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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

THE MOVIE PROBLEM

We shall make little headway in the solution of the motion-picture problem as it relates to children and youth until we apply to this problem the same social policies that we have applied to our public schools, parks, and libraries. In these areas of community welfare, we ask two questions: First, what do our citizens need? Second, what can we afford to furnish them at public expense? The same line of reasoning must be applied to the motion picture as it relates to children and youth. Where private profits and child welfare clash, private profit should give way.

To carry out such a program of child welfare in the field of the motion picture, the following activities must be pursued: First, parents and teachers must be made aware of the significant role that the motion picture is playing in the influencing of children's information, attitudes, sleep, emotions, and conduct. Emphasis should be placed on the constructive possibilities of the motion picture as an educational agent.

Second, parents and teachers must see the

motion-picture problem in the context of the larger recreational problem of today. We cannot solve the motion-picture problem unless we give careful attention to the question of adequate play grounds, good libraries, satisfactory radio programs, and other constructive uses of leisure time. It is necessary, therefore, that those concerned with motion pictures co-operate with other agencies, especially those interested in recreation.

Third, there must be experimental establishment of children's theaters offering a wide repertoire of dramatic activities of which motion-picture drama would be one. The physical housing of such theaters would not offer a problem. School auditoriums, fine-arts museums, and science museums could be utilized for this purpose. It is strange that we in the United States lag so far behind European countries in this respect. With the development of the 16-mm. sound film, however, it becomes possible greatly to extend the range of exhibition of good motion pictures. An increasingly large number of films are suitable for community showings.

Fourth, the establishment and promotion of national, state, regional, city, and county film libraries are imperative. Parent and teacher organizations in those states not having film libraries should work actively with board members, educators, and public-spirited citizens to set up such libraries. Educational films deserve much wider use in the schools than they have yet received.

Fifth, the introduction into our high-school curriculum of courses in motion-picture discrimination is highly desirable. The aim of such courses shall be the development in youth of adequate standards for evaluating the social and artistic qualities of theatrical films. During the past three years thousands of teachers have begun work in this field.

Sixth, we must secure national legislation which will enable communities to choose the

theatrical films they wish without the restrictive influences of such motion-picture trade practices as compulsory block-booking and blind-selling.

—EDGAR DALE, in *The News Letter*.

"THE BEST KIND OF BACKING"

"I heard the President say that he was dumbfounded by the almost unanimous support given by the American press to his recovery program," writes Marlen Edwin Pew, editor of *Editor and Publisher*.

Mr. Roosevelt went on to say, "But there is a fly in the ointment, gentlemen. Where is your criticism? You know the Government can make mistakes and this undertaking is too vast a program for any one man or set of men to be sure of. We are certain to make blunders. I rely on you newspaper men to check us. . . . There is no kindness in flattering a wrong cause. I want your criticism as well as your support. It is the best kind of backing and the only request I make is that you be prompt about it."

THE READING TABLE

PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS AND HIGHER EDUCATION. By Ernest Victor Hollis. New York City: Columbia University Press. 1938. 373 pp. \$3.50.

Believing that the philanthropic foundation is a social institution ranking in importance with the school, the press, and the church, Dr. Hollis has admirably analyzed the philosophy, history, and practices of this twentieth-century movement. He finds they have, through the disbursal of sums running up to many millions of dollars per year, definitely influenced the colleges and universities in many ways. Church schools have tended to pull away from their religious foundation. High school credits have been standardized in the Carnegie unit. Professional education, particularly medical education, has been lifted to higher levels. Publication of much research has been stimulated and has had its in-

fluence. A large number of students have been served by scholarships.

In one of the few careful statements of this type of educational activity Dr. Hollis has found himself handicapped by lack of data, and has found uncertain philosophy and variable practices in the efforts of wealthy individuals to prolong their shadows and at the same time render a service to humanity. The book will be stimulating and valuable to college administrators and others interested in the development of higher education in America.

W. J. GIFFORD

INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY. (Second Edition.) By Lathan A. Crandall, Jr. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 356 pp. \$2.00

This second edition of a well known elementary physiology is well written and contains much valuable material. Although necessarily condensed it is not too much so for clearness, and all essential information is to be found within its 307 pages of subject matter.

The illustrations are particularly clear and are real helps in understanding the text. The book is excellent for use in college classes and as a reference work for the teacher in the field.

R. L. P.

VOCATIONAL HYGIENE. By Daniel Caplin and S. G. Ocean. New York: Globe Book Company. 1938. 207 pp. \$1.60.

Feeling that sufficient attention has not been given to the special health needs of students specializing in vocational work, the authors have written a good concise book for high school students. It is divided into three parts: proper working conditions and desirable health habits; accidents possible in different shop trades, with prevention and treatment; and a safety education plan for vocational high schools. Many of the illustrations are original and illustrate plainly the points stressed by the authors. The appendix includes a list of available literature on the subject.

RACHEL WEEMS