EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

DISTRICT TEACHER'S HOME

Handley Schools, Winchester, Virginia

Some idea of the progress that is being made in the establishment of district-owned or controlled teachers' homes is to be had from a recent bulletin (1922, No. 16) of the U. S. Bureau of Education. It is particularly pleasing to find here a complete description of the co-operative club plan which has been adopted in the Handley Schools, at Winchester, Virginia.

Miss Lillie B. Maphis, Manager of the Teachers' Club, made the following report to J. C. Muerman, Specialist in Rural Education, Bureau of Education:

Last year on account of the scarcity of suitable boarding houses in which the teachers of the Handley schools could secure accommodations, the city school board of the Handley Foundation decided to rent a furnished dwelling and establish a home, or club, for their teachers.

The only available building was a house which accommodated 12 roomers and about 21 table boarders. The club is conducted in just the same manner as a well-regulated private residence, the entire supervision and management being under the direction of the manager. The teachers boarding and rooming in the club pay the entire expense of its maintenance and operation, the school board being at no expense whatever. On account of the smallness of the house and inefficient heating plant, the overhead expenses are very much heavier than if we had a larger and more suitable building; notwithstanding this fact, the operation for the last nine months has demonstrated that the teachers can be housed and boarded at a cost less than they could obtain accommodations at other boarding houses, and at the same time they have the advantages of the home as though they were one large family.

In order that you may know just how the club is operated, I am attaching a copy of my expense statement for the month of March, which is a little higher than the average. The average for board has been between $25 and $27 a month, and board and room together between $38 and $40 a month.

From this statement, you will observe that the school board purchased certain equipment for the club which is being refunded at the rate of 5 per cent a month until this permanent equipment is paid for in full.

From my observation, I think the teachers in the club are pleased with the arrangement and they realize that they are afforded privileges they would not have at a private or public boarding house. It is hoped that we can secure a larger and more suitable building for the coming year, in which case we will be able to reduce the overhead expense very materially, as the present force can take care of more people.

I buy all the supplies and everything needed in connection with the club to the very best advantage possible, and it is generally conceded that the table is as good, or better, than can be secured at the average boarding house. In case of a temporary vacancy at a table, a guest is invited to dine with us. As vacancies occur quite frequently, the girls have the opportunity of meeting the people of the town, and also of entertaining their friends. They also understand that at any time one, more than one, or all of them desire to entertain—at a tea, party, dance, etc.—they have the privilege of using the house as though it were their own, and the assistance of the manager in any way possible, the expense, of course, being borne individually. In other words, we are one big family, and I believe the girls feel that the club is as nearly a home as it is possible
for a substitute to be. The teachers this year are all attractive young girls, and we have spent a very pleasant winter.

Report of Lillie B. Maphis, Manager, Teachers’ Club, Month of March, 1921.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items of Expense</th>
<th>Expense of Board Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s salary</td>
<td>$ 37.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>48.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First maid</td>
<td>14.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second maid</td>
<td>9.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furnace man</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>37.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td>31.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>3.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>372.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation, 5 per cent on $319.39</td>
<td>7.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>571.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less board for guest, 5 days at 30c a meal</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average for each boarder or roomer</td>
<td>$28.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

†Twenty boarders. †Eleven roomers.

**AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK**

American Education Week this year, held December 3-9, was devoted to the outstanding National issues of illiteracy, physical education, Americanization, and inequality of educational opportunity. This annual celebration of Education Week was initiated by the American Legion for the purpose of acquainting the laymen of the country with what is going on in our schools, and likewise with some of the more notable needs of the schools. Some pertinent queries for which answer was sought were:

(a) Should the richest nation in the world lag behind other enlightened nations in stamping out illiteracy?

(b) Can we afford to have our effectiveness as a democracy diluted for a century by a menace that would quickly fade before an adequate educational system?

(c) Does the fact that five million people confess illiteracy in 1920 represent a menace to our democratic institutions?

(d) Can a nation afford to have a fourth of its young manhood unable “to read and understand newspapers and write letters home”?

(e) Are all Americans getting “an unfettered start in the race of life”?

(f) Can the fact that one in every four of our young men possesses “physical defects of such a degree as to prevent their qualifying for general military service” safely be disregarded?

(g) Should ignorance of the simple rules of health and hygiene be allowed longer to undermine the nation’s physical efficiency?

(h) Should the opportunity to attend school be dependent upon the accident of the place of birth?

**AN EFFORT TO APPLY TO NEW CREATIONS CRITICISM HITHERTO DEVOTED TO THE PAST**

A course in current literature, described as the first attempt on the part of any American university to interpret and evaluate literature in the making, is being offered at Columbia University this fall, both in the classroom and as a home study course for persons not residing in New York. The aim of the course, which is being conducted by Lloyd R. Morris, writer and critic, is to guide the general reader to the most significant books published during 1922-1923, both here and abroad in the fields of fiction, poetry, drama and general literature.

“Literature is not a dead art,” declares Mr. Morris, “and it is difficult to see how other universities can long escape the conclusion that an intelligent interest in the creative activity of today is one of the responsibilities of an education. Our universities attempt to interpret the literature of the past and to form standards of literary taste, but no attempt has thus far been made to evaluate the literature which gives expression to contemporary experience—precisely the experience in which the student is most interested.

The same course, as arranged by the Home Study Department, will provide a complete program for the year for the use of literary clubs. Many others, all over the country, who wish to keep up with the best in current literature will welcome, it is thought by Columbia authorities, “intelligent and not too dictatorial help in separating the wheat from the chaff.”

The discussions will be issued for the home study course in thirty installments, fifteen each semester. The students will not be required to report on the readings each
week, but must complete the reading called for in the course within twelve months. Registration for this course may be made at any time during the year.

"For some time it has been apparent to most writers that they are faced with a hospitable but frequently unprepared audience," said Mr. Morris, in commenting on the need for a course in current literature. "In this country criticism has most profitably concerned itself with the past. The literature that is produced today is largely treated as news, and it is more rarely considered as literature.

"There has been frequently expressed by American writers a wish for a more competent criticism and a more exacting audience. It is part of the purpose of this course to develop the nucleus of such an audience."—The New York Times.

STUDENTS FOREVER

An interesting development of the function of the university is exemplified in the effort of Amherst College to extend the influence of its curriculum in such manner as will keep the students of the College more or less actively engaged in college studies the rest of their lives. The New York Times comments on the plan editorially, as follows:

The story is told of an English army officer in India that when he was shut away in a precarious mountain position with a small contingent, and was asked by heliograph how long he could hold out, he answered "Forever." So it was that thereafter, even though he was little more than a youth, he came to be known as "Old Forever." The graduates of Amherst College, all the way from '78 to '21, have just put forth a plan to help make those who were once youthful students in that institution students forever.

The scheme is to offer, through the college faculty, continued intellectual guidance to alumni, and to promote, through conferences for them and their friends, serious and orderly study. A wide range is indicated by the subjects of the conferences that are being arranged for this week at Amherst, where the hosts will be gathering preparatory to the Amherst-Williams football game on Saturday. The object of it all is not the backward-looking one of keeping the old college loyalties, but the forward-looking, Aristotelian one of helping the graduates to employ profitably their "leisure time."

It will be a fine service to American life to invite adults generally to this use of the free time which most of them have beyond their hours of occupational work. There is no gospel that more needs preaching in our country today with the increase of leisure time and the temptation to its prodigal or purely sensual use. And the most effectual way to preach it will be its practice by such a body of men as Amherst has scattered through this nation. Williams has done a fine bit of pioneer work in making a summer retreat for the study of international problems. Amherst has an opportunity to do another bit of pioneer work in making her curriculum life-long.

CLASSICAL TEACHING IN AMERICA TO UNDERGO A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION

American secondary schools are to be studied for a period of two years in their relation to classical education. The work will be under the direction of the American Classical League; and about 125,000 students in about 750 schools will be under observation. The announcement, made from Princeton, is as follows:

The sum of $110,000 is now available for investigation of classical education in American secondary schools, it was announced tonight by Andrew Fleming West, Dean of the Princeton Graduate School, who is President of the American Classical League. Dean West's statement follows:

"The General Education Board has just appropriated $50,000 to continue and complete the investigation of classical education in American secondary schools. This is in an addition to the $60,000 previously appropriated, making a total of $110,000. The investigation is being conducted by the American Classical League and will be completed by January 1, 1924.

"About 125,000 pupils in about 750 schools, distributed through every State in the United States, are being tested for a period of two years. Many special studies and controlled experiments are under way. The United States Bureau of Education, the College Entrance Examination Board, the Department of Education for the State of New York, together with other educational bodies
and seventeen leading professors of education or psychology, are also co-operating in the work. About 7,000 teachers of the classics, English, French and history have given their services without compensation to help in conducting the investigation. It is a free-will offering unmatched in the educational history of our country. Valuable information regarding changes and improvements in English and French classical education is being secured from the British and French Ministries of Education and through other agencies."

IX

RECENT BOOKS THAT SHOULD INTEREST TEACHERS


This collection of essays and addresses, revised and brought down to date for publication, forms a kind of autobiography of thought rather than action. Dean Russell has usually been thought of as the virile father and builder of the first, and still the greatest, university professional school for teachers, the Teachers College of Columbia University. But we see in this volume something of the reason for his leadership in educational action. These essays stretching out over the present century are abundant evidence that Dean Russell’s quick insight and clear vision as to the ever-changing needs of a great professional school were due to his firm grasp on the principles of education in a great and growing democracy—are due—for after twenty-five years of service as dean of Teachers College he is still actively planning and developing this great institution along new lines.

Among the essays which mirror best this long service and therefore are of greatest value to the administrator in charge of similar work are perhaps those on “The University and Professional Training,” and “The Opportunities of Professional Service.” A number of essays are of similar importance for the high school administrator, particularly those on the values of examinations, on the training of high school teachers, and on co-education. However, more than half the volume is of interest both in giving the broader principles in present day American education, and in indicating to educational leaders, interested in rendering the largest service thru the best preparation, certain lines of thought which are fruitful for them to follow. Such are the chapters on “The Call to Professional Service,” “Education for Democracy,” “The Trend in American Education,” “The Vital Things in Education,” and “Specialism in Education.”

Educational theory is much the richer for the appearance of this little volume of a great educator’s most virile ideas, just as American educational practice has been enriched beyond all dreams of a score of years ago, thru the achievements of the great institution built under his skilful guidance.

W. J. GIFFORD


In this admirable manual, the author aims thru a set of eighty problems “to train the student of education to think in psychological terms about educational situations.” The manual represents one of several recent efforts to psychologize the teaching of the subjects which the prospective teacher is studying so that the method used in his training may not continue to be out of harmony with the theory he is taught. It would appear to the reviewer that the use of these concrete problems would make the subject of educational psychology much more fruitful in the preparation of teachers, and that the manual is particularly usable by more mature students.

In general the booklet is based on two methods, the so-called case method and the problem method. The right hand page only is printed, the problem, illustration, or case being placed at the top, and then usually two or three thought-provoking questions are distributed over the page with room for answers. The subjects include among others heredity, instinct, imagination, methods of teaching and study, discipline, motivation, the learning process, and examinations and grading, a suitably wide range for stimulating thought in the psychological background of all the major teaching and administrative problems. References are given only on a few of the problems. The author and publisher must share in the responsibility for inadequate proof-reading, for the narrow margin and consequently unattractive page, for the fact that when one opens the book the leaves come out as they are turned, and finally for the lack of topical headings for the problems or lessons, so that the reader has to look thru each problem to find its point. Despite these matters which can easily be corrected in later issues, it would seem that the pamphlet is certain to be assured wide use by teachers who are anxious that they may make the subject of educational psychology, practical, vital, and concrete, and who are concerned with demonstrating to their pupils the same methodology which they recommend for them as teachers.

W. J. GIFFORD


Miss Pierce, in undertaking to find and catalog available literature applicable to the work of advisers of girls or young women, should have the gratitude and co-operation of