

THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

NEW SECRETARY OF THE STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Dr. Wm. T. Sanger, Dean of Bridgewater College, has been elected by the Board of Directors of the State Teachers' Association as executive secretary of that organization to take office July 1st of this year. The newly elected secretary is to devote his entire time to the work in organizing the State Association and in editing the *Virginia Journal of Education*, which becomes the property of the Association on July 1st. It is sincerely hoped that Dr. Sanger will accept this office, as his natural abilities combined with his professional training and experience eminently qualify him for this important work.

FEDERAL AID FOR THE COMMON SCHOOLS

The effort to create a federal department of education and to extend financial aid to the common schools of the various states of the union has been renewed in Congress by the introduction of the Towner-Sterling bill. Representative Towner of Iowa was co-author of the Smith-Towner bill in the last Congress and has now, as co-worker in the Senate, Senator Thomas Sterling of South Dakota.

The chief stumbling block to the bill now seems to be President Harding's desire to create a Department of Public Welfare, which will contain four divisions: (a) Educa-

tion, (b) Health, (c) Social Service, and (d) Veteran Relief.

It seems almost inexplicable how often education is forced to yield the right of way to other matters of less importance and by the suggestion of those who are avowedly its friends.

The advocates of a federal department of education with a secretary in the president's cabinet should make no compromise that will relegate education to a position of minor importance in national recognition, but should stand or fall by the original determination to place education on a parity, at least, with agriculture, and our mail service, in our national scheme of Government.

STATE CONFERENCE OF SUPERINTENDENTS

The division superintendents of the county and city schools of Virginia will hold their annual conference with the State Superintendent and his staff at the University of Virginia from June 14th to June 17th. The outstanding problems for consideration at this conference will be the problems of finance, of physical education and of vocational education. The chief invited speaker will be Dr. Chas. H. Judd of the University of Chicago.

GOVERNOR DAVIS, COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER AT HARRISONBURG

Governor Davis will deliver the Commencement address to the graduating class at the Commencement exercise of the Harrisonburg Normal School on June 7th. The active interest of Governor Davis in our educational institutions is resulting in many significant improvements in the administration of these institutions.

AN APPEAL FOR OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Wm. C. Bagley, in the *Journal of the National Education Association*.)

"This is no time for extravagance in governmental expenditures. Appropriations should be carefully scrutinized and all unnecessary items eliminated. The times demand the application of the best business principles in the conduct of public affairs.

"However, there can be no retrenchment in the support of education. Money wisely expended for this purpose is an investment in

citizenship and an insurance against the revolutionary conditions which exist in countries whose peoples are ignorant and illiterate.

"Our free public school system is an integral part of our free government, essential to its life and prosperity. The only secure foundation for democracy is an enlightened and intelligent electorate. A government of the people and by the people can be no better and no stronger than the composite citizenship of which it is constituted.

"The fact was recognized by the far-seeing statesmen who founded this nation. William Penn declared that the only way to preserve free government was by the education of all its citizens, 'for which,' said he, 'spare no cost, for by such parsimony all that is saved is lost.' Washington urged his countrymen 'to promote as objects of primary importance institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge.' Jefferson, Adams, and Madison taught that the education of all the people furnishes the greatest safeguard for our free institutions.

"The greatest need of our country today is competent, well-qualified teachers to train the future citizens of the Nation. We must get rid of the incompetent and unprepared in our public schools. The schools of tomorrow should be taught only by the best, and the profession of teaching must be made so inviting that it will attract and hold the best. Any reduction in the salaries of teachers or any failure properly to appreciate the importance of education will turn from the teaching profession those young men and women now preparing for their life's work who should be secured for this most important field of public service.

"Let us cut down expenditures for luxuries. Let us reduce appropriations wherever it can be done with safety, but for the perpetuity of those ideals and principles which are nearest to the hearts of the American people, there can be no backward step in the development of a strong, intelligent, patriotic citizenry, upon whom must depend the preservation of the things for which we have made such sacrifice in blood and treasure. The hope of America is in her free public schools. To elevate their standards and promote their efficiency should be the purpose of every American statesman and citizen."

S. P. D.

X

RECENT BOOKS THAT SHOULD INTEREST TEACHERS

HOW TO MEASURE, by G. M. Wilson and K. J. Hoke. New York: Macmillan Co. 1920. 285 pages. (\$1.60).

The authors of this book have two main considerations in mind: "first, that the work in measurement should be handled more and more by the individual classroom teacher; and second, that the chief purpose to be served by standard tests is the diagnosis of pupil ability and pupil difficulty." The volume aims therefore to include a relatively small number of tests which are already well standardized, and which are easily scored, and to give readable and simple directions for their use by the teacher untrained in scientific measurement.

While the actual test of the book will be its use by such teachers, the reviewer believes that these purposes are fairly well met. In regard to the first, directions additional to those sent out by the publishers are given explicitly, and furthermore about half of Chapter XI entitled "Statistical Terms and Methods" is an admirable general statement concerning the steps in the use of standardized tests.

The second aim seems hardly so well cared for. In the first place, but a single reference is given in the index to educational diagnosis with no additional general references. In the body of the text, data on this subject is often imbedded under other topics as in the case of the Woody Arithmetic Scales. These scales by the way are given more attention as diagnostic tests than others specifically framed for this purpose, just as the Trabue Language Scales receive more attention as measures of intelligence than all the group intelligence tests. The partial justification of this selection is the relative ease of scoring and using these particular tests.

In plan and mechanical arrangement the book is thoroughly disappointing. There is no list given of figures and tables, nor is there anywhere any list of the scales and tests treated in the body of the text. The index is un-illuminating. There are frequent errors of misspelling and of whole words. Topics in a single chapter are unusually dissimilar, while topic headings are frequently printed in larger capitals than the chapter titles. The whole volume lacks that systematic, clear-cut arrangement so essential for the beginner in so difficult a field.

In all likelihood the book will not rapidly displace any text now in the field, but will probably be used as a companion book with Monroe's *Measuring the Results of Teaching* which has the advantage of workmanship and organization and lacks only the discussions of drawing, high school tests, and intelligence