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## THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

## AN EXPERIMENTER DELIVERS THE GOODS

*Child Life and the Curriculum* marks a step far in advance of anything that has appeared which bears distinctly on the child's school life vitalized by his social activities. The student of school administration and school supervision will welcome this volume to his working library as being among the most helpful and inspiring of the more recent books bearing directly on his every day problems.

Dr. Meriam has long been a close student of the traditional curricula as they have been developed and worked out by school men, and has endeavored to follow them in several experiments he has made in order to convince himself that by them it is possible to reach the child in the deepest and fullest manner so as to call forth the very best effort of every child as he passes through the several grades in his school life. To his mind, the results were so unsatisfactory, that as Professor of School Supervision at the University of Illinois, a Professional Laboratory was established in which he worked out a new kind of curriculum. A sympathetic interest in the activities of the child, whether in school or out, is at the basis of Dr. Meriam's work.

The traditional curriculum is not abandoned, but is vitalized by having everything that is done as school work center around the sympathetic interests of the child. This is done on the hypothesis that children prefer to be actively engaged rather than passively quiet; in fine, that they are eager to work when they know it is "cash in hand." This is evidenced by boys who sell papers, carry baggage, make deliveries, carry messages, etc. It is this inherent desire that the author seeks to employ in a curriculum which he has evolved and which, by experiment, has proved that it does what stereotyped curricula have not been able to do.

In this experimental school, there are no class recitations as ordinarily conducted;

*Child Life and the Curriculum*, by Junius L. Meriam. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company. 1920. 538 pages. (\$3.00).

there are no final examinations for promotion; there are no text books, nor is there any grading by letters or by numbers. The work is done in class conferences; the children prepare their work in a library especially selected for this school; the pupils investigate by bringing to school everything that is possible in nature and in manufactured products. Much use is made of newspaper clippings which bear on the subjects under investigation, and each student is encouraged to go as far as possible in any subject that directly appeals to him.

That the experiment has made good is shown by the fact that the students who go out from this school to the higher institutions have done better work in every way than those who have gone to the same institutions from the city school. They make higher marks, are more widely educated, and are more eager to spend their time in working out and investigating the tasks assigned to them.

On the whole, the book and the ideas brought forth for this vitalized curriculum are worthy the sincere attention and investigation of school men who are keeping abreast of all that is best for their systems and for the boys and girls who are going out to their callings in life.

WILLIAM H. KEISTER

Teaching pupils to read the daily and weekly newspapers with economy and discrimination was laid down as one of the objectives of English teaching at the recent meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English.

"The newspaper is the most powerful factor in forming opinion in a country that is governed by public opinion," said James Fleming Hosis, president of the Council and editor of *The English Journal*. "To have good newspapers we must have, however, an educated clientele. Like everything else, newspapers are as good as their readers demand. All journalists look forward to the possibility of improvement in the quality of their papers as their reading public responds to better and more dignified treatment of current events."