

on the farm; it exerts a far-reaching influence for betterment that cannot be put into words.

In the future, every community will feel it as necessary to have its public library as to have its public schools.

Our community should have a public library.

JANET HOUCK.

THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Ignorance is the menace of civilization. If America continues to grow, the minds of her people must grow. The schools alone cannot satisfy this need for continuing the intellectual growth of American citizens. In America today, 85 per cent of the boys and girls are in school until the age of 14 years. After that, but one in five continues school until the age of 18. Then what happens? A scanty few go on to college or university and the others do not. Is this the end of their education then? Must their mental growth cease when the school doors close behind them?

There must be some way out. Some way to continue the educational growth of American citizens. And there is a way. That way is the public library. It is America's continuation of school. It is the most democratic of American educational institutions. It is free to every person—color or race, nationality or creed make no difference. It is free to every person who wishes to read, and who is willing to read. If the schools will only teach the reading habit, the library will educate the world, for the public library of America is free to every new idea, free to every fresh point of view; nothing is barred because it is new or radical or different. The public library is free from party politics; it is free from religious intolerance and prejudice. The public library provides information on all sides of every important question—so far as its funds will allow.

The citizen has his duty toward the library. First of all he should encourage larger appropriations of funds. Too many people are being turned away because there are not enough copies of certain books to supply the demand, or not enough money to

buy all the books that should be on the shelves. More than half the people of the United States do not have library facilities of any kind. The educational facilities of the library have not been recognized as they should be; with that recognition will come greater service.

Democratic as the library is, its service should be greatly extended. The librarians should be prepared to give more service, more encouragement and sympathy to their patrons, whether to help the half literate foreigner or the scholar. The public should be made to see that the library is a continuation school. While the library is useful and helpful, it has still not reached its maximum of helpfulness or usefulness and it cannot do so until the people themselves realize what it has to give them.

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE.

FUNDAMENTAL REFORMS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COURSE OF STUDY

DO WE need reforms in our elementary school course of study?

Probably the presentation of a few facts may point to the truth that reforms are needed.

First, the world has made rapid strides and civilization, in its progressive mastery of varied energies, includes education, and education includes the course of study.

Second, there exists an appalling amount of injustice, error, stupidity, and misery. The schools know this, and the machinery of education should constantly be directed against these insidious foes.

Practices which once may have proved adequate have become obsolete and ineffective. Even the founders of our Republic were influenced by the ideas of John Locke, among which was the *tabula rasa* theory, namely, that the mind is a tablet on which could be inscribed anything that one wished to write. Consequently all men are equal. No individual differences, here; none of the facts and principles of modern science; no biologists in these deliberations. And ever since then, because of our democratic notions of equality we have been trying to hitch some very ordinary wagons to stars of the first magnitude. One of the curses

young boys and girls at the age of about fourteen, when we turn them out on the world, that anything may be had for the asking. We have had their tonsils and adenoids removed or carefully looked after and their intellects have been carefully trained. Why should they not succeed? But it is odd. They are not long remaining efficient in the home, the shop, and the office. It is odd, indeed. Have we not told them not to worry about things, to control their tempers, always to be cheerful and to smile in spite of everything, to be brave and courageous and to believe in success and to keep themselves pure? Having failed after all this has been done for them must mean that we were deceived and that they were no good to begin with. There was something inherently weak in them. It is a strange way that the world has of locking doors against people. But we should be careful in schools how we promise open doors.

The *acquisition of facts* early became the prime object of the schools. Since all knowledge was within the grasp of all men, the attainment of knowledge was the acme of school achievement. Textbook teaching, formal discipline, and other such practices prevailed. Military or repressive discipline early became the handmaiden to the course of study. "Cramming" was the principal manner used in devouring the facts presented in the course of study. Memory was the best faculty one could possess.

Popular approval was given to the mastery of textbooks. This was the acme of attainment for the adult and hence desirable for the child. Long hours of grammatical analysis, persistent arithmetical drills, tortuous spelling lessons—all these are effective to endow the learner with accuracy, which faculty will be useful to him in other lines of mental activity, and especially in his future life as a citizen.

Under such circumstances it was the fashion for young people, fresh from college, to go about enthusiastically broadcasting whatever knowledge they possessed. Such zeal placed many burdens upon the schools and fostered the wide distribution of comparatively useless knowledge—encyclopedic information. This became rooted in the course of study. Has it yet been stamped out? Meanwhile, the sciences and arts were developing apace. The great truths thus uncovered were not given a place in curricula except in isolated cases.

Somehow there was skepticism of the great truths of science and of the uplift to be had from literature and history. As the school term grew longer and more money became available for the schools, there was added to the course of study more and more of the same things in vogue—more reading, more writing, more arithmetic, especially arithmetic. Arithmetic, the mind trainer, grew into a giant. It grew too large for the elementary schools and was added to the high school as "review of arithmetic." Somehow, children didn't seem to know enough about it when they reached the high school. Nor did they seem to know enough about the conventions of language, grammar, and spelling. Strange, too, when so much care had been expended upon all of these things.

But we need not look further at this picture. We are face to face with inherited conditions. It may be well at once to present the indictment against the curriculum: (1) It is over-crowded; (2) there is little correlation of subject matter; (3) exaggerated attention is given to unessential and impractical topics; (4) many topics presented have no legitimate place in any curriculum; (5) pupils are overworked; (6) the course of study is inflexible; (7) individual tastes and capacities are not rightly considered; (8) promotions are based upon unsound principles.

What are we to say in answer? What do we need to improve most? On what fundamentals should we expend our energies? If I could answer these questions in one statement, I would frame my answer something like this: The course of study should be concerned with inculcating in pupils right attitudes, wholesome appreciations, desirable habits, and fruitful knowledge. In other words, we should organize the course of study for the purpose of providing our pupils with such knowledge, attitudes, and appreciations as will best serve in their occupational life, their civic life, their domestic life, and their avocational life.

This statement takes on added effect when we attempt to state the chief purposes of elementary school education. Besides promoting and strengthening one's physical health, we are told, it has for its chief aims the opening of the mind to the entire world in its elements, the development of interests in the world and its activities and the fostering of desirable habits of mind and body. Its mission is *preparedness*. It aims *not* at

knowledge itself but at supplying the tools of the mind and at inculcating attitudes, and habits, and appreciations that will enable the individual later to pursue knowledge and industry.

What, then, is left for the secondary schools? Theirs is the task to "promote the discovery and development of each pupil's dominant interests and capacities; to render these subservient to life's serious purposes and also to the possibility of participation in the refined pleasures of life . . . The serious purposes of life are first, self-support, or, when this is unnecessary, some worthy form of *service*; second, intelligent, active participation in human affairs. . . The refined pleasures of life are found in the ability to participate with intelligence and appreciation in the intellectual and esthetic interests of cultivated men."

To confuse the purposes of elementary schools with the aims of secondary schools is to place us in a false position for further inquiry. The sum total of the material of both elementary and secondary curricula should be of such a nature that one can secure therefrom a body of knowledge and habits and interests that prepare one to perform well the work of citizen, parent, friend, and human being.

Virginia may produce another great general in some future war. She may develop a statesman of such transcendent ability that he will overcome the practical handicap of Southern birth and become a president to rank with the most distinguished. But Virginia's greatest hope—in fact, the country's greatest hope—lies in the education of able youths to achievement in science or in letters. A single great scientist by his discoveries may offset all the losses of a war or may make it possible for a nation to recover from the economic ruin a protracted struggle entails. Matthew Fontaine Maury brought almost as much wealth to the world by his studies of ocean currents as America wasted in the War Between the States; by charting the ocean currents, the safety of the world's shipping has been enormously increased; by the establishment of weather bureaus, the world has been made happier. Walter Reed's investigations of yellow fever opened the way for the successful construction of the Panama Canal, with all that means to future industry. Dr. John Gorrie's invention of the manufacture of artificial ice has probably saved more

lives than have been lost in all wars in a hundred years. To take a case still more dramatic, Emil von Behring's discovery of diphtheria antitoxin will mean the saving of life in a hundred years of as many lives as were lost in the World War. Science, the fruit of education, works with religion to ameliorate the condition of mankind. All else is futile and carries the human race scarcely a span beyond the earliest condition of man. To stimulate the lads who will be scientists of tomorrow is to better the world. Education is most profitable when spent upon a fine capacity.

In the short time allotted to me, I can but sketch briefly the far reaching effect of the fundamentals I have just remarked upon.

The outcome of the whole process of administering the course of study and of teaching the subjects in classrooms, should affect every pupil's whole outlook on life and in his way in general of conducting himself. I am reminded here that there is a principle of transcendent importance that needs statement just here. It is this: "Morality is more susceptible than intellect to environmental influence. Moral traits are more often matters of the direction of capacities and the creation of desires and aversions." We can not create powers and capacities, but we can create likes and dislikes. And thereon hangs a tale. By skilful handling of environmental influences, we can effect enormously the character and skill of our pupils and we can also give scope to intellectual ability.

From the standpoint of teacher and principal and parent, the center of attention is the child and not the subject. The subject—in fact, the entire course of study—is a part of the child's environment. This is one of the finest realizations of modern life. With it in mind, we are *adjusting* our course of study to meet the demands of *each boy and girl* in respect to intellect, character, and skill. But this is no easy task; on it we have just begun. But we must fight the good fight now, resting assured that other generations will continue to battle and bless us for our efforts.

We know, even in the dim light of the present, that knowledge that is fruitful tends to result in right attitudes and that attitudes determine action and conduct. I shall attempt to illustrate this point by a few excerpts from and comments upon the life of Joseph Conrad. In Conrad is exem-

plified the fact that one gets appreciations through knowledge. In his case, he in turn gave the world his appreciations; and the world is better for them.

At the age of 13, Joseph Conrad wrote a school paper on Arctic geography, but "I got no mark," he says. A private tutor made the comment that he had been wasting his time reading books of travel. But a knack of map-drawing saved him from disgrace. The Arctic did not long hold his vagrant spirit; Africa became an obsession. He devoured the narratives of Mungo, Park, and Bruce. He remembers penciling the outline of Tanganyika in "my beloved atlas, which, having been published in 1852, knew nothing, of course, of the Great Lakes."

The most venerated of Conrad's boyish enthusiasms was David Livingstone. One day when his devotion was derided by his school fellows, he put his finger "on a spot in the very middle of the white heart of Africa" and vowed that there he would go. And the time came. "Eighteen years afterward, a wretched little stern-wheel steamboat I commanded lay moored on the bank of an African river."

Conrad admits that he felt very lonely in the heart of the African continent. But it was different on ocean's expanse. At sea he "never lacked company, the company of great navigators, the first grown-ups of my early boyhood." In 1888, when he was master of a ship loading in the port of Sydney a mixed cargo for Mauritius, "all of a sudden all the deep-lying historic sense of the exploring adventures in the Pacific surged up to the surface of my being." At once he sat down and wrote a letter to the owners proposing that he take his ship through Torres Strait, instead of by the usual southern route. The letter posted, he marveled at his audacity. He confessed he hadn't been scrupulously honest in his argumentations. His conscience pricked him. But the world was the gainer in the inspiration that flooded the soul of Conrad.

"What would the memory of my sea life have been, if it had not included a passage through Torres Strait, in its fullest extent, from the mouth of the great Fly River right along the track of the early navigators." He apostrophizes them: "Great shades, all friends of my youth!"

In one of his books we read the story of the typhoon. It had broken, this terror of

the sea. "Keep facing it," said the old skipper to the young mate. Reading on, ere we know it, the ship has become a symbol of the life of mankind. MacWhirr does not know whether the ship will be lost or not. Nor do we. *What he does know is how he must act.* He never loses hope. When Jukes tells him that the boats are gone, he yells back sensibly, "Can't be helped." Again Jukes shouts, and he hears a voice crying to him, as if from very, very far, "All right." After this manner we find hope and strength in life.

Knowing how to act; putting knowledge to work; having the attitudes to control our conduct—surely our curriculum must provide means to these ends.

Nobody nowadays defends the curriculum solely on the amount of knowledge it gives. At least, nobody should. In connection with habit formation, the kind of discipline exercised in getting over the subjects has much influence. The old fashioned, automatic, unthinking obedience which is the ideal of military organization, and which got a firm hold on our schools, does not achieve the same success that a better discipline does. We are told that a special object of the schools should be "to develop among children and youth what is called in sports 'team play'; to impress all the pupils with the high value of co-operative discipline, that is, of discipline imposed with the consent of the subjects of discipline in order to increase the efficiency of the group, and therefore the satisfaction of every member in his own contribution." Such results are secured by singing in parts, producing music in band or orchestra, folk dancing, combining in groups to perform gymnastic feats, acting plays, giving descriptions of narratives before school audiences in which many speakers combine to produce one harmonious and consecutive story, and in many of the activities connected with problem-project work.

How important habits are! Consider how moral stature can be stunted, warped, or twisted; how early blind contacts may bring strong prejudices, unreasonable likes and dislikes, loves and hates. On the other hand, virtues like modesty, reverence, obedience, persistence, and leadership can be crystallized into good manners and morals. Such crystallizations were effected in the life of John Gorrie.

In 1914, Florida placed in the Hall of Fame a statue of Dr. John Gorrie. Few people knew who Doctor Gorrie was, and many wondered why he had been given such great honor, although everybody in our country enjoys the comforts and blessings of what he did. As the inventor of the process of manufacturing ice, Doctor Gorrie made a great gift to the world, and especially to his native South.

John Gorrie was born in Charleston, South Carolina, October 3, 1803. After graduating in medicine in New York in 1825, he settled in Apalachicola, Florida, at that time one of the principal cotton ports on the Gulf. His sympathy for the sick was unmeasured and he worked untiringly to help them. He gave his greatest efforts to finding a way to cool the rooms of his many fever patients; and in this he succeeded so well that he became absorbed in the idea of manufacturing ice. In 1851, he patented the process of making artificial ice. This was the foundation of the big industry of ice-making and cold storage today. Doctor Gorrie never received any profits from his invention, though he lived long enough to see it in wide use.

In our course of study, we are concerned with the cultivation of all the specific habits of performing right actions, such as honesty, courage, cleanliness, and of avoiding wrong ones, such as injustice or cruelty. What counts most for morality is what the school gets boys and girls to do, not what it keeps them from doing.

And now may I direct your attention to the appreciation of what is best in life. Seeing the beauty in art; feeling the uplift in literature and history; respecting the truths of science; taking comfort in religion; seeing the good in everything—surely we aim for just such things in our course of study.

Much depends upon proper appreciations. Living with our family, our neighbors at home and far away; getting along with others; ruling and being ruled; giving and taking—in fact, the brotherhood of man as a living force demands of us proper appreciations of what is best in life. By means of appreciations, barriers of misunderstanding are broken down.

Proper appreciations depend in large measure upon adequate knowledge. Hazy conceptions result in misconceptions, and

vice versa. Inadequate facts bring about misguided actions and feelings. A thoroughgoing enthusiasm depends upon appreciative understanding. Probably our courses of study contain, among their unessential and impractical topics, such misconceptions as that Dutch children wear wooden shoes and Hawaii is full of hula-hula maidens. At any rate, we would do well to purge our course of study of misconceptions, inadequate facts, gross errors.

What knowledge, then, should be secured from the course of study? We can best answer this question by considering some of the topics and subjects of the elementary curriculum in their relation to guiding principles.

In arithmetic, the topic of percentage is more important than that of interest, brokerage, or bank discount, because the principle involved in percentage is of much wider application. In geography, it is better to have knowledge of the relative importance of the world's workers and the work they do. "What is called geography as a formulated study is simply a body of facts and principles which have been discovered in other men's experience about the natural medium in which we live and in connection with which the particular acts of our lives have an explanation. So history as a formulated study is but the body of known facts about the activities and sufferings of the social group with which our lives are continuous and through reference to to which our own customs and institutions are illuminated."

These serve as examples to lead us to the general truth that knowledge of principles is better than knowledge of mere facts.

But when facts are given in elementary schools, we have fortunately adequate criteria for their selection. These find form in adaptation to life problems. The facts have been selected with care and with scientific precision. But you are already acquainted with these findings in spelling, grammar, arithmetic, and the social studies. Lack of time does not permit me to comment upon this phase of educational procedure. In passing, however, let me state that the prospects for providing a useful curriculum are very bright. The work has already begun and the workers are carefully trained. We are now dissatisfied with wasting the time of

elementary school pupils on useless and unessential material.

In the second place, knowledge of what is real is better than knowledge of what is not real. In the application of this fundamental principle to the course of study, we find that biography and travel deserve an important place in literature, and that home geography should occupy a strategic position that it so well deserves. For, in the appreciation of the environment, here sunlight, air, running water, inequality of earth's surface, varied industries, civil officers and their duties are treated as instruments for extending the limits of experience, thus bringing within its scope peoples and things strange and unknown. Abstract ideas like "plain," "seaport," "manufacturing" are made concrete and hence significant; relationships such as exist between valleys and railroads, cities and rivers, rainfall and crops—these are a few of the fundamental relationships needing concrete illustration. We must and can provide contact with the physical things of life. Formerly no such need existed; now it is imperative. We are not going to let our pupils starve for lack of sense experiences, for lack of manipulation, for the materials that stimulate intellectual curiosity. Education is moving forward in large measure on a basis of experience in physical facts. *School* education must join the procession.

Knowledge that is important for one to have in order to render useful service and knowledge that is of importance to human welfare need to be applied. Consequently we should emphasize knowledge that gives control of disease and pestilence, control of health, control of oneself, control of nature; that includes the laws of co-operation and good will; that embraces family and state. These are far more important than the conventions of language, spelling, and punctuation.

Because of this principle, we would give community civics precedence over fairy tales and fiction; safety education a place in the scheme; knowledge of self-protection and the protection of others—in short, instruction in that data which best provide our pupils contact with social, economic, scientific, and political life.

And in getting these contacts, we should remember that we are to lead our pupils into the court of science's princes. "We are only just beginning to realize that the

great heroes who have advanced human destiny are not its politicians, generals, and diplomatists, but the scientific discoverers and inventors who have put into man's hand the instrumentalities of an expanding and controlled experience, and the artists and poets who have celebrated his struggles, triumphs, and defeats in such language pictorial, plastic or written, that their meaning is rendered universally accessible to others."

Everywhere, first and last impressions are to be clear and unconfused. To illustrate by geography—getting knowledge of the world by having keen impressions of such things as Red River—great wheat fields; Texas—oil, picking, ginning, and baling cotton; Montana—mines and ore reduction plants; Amazon—dense forests and wild life. Such outstanding impressions of the world give zest to more thorough study later. Appreciations of literature and appreciations through literature are but different forms of the same process.

E. EHRLICH SMITH.

THE HOME AND THE SCHOOL

THE school exists for the child and is the means through which the community is assured of wholesome future growth. It is the means by which the state is attempting to provide for the future welfare of the individual and the group. The parent, the child, and the teacher form an inseparable triangle. The three must work together in close harmony and understanding to secure the best results. If either the parent, the child, or the teacher is not sympathetic, the education of the child inevitably suffers.

The parent must understand the school and be in sympathy with its aims and the means of attaining them; the teacher, on the other side, should be familiar with the home background to secure a better understanding of the individuals whom she has under her charge.

Criticisms are frequently directed at the schools because they do too much, and then, in the same breath, they are blamed for not