

one-tenth. Money expenditure is related to performance of function. America, as compared with other industrial countries, has a much heavier capitalization, but it pays higher wages and gets a mass production that lowers prices. There is a thought there for educational production.

Education research and new scientific procedure promise most for efficiency and economy in the domain of teaching. The intelligence tests as aids to diagnosis, standard achievement tests, the new comprehensive examinations, comparative study of teaching processes, all promise to give the taxpayer more for his dollar in school, just as science and scientific technology have given more and better nails for a dollar than before.

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CAN VIRGINIA AFFORD TO GIVE HER CHILDREN A FAIR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

FROM the early days of the Republic, clear-visioned educators and statesmen have given an emphatic affirmative answer to this question. Thomas Jefferson, spokesman of the growing spirit of democracy, sought for nearly a half century to bring about the establishment of a system of schools, whereby the level of human happiness and of intelligent citizenship should be maintained and advanced. The concrete result of his work was the creation of the capstone of such a system, the state university. Two significant steps looking to the realization of a fair educational opportunity were the creation of the public elementary school system in the early days of reconstruction, and the building up of the high schools, as an intermediate link, in the early twentieth century.

Today, with a system, comparable in general outline to that of the other forty-seven states of the Union, we find statisticians in

practical agreement that Virginia ranks thirty-ninth in the effectiveness of its public education. For the first time there are available abundant statistical data indicating at once the actual support of education by the different states, and also their potentialities for its further extension. In *The Ability of the States to Support Education*,¹ Dr. Norton has given us the educational economist's analysis based on an unusually wide range of pertinent facts. The data for the table below have been drawn from this study and supplemented by a table in a recent issue of the *Journal of the National Education Association*.² For comparative purposes, the relative standing of North Carolina has been shown.

RANKING OF VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA IN SIGNIFICANT ITEMS OF POTENTIAL AND ACTUAL SUPPORT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

ITEMS	RANK	
	VA.	N. C.
1. Estimated value of tangible wealth.....	19	21
2. Index of economic resources.....	18	22
3. Estimated current income.....	21	23

4. Wealth per child, age 6-13.....	38	42
5. Index of economic resources per child.....	38	42
6. Average annual current income per child	39	43

7. Financial ability to support education..	39	43
8. Per cent of income expended for public elementary and secondary education, 1923-24	36	13

While in the main these figures speak for themselves, a brief interpretation may be in place. From items 1, 2, and 3 it is clearly seen that both Virginia and North Carolina rank above the median of the forty-eight states in actual financial resources. Items 4, 5, and 6, however, indicate that when these resources are pro-rated in terms of the school population, the two states drop to a ranking similar to the educational ranking which each has maintained. In addition,

¹*The Ability of the States to Support Education*. By J. K. Norton. The National Education Association: Washington, D. C. 1926. 85 pages.

²Can America Afford Education? *Journal of the National Education Association*, December, 1926, p. 286.

Dr. Norton points out that states over a considerable period of years tend to maintain approximately the same rank.

However, in items 7 and 8, we find the most significant and patent facts: namely, that while Virginia has a slight advantage in its ability to support education, North Carolina has recently realized its need and has increased its appropriation over Virginia's by nearly fifty per cent. This has placed North Carolina in 13th position in regard to the per cent of income expended for public education. This gives North Carolina an enviable record as to its willingness to foot the bill for a better school system, placing it ahead of such states as Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. It also places that state decidedly in the lead of the southern states with only Florida trailing at a respectable distance.

What then can be said of Virginia's indicated willingness to support her schools? Remaining in 36th place in the percentage of income expended for public education, she is given credit for an actual percentage expenditure of 2.18 as against 3.43 for North Carolina. The ranking of the five leading states in this respect was as follows: North Dakota, 5.50%; South Dakota, 4.37%; Minnesota, 4.15%; California, 4.03%; Utah, 3.83%. It may be readily granted that the rich states (of the above, California only may be so designated) can, like the large estate or inheritance, get on with a disproportionately low tax. It may also be argued that, just as Virginia has found it a sane and feasible financial policy to tax gasoline sales instead of income for road-building, so she may find and should search for additional sources of taxation. On the other hand, by comparison with other states, Virginia has yet to make the venture, already made by some relatively poor states, of levying sufficient taxes on income to advance, or even maintain, her rating and consequently her ability to provide adequately for the education of oncoming generations.

The ardent advocates of states rights to-

gether with the enemies of public education have brought about the elimination of the hope of Federal legislation, intended to equalize through Federal support the moneys available for public education in the various states. It remains evident therefore, as Dr. Norton points out in his conclusions, that some states will be forced to levy taxes from two to six times those levied by other states to give their children an equivalent opportunity with those of richer states. This Florida and North Carolina have to some extent realized, and unless Virginia speedily realizes the same fact, its rank will slip down two points in the scale of states as to the effectiveness of its system of public education.

At this very moment, Virginia for the first time in recent years has seemed to be entering upon an era of economical and social leadership. Her agricultural possibilities, her scenic advantages, her splendid maritime shipping facilities, are being heralded throughout the nation and indeed the world. If Jefferson and his contemporaries, Washington and Madison, also native Virginians, were right—and every step in national and state advancement indicates they were—this era of progress will be short-lived unless its foundation be laid in a finer and better educational system, beginning in the kindergarten and crowned by the university and technical schools. May Virginia's present leaders perceive this fact as clearly as they have realized the state's economical and commercial possibilities, and rise to prevent its youth being handicapped in their preparation for the competition with the youth of other states. We must not overlook the greatest asset of the state, its potential manhood and womanhood. In earlier crises educator-statesmen have arisen and brought about the needed reforms. Let us have faith that in so important an hour as this, history will repeat itself before we have lost half the battle through delay.

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