

# THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

Published monthly by the State Normal School for Women at Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Entered as second-class matter March 13, 1920, at the post office at Harrisonburg, Virginia, under the act of March 3, 1879.

James C. Johnston, Editor  
Conrad T. Logan, Assistant Editor  
Henry A. Converse, Manager

**Advisory Board**  
John W. Wayland Elizabeth P. Cleveland  
Rosa P. Heidelberg Katherine M. Anthony  
Annette L. Houston

Manuscripts offered for publication from those interested in our state educational problems should be addressed to the Editor of The Virginia Teacher, State Normal School, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

## X

### EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

#### TO TEST VALUE OF EDUCATIONAL FILMS

To Dr. Frank N. Freeman, professor of educational philosophy in the School of Education of the University of Chicago, has been granted \$10,000 by the Commonwealth Fund of New York. The money is to be spent in an effort to determine just what value the motion picture has in the education of children.

"There seem to be two general problems presented for solution," said Dr. Freeman in an interview dispatched to the *New York Times*. "One is to determine what can best be taught by moving pictures and to devise means of enlarging the field, and the second is to find ways of improving the pictures themselves.

"Some of the films in use in the schools are of a purely educational character but more of them are in the nature of literature in that they are partly entertainment. There are, of course, biological and nature study pictures that might be classed as strictly educational. There are also in this class the animated diagrams showing the circulation of the blood, nerve action, etc.

"Visual education, at present, is not systematized. The situation reminds of an enthusiastic friend who went to Mexico to

take pictures. He shot everything in sight and then when he got back it took a geographer to 'cut and paste' and get an understandable 'story' out of the films.

"Motion pictures will not spread over the whole curriculum but will be incorporated as a part of the school work. What is best to show is a matter for much study. Some subjects, of course, lend themselves very readily to the film, as the hatching of salmon and orange culture. Pictures of the various stages in these industries are, I think, readily understood by the children. Getting vicarious experience, one man called it.

"Valuable results are obtained in the presentation of objects which the child never has seen. If, for instance, the child never had seen a ship or a picture of one, a film of a vessel moving over the water would convey much more meaning than oral information."

Experimental work now is going on in the University of Chicago, at the University of Illinois and in at least two cities where there are large school systems. Pictures are being taken, shown to the pupils and the results observed. One test is to determine whether it is possible by motion pictures to show the child the proper way to sit while writing and another will be on the proper use of tools, the pictures being made in the school shops.

"Because of the lack of precise information on the film in the education field," said Dr. Freeman, "films sometimes are much too long. Again they are too short. How much 'film' a child can 'absorb' is a matter for experiment. There is a grievous lack of system, too, in the matter of captions. I have seen films that were more than 60 per cent captions. Is this the best length or should they be much shorter, or should there be no captions at all and such matter left to oral exposition after the manner of the illustrated lecture?

"I am of the opinion that the film is not so far superior to other methods as to be substituted in a wholesale way, but that it has its definite field and is excellently adapted to certain things seems beyond doubt."

#### HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALSHIP LOOKED UPON AS PROFESSION

The increasing number of men and women who are preparing themselves for positions as high school principals is one of the most encouraging indications of progress in the high school system of Virginia, Harris Hart, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, said recently, according to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

In a recent report to Mr. Hart, Henry G. Ellis, State supervisor of secondary education, states that many of the better high schools of the State are in charge of trained, professionally minded educators.

"The principalship of a high school of the better class is no longer looked upon as a temporary moneymaker for a young man between his college course and professional work, or as a retreat for persons who cannot conveniently make a living in other occupations," Mr. Hart stated. "Practically all of the cities and larger towns, and many small towns and rural communities, recognize that the high school principalship is a position which should be filled by a skilled expert, and insists on the employment of a professional educator for the position.

"Salaries of principals of 292 high schools of the State in 1921-22 ranged from a minimum of \$900 to a maximum of \$4,000. The average salary was \$1,692.27. This is below the national average, but represents an increase of over 30 per cent in the past three years in Virginia. Nine principals received from \$2,000 to \$2,500, and the remainder received less than \$2,000 a year. The gradual improvement in principals' salaries will encourage better training and attract more prepared men and women to the work.

"The State Department of Education recognizes that the 292 principals of accredited high schools in the State can and should be a great force for educational advancement, and encourages in every possible way the employment of professional educators as principals. Each year since 1918 the department has held a conference of principals at the University of Virginia. These

conferences have helped in the work of creating a professional principalship, and have been of much benefit to the high schools of the State in other ways. The principals of the State also maintain their own association, which meets as a section of the State Teachers Association at the Educational Conference in Richmond each November."

#### A METHOD OF DRAMATIZATION

Twelve steps in the process of dramatizing a story are suggested by Elizabeth Miller in her book on *The Dramatization of Bible Stories*. They follow:

1. Select a story with care; then adapt it for telling.
2. Tell the story, emphasizing the essential parts.
3. Let the pupils divide the story into pictures, or scenes.
4. Discuss what should take place in each scene.
5. Let volunteers act out one scene as they think it should be done, using their own words.
6. Develop criticism by the other pupils with suggestions for improvement.
7. Have a second acting of the scene for improvement.
8. Work out each scene in the same manner.
9. See that each child has the chance to try out many parts.
10. Play the story through many times. Change it often according to the criticism, until the pupils recognize the result as a product of their best effort.
11. With the help of the pupils change the words into the diction fitting the story.
12. Let the group assign definite parts to be learned for the final performance.

---

Talk of the happiness of getting a great prize in the lottery! What is that to the opening of a box of books?—Robert Southey.

---

Far more seemly were it for thee to have thy study full of books than thy purse full of money.—John Lyly.