V

RECENT BOOKS OF INTEREST TO TEACHERS


A mere glance at the title of this encouragingly thin book might suggest that it is one or more of the crop of manuals that have followed Woolley's excellent Mechanics of Writing. But this is no manual in the sense of a handbook which, by means of a full and carefully subdivided index, enables the writer or printer to lay finger upon some rather definite guidance in the practical need of almost any moment.

On the contrary, the strength of the book lies in requiring the student himself to formulate the rules. For instance, in studying the comma, there are first given varied and suggestive examples of its use. Then the student is invited to write a set of rules for this mark. The road before him is not staked out, but he is invited to write a set of rules for this mark. He has general guidance in the warning that these rules should contain reference to series, non-essential relative clauses, etc., etc.

The spelling list includes some common words that need watching; but perhaps it is true that many of the others, like idiosyncrasy, schematic, ricochet, might better be trusted to the safe-keeping of Webster, to give place to a greater number of the "little foxes" that every day give trouble.

"At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark," or in Virginia, whatever may fit Mr. Johnson's needs in Missouri.

The author makes it clear that we can not punctuate by "feeling" or by the pauses in reading. He has an enjoyable bit of word-derivation and a short and discriminating list for pronunciation. He pays due respect to sentence structure as an index of one's power to think, and warns against the sentimental extravagance that too often breaks out and breaks off in emotional superlatives.

Ettel Spilman


An abasedly illustrated school edition of one of Scott's less widely read novels. The editor's introduction and notes both emphasize the historical background—Charles the Bold and the struggle of the Swiss Confederates against him. Mechanically, the book has all the excellence one expects of any product of the Clarendon Press.


Eight lectures delivered by Professor Dewey at the Imperial University of Japan in Tokyo during February and March, 1919. Honored as the greatest educational philosopher, Dr. Dewey is also regarded as the outstanding student of philosophy in America. This book has therefore a definite interest for those who are seeking an interpretation of the reconstruction of ideas and ways of thought now going on in philosophy.


The first section of this book is a detailed account of an experiment conducted at the Trenton, N. J., Normal School. There Miss Wells organized the years' work in each of the three primary grades around one major project. Out of these major projects grew various minor ones. Working these related projects out resulted not only in much group activity within each of the three grades, but also established a spirit of co-operation between the three grades, thus taking the practice in living together one step further.

The central point used in grades one and two was an investigation of the sources of local supplies. This gave meaning to the usual topic of home life in first grade and of stores in second. The children played "families" in first grade, they kept a "model department store" in second grade. This department store supplied many family needs for the first grade; it was an integral part of the Victory City run by the third grade. In the concrete account of the three projects in their relation to each other the teacher and supervisor will derive many fertile suggestions.

The second and third sections of the book give guiding principles and theses underlying the organization of such a curriculum. The treatment here is clear, but there is very little original material. She does set forth a normal school curriculum for primary teachers which consists entirely of projects. These projects are built around the usual topic of home life and the usual topic of stores and stores.


The Teaching of History in the Junior and Senior High Schools is a book of real value. It is attractive to the eye, inspiring to the imagination, and satisfying to the common sense. It puts forth a specific procedure for a high school pupil's education in history—and a real, workable, usable growing education it is, too. While the author tells the teacher how to do more things than can be done, he learns the very definite impression that he is trying to show only some of the possibilities and that no originality of teacher or pupils is to be interfered with by following these well planned ideas.

Ethel Spilman
ment. These two sections of the book will be of more help to supervisors and normal school teachers than to grade teachers.

In section four, Miss Wells makes a real contribution to our project literature. Here she has organized the year's work in each of the three grades under the heads: first, facts taught; second, skills begun; and third, habits, attitudes and ideals. These children who had played family, kept store and built a city had also covered more ground in traditional subjects than is expected of these grades. This part of the book is unique in the help afforded the teacher confronted with a formal course of study, yet possessed of or possessed by modern ideas of education.

Some examples of the children's work are given in the appendix. There is nothing new in having children write their own supplementary readers but this account of how to do it is the clearest I know. In fact, therein lies the secret of the success bound to reward Miss Wells's efforts—that the book is usable.

KATHERINE M. ANTHONY


Education and the General Welfare, by Dr. Frank K. Sechrist of the University of Cincinnati, is represented to be a textbook in school law, hygiene, and management. There are twenty-two chapters, an appendix, list of charts and figures, illustrations, references by chapters, and an adequate index. This book was worked out in connection with classes in education and in a sense has been tested.

It opens with the demonstrated thesis that the general welfare is directly dependent upon education. "To make more of our material resources, we must fall back on the resources of the mind. These are by their nature inexhaustible. We must keep extending the intellectual frontier," p. 3. It would take a man 560 seasons to turn over a square mile of soil with a spade; three properly equipped and manned tractors can do this work in thirty-six hours. Thus cunning prevails over mere muscle.

The formal aims of education, the amount of illiteracy and its elimination, the history of local and nation-wide public opinion and educational control, federal grants for education, child labor with its consequences and control, the status and methods of securing school attendance, the school challenged to develop and safeguard as basic in a developed character. The reviewer believes this to be the most significant contribution of the book.

The inexperienced teacher will find The Work of the School Day a useful chapter. Play, food and sleep, and recreation constitute three standard chapters.

Such auxiliary agents of the school as the home, the National Children's Bureaus, school gardening, savings banks, civic clubs, scout organizations, etc., come in for a reasonable proportion of space. The appendix considers standardizing requirements.

Obviously Dr. Sechrist's book covers a wide range of considerations; it must do so to show the relation between education and general welfare. This is not a work for the expert. It will serve the general reader and average teacher. The style is attractive, the mechanical arrangement good, graphs, illustrations and statistical tables ample, and references for further reading on each chapter inclusive enough to make the book usable. It will likely find a place in reading courses for teachers.

W. T. SANGER


While numerous writers have ventured opinions as to the causes and factors operating in the matter of school attendance and absence, this is the first fully scientific inquiry that has been published. Dr. Reavis, who is Assistant Superintendent of the Maryland State Public Schools, collected his data largely from exhaustive reports which were filled out by the teachers and checked by the county superintendents. The records were thus made available for 6450 pupils in five Maryland counties which differed widely in regard to occupations and physical features. Of these pupils the twelve per cent attending best and the twelve per cent attending most poorly were then studied in detail. The general reader will find the conclusions stated clearly and briefly in Chapter II. The statistical data is collected in Chapter V. Showing, in a number of tables, the facts regarding these pupils grouped by grades and ages, while in Chapter VI are to be found the more elaborate tables, showing the correlations and the corrections. There is thus made available for each type of reader a report of special interest. Unfortunately for some reason the latter two-thirds of the bulletin is printed in very fine type.

Of the nearly fifty possible factors studied,
Inasmuch as Virginia, like Maryland, wastes nearly one-third of its school year, due to poor attendance, as against Indiana wasting 7%, and Ohio and Oregon 10%, it would be well for county superintendents, supervisors and others to study the application of these factors. A very interesting and profitable study could also be made of individual cases, a problem outside of the province of Dr. Reavis's report. It is certainly important that as fast as practicable two definite administrative measures recommended in this study be put into operation; namely, the equalization of educational opportunity through state aid applied to the transportation of the more distant children, and the appointment of educationally trained attendance officers or “supervisors of school attendance” whose chief concern would be preventive rather than emulative treatment of this serious problem.

W. J. GIFFORD


In one volume lessons in both foods and clothing are arranged for elementary schools whose pupils have had little or no training in general science.

Suitable textiles are studied in connection with the lessons on garment-making in the first part of the book; and principles of economy, nutrition, and aesthetics are developed through the study of the planning and preparing of meals in part two.

The book is organized around projects in making garments and preparing meals. Especially are the “home problems” to be commended, for if the home work is carried on parallel to school work the results should function to a much greater extent in the girls’ homes.

It is unwise to follow any textbook without knowing the home life of students. It is suggested that after learning the kind of homes from which students come, after learning the social life of the neighborhood and something of the income of the families of the community, then the teacher can more wisely arrange and select the projects and problems to be used.

Lotta Day


Alfred Noyes’s play of ROBIN HOOD AND THE THREE KINGS embraces much that is beautiful in both history and literature. Its ethical values combined with the dramatic action, poetic charm, romantic color, and scenic effectiveness make its study and production a real delight to the cultural life of any institution.

The acting edition prepared by Milnor Dorey is very carefully worked out in every detail. Portions of the play to be omitted in acting are indicated by brackets. Directions for production include notes on staging, lighting, costuming, casting, and property lists, also stage diagrams, directions for dances and music, and many valuable suggestions for interpretation and acting.

The publication of this edition should do much to stimulate the use of this delightful play, especially in schools and colleges.

Ruth S. HUDSON


A very helpful book for any debater, reader, or serious student of sociology, discussing in concise manner and in parallel columns the pros and the cons of some of our most important questions of the day.

R. S. H.

TRIALS OF A SUPERINTENDENT

One can not but have a feeling of sympathy for Superintendent Randall J. Condon, of Cincinnati, who recently included the following statement in his weekly bulletin in the school paper, the Cincinnati School Index:

Of course you all saw that something had happened to one of the sentences under “School Dress” which appeared in last week’s Bulletin. The printer left out “from” which gave the sentence exactly the opposite meaning from that which I wrote. Here is the sentence as it was written and as it should read: “Do all you can to keep girls from coming to school wearing socks.”

I think the term, “printer’s devil,” has a correct application in this case. I never knew before just why they were called that.