

## THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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## EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL IN THE CONSERVATION OF EYE SIGHT

THE results of a survey conducted by the Eye Sight Conservation Council indicate an increase in the prevalence of defective vision among university students. Twenty-two colleges and universities reported 42,275 students examined with the prevalence of defective vision varying from 15.6% to 51% and averaging 37.7%. These conclusions were all based on simple visual acuity tests which were probably conducted more carefully and thoroughly than similar tests made in graded schools. Authentic and scientifically correct findings, however, show that less than 10% of children at the average age of eight and one-half years have normal eyes and that more than 60% have errors of sufficient degree to warrant correction. The fact that most of errors of vision are preventable should be of large significance to school people, not alone because of the discomfort to the individual, but because of the large economic loss to the nation that this particular type of defect involves. Moreover, if the schools do not accomplish more in the protection of eye sight, little need be expected from the industries, where even less attention is given to the conservation of eye sight than in the home and the school.

### A DIVINITY SCHOOL IS ALSO A SCHOOL OF RESEARCH

REASSURING news comes from the University of Chicago, that theology may be reckoned among progressive sciences. President Ernest DeWitt Burton, in his recent address at the cornerstone-laying for the new Theology Building, said that the University Divinity School is not only a professional school, but a school of research in the realm of religion, thus testifying to the conviction that scholars are not at the end of their discoveries in this sphere.

"The last generation," President Burton assures us, "has seen great progress in the recognition and acceptance of the thought that theology has the same right and duty to make progress by research as astronomy or geology. Relatively to our knowledge of them, the stars and the earth and religious experience are all fixed. Absolutely they are not fixed, but are constantly changing and our knowledge of them is increased not only by a study of their past, which is unchangeable, but of those changes which go on under our eyes."

### MOVING PICTURES AND CULTURE

THE use of educational and scientific films has been given considerable impetus recently by a report from the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation of the League of Nations. In the opinion of this Committee moving pictures "may exercise a very fruitful influence on the development of culture." This Committee looks with favor on the convening of an international congress for the purpose of studying the scientific, artistic, and educational interests involved in the development of the cinema. One of the important outgrowths will probably be the publication of an international catalog of scientific films. The possibilities of moving pictures for legitimate uses is so great that it seems unfortunate so little attention has been paid to them by educators; hence, the efforts of the League of Nations Committee ought to receive the commendations of all who appreciate the difference in the "movie" as customarily presented to young people and the tremendous educational opportunities it may offer.

A course in the unification of the kindergarten and the first grade is given by Johns Hopkins University as a part of its service to elementary teachers.

## WHERE DO YOU STAND ON THE CHILD LABOR AMENDMENT

THE fight over this movement is on. It will be one of the bitterly fought battles in American Constitutional history. In the white light of the struggle our opinions will be measured by the eternal principles of truth, justice, equality, and human liberty. The methods of the opposition are intrigue, prejudice, and misrepresentation—the very things against which education should stand like the Rock of Gibraltar. Let everyone who is trying honestly to make up his mind on this great problem ask the following questions of those who urge him to oppose the Child Labor Amendment:

1. Who are the friends of the measure? What are their motives?
2. Who are the enemies of the measure? Were they not also the enemies of compulsory school attendance? What are their motives?
3. Where did you get your facts?
4. Just what do you mean by "States' rights"? Would you put "States' rights" above human rights?
5. Is it good American citizenship to try to create a lack of faith in the Federal Government? Has it been less efficient and high-minded than the State governments?
6. Would you exempt from military service to the Nation in time of war the men who as children the Nation denied an opportunity for a fair start in life?
7. Do you think it is possible under present conditions to confine to the State of its origin the bent and broken human life that the exploitation of children leaves in its wake?
8. Do you believe that mature men and women should be required to compete with the commercially exploited labor of children?
9. Have you read the proposed Amendment itself? It does not prohibit child labor, but merely gives Congress power to deal with

the problem. Has any honorable citizen anything to fear by granting to Congress authority to deal with a recognized National evil?

10. Were it adopted, have we reason to believe Congress would go further than the standards of the two child labor laws that have been enacted and acknowledged to be good, although declared unconstitutional?

JOY E. MORGAN.

## CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

### THE CHURCH AS AN EDUCATIVE FORCE

NATIONALISM AND RELIGION IN AMERICA, 1774-1789, by Edward Frank Humphrey. Boston: Chipman Law Publishing Company. 1924. Pp. 536.

From the beginning of American history down to within recent times the ministry has played a large part in the shaping of American policies. This influence of the Church as a factor in American history has been recognized by historians, but has never received the emphasis it should have.

Historians in reviewing American history have stressed different factors as being the "main-spring" of different periods, ranging all the way from the influence of individual men to economic causes, which are stressed today; but in no case has the pulpit been stressed as an educative force in American ideals. Yet we know that the ministry until recent times has freely voiced its opinion in political matters from the pulpit and has just as freely been consulted by government officials on matters of State.

Histories have been written on religion in America, but they either contain an inadequate treatment of the subject or are written from a denominational point of view. Professor Humphrey has considered the part played by religion in the creation of American nationalism.

In the Introduction to the book he points out very emphatically the need for such a work. In Part I he considers the action of the various churches in their contributions to the political independence. He takes up each denomination and considers the stand of that denomination in regard to independence. In Part II, his problem is the study of the nationalization of the churches and the influence which this process had in the creation of a national American conscience. He deals with the problem from the view of each church, but does not answer it in a satisfactory manner. In Part III, he deals with the problem of State and Religion.

The book is valuable chiefly because it calls attention to the need of histories showing the influence of the Church on American history.

J. N. McILWRAITH.