowth of the course of study, when it is planned as a regular part of the school work and made to furnish a motive for much of it, when it provides opportunity for self-realization through constructive work of a co-operative sort, then there is no question as to its right to a place in our schools.

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