

*unit*, often covering several months or a year or two of time (e. g., "The Fur Trade") versus the short unit, of from two to five weeks' duration. It is the conviction of this committee that the short unit is the only defensible type on this level of pupil learning. There are several reasons for this view; but the two most important perhaps are these: (1) the long unit of the type mentioned above sets up a minor activity, problem or issue of our very complex civilization, and emphasizes it as if it were a major activity; (2) these units are so long that it is impossible to develop or use enough of them ever to fairly balance the understandings and life equipment that a secondary school pupil should have in order to face the dynamic and perplexing issues and problems of the present American scene.

The organizing "center of interest," however, may be of indefinite length.

### THE NEW SCHOOL

**I**N THESE days of radical differences of opinion, when one person says the Government should do this and another says it should do that, it is difficult to find any common ground, but there is one national responsibility on which all can agree. That is our obligation to the nation's children. Tariffs will come and tariffs will go. International complications will wax and wane. Whether we drink or whether we don't will cease to be a problem. But always and ever there will be facing us the question of the rights of those who are to be the nation when we are gone. Here, after all, is the thing that counts most: whether or not we are giving the children a chance to prepare for and to build a better civilization than we have been able to achieve.

The question is insistent; it clamors for an answer as we watch the millions upon millions trooping back to school—nearly thirty millions of them, if we count the high school and college boys and girls. And of course we should count them; more particularly count them, for they are just about to face us with questions as to our stewardship of their time. We can keep the smaller ones busy with their reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic; they won't know for several years that we have muddled things and are not preparing them to set them aright. But not so the high school and college boys and

girls. We have told them they must study this, have insisted that they learn that. And in the last three years we have turned a few millions of them loose with the belief that they were ready for work, and they can find no work—for either head or hand. It won't do to put the whole blame for this upon the industrial depression, for, long before the depression struck us, we were doing in our educational institutions just what our industrialists were doing in the business world—overlooking the inevitability of reaching a point where standardized products produced wholesale could no longer be absorbed. The fact that industry collapsed first offers no alibi for our educational system; its day of reckoning was at hand, delayed only by a period of prosperity that fooled everybody.

"The public school system offered the opportunity for the individual to choose what he believed he wanted and was fitted to do, regardless of what was necessary to be done, or what there was available to do. The result was that we prepared 20,000 persons to act where there was only need for twenty," says Dr. Henry Suzzallo, president of the Carnegie Foundation.

The way to correct this condition is obvious: before making lawyers, doctors, engineers, of our boys, an educational institution should try to find out whether there is a reasonable chance of their finding an opportunity to work. Further, the schools and colleges should find out where opportunities do exist, not leave it to the student to stumble upon his chance. This is not too great a task for education to take upon itself, though it seems, at first glance, almost insuperable. Maybe if we could look past the imposing piles of wood and brick and stone that represent the tangible, unyielding part of our educational system, to the young people for whom the system was elaborated, we would see the necessity for making an effort to prepare youth for life as it is. That, we think, is what the White House Confer-

ence had in mind when it wrote Article X of The Children's Charter, demanding "for every child an education which, through the discovery and development of his individual abilities, prepares him for life; and through training and vocational guidance prepares him for a living which will yield him the maximum of satisfaction."

In the meantime, the millions of children and young people follow the old, worn way to the schoolhouse. There they must find at least the opportunities offered so freely to their predecessors. If there must be a choice, build a schoolhouse, and leave a road unbuilt, some streets unpaved. We must have education; it is America's boast. While other things are crumbling, our schools must be maintained. Not just as they are; they have not fully met their opportunity. There is too much loose thinking, too little comprehension of what citizenship means, for any one to claim that. But as we rebuild our economic structures, let us teach our young folks how to play a bigger part in the world—how not to be just cogs in a machine that may be wrecked without warning.

We can move forward only through our children. If we give them adequate training, they'll work this thing out for themselves some day, but it's going to be a long hard struggle, and we may as well help them by getting it started. The old—and present—hopper system is inadequate. Tomorrow's school must treat children as individuals. Mass production has failed. The time has come to act sensibly in both business and education.—WILLIAM FREDERICK BIGELOW, Editor of *Good Housekeeping*

---

One hundred and two of every 1,000 adults are high school graduates.

Twenty-three of every 1,000 adults are college graduates.

Two college students grow where one grew in 1920.

## TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN CURRICULUM IM- PROVEMENT

"The curriculum of the Chicago schools must not be thought of only in terms of printed courses of study produced by subject matter experts or by those few individuals most capable of constructing the printed courses. The curriculum improvement program must be conceived as continuous professional growth on the part of every teacher and supervisor of the Chicago school staff. With this concept in mind, it is clear that such improvement can go forward only when every classroom teacher in the system is engaged in thinking through curriculum problems and revising her own practices. When courses of study are made by a few highly competent individuals, they, and they alone, get the intellectual stimulation and growth involved in the production of the materials. It is impossible to expect the intellectual stimulation and growth to have taken place in the entire teaching staff simply because they are able to read the completed product of a few individuals who produced the courses. Vital growth on the part of the entire staff can occur only when all the members are engaged continuously in remaking the curriculum of the Chicago schools. Superior printed courses are necessary at intervals in order to give the tangible satisfactions of completed steps in the process, but the chief criterion of the success of a curriculum program is the continued growth of the members of the school staff. In such a curriculum program printed courses of study serve two purposes: first, to make tangible the results of the effort, and second, to make accessible the better thinking and practice of a large number of classroom teachers."—From the Report of the Survey of the Chicago Schools (III, 45).

---

The current or running expense of the schools is only fifty-one cents per pupil per day.