

The New—in Review

Alice Miel, Editor

- Primarily a handbook for curriculum workers is the description which J. Minor Gwynn applies to his new book, *Curriculum Principles and Social Trends* (Macmillan, 1943, 630 pages, \$3.50). One does not find, therefore, nor expect to find, a considered point of view on the school curriculum. Almost anything else one might wish to know about the history of curriculum development down to the present is included. In the preparation of such a voluminous document it is not surprising that some of the material would have become outdated by the time of publication nor that treatment of such a difficult subject as learning theories might be rather inadequate. But it is most convenient to have at hand a volume that brings together descriptions of the many national, regional, state, and local studies that have been and are being carried on under the auspices of various educational groups. The very extensive bibliographies which the author has assembled for each topic treated add to the value of this "handbook."
- Filled largely with excellent photographic illustrations—157 pages of them to 67 pages of text—S. Paul Johnson's *Flying Squadrons*, a graphic history of the U. S. Army Air Forces (New York, Silver Burdett, 1942, \$2.56) is a worthy successor to his *Horizons Unlimited*, a history of aviation, and *Flying Fleets*, a history of U. S. naval aviation. Text suitable for secondary level.
- Second and third graders can read the new addition to the Row, Peterson and Company Basic Science Education Series, *Doing Work*, by Blough and Parker. Wind, electricity, steam, gasoline, and various types of machines such as the lever and the pulley are given simple treatment (32 cents list).
- Added to the good neighbor series of Row, Peterson and Company are *Between Mountain and Sea* (Chile), *Children of the Sun* (Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia), *Republics of the Pampas* (Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay), and *The Fertile Land* (Brazil), completing the set of eight. These colorful, eighty-four-page, paper-covered books (list at 56 cents each) are suitable for secondary schools.
- More mature in its approach is *Latin America and Hemisphere Solidarity* by Downes, Singer, and Becker (Heath, 1943, \$1.40 list). Senior high school and even college students will find in this 237-page "unit of study" geographical, anthropological, political, and economic material that is interesting and valuable but that will require them to stretch themselves to get the full force of the social point of view from which the book is written. "Units" on Latin America would be better taught if the

teachers were to study such material as this as a background.

- A great increase in the use of technical animation characterizes the more recent films released by Erpi Classroom Films, Inc. Among their new history films is "Colonial Expansion" (1492-1763) in which many clever devices are employed to make the use of maps more effective. Henry S. Commager of Columbia University collaborated on this production. In this film the commentary is swift and packed so full of facts that younger students or those who think slowly are likely to lose a great deal. For this reason, repeated showings probably would be required to get maximum benefit. The regional geography films which depict contemporary life in six major regions of the United States have been produced in collaboration with Howard W. Odum of the University of North Carolina. A representative one, "The Middle States," is more leisurely and gives one time to get a feeling for the agricultural, processing, and industrial activities which are shown pictorially. The films in this series could be used anywhere from the middle grades on up.

With Robert S. Lynd of Columbia University as collaborator, "Growth of Cities" does a good job of tracing the urbanization of the United States. Some will be disappointed that the portion of the film devoted to city planning is so slight. However, the commentary is excellent and if used with other films on city life (Erpi has some and there is the excellent documentary, "The City"), high school students making a study of American problems would find it valuable.

"The Airplane Changes Our World Map," produced in collaboration with George T. Renner, Jr., of Teachers College, Columbia University, is an especially timely film and should help high school students and even younger children in the elementary school to understand the problem of map projection. Contrasts in distances between points on the globe reached by land, water, and air are clearly illustrated. This film would be valuable also for education of teachers in the proper use of maps and globes, for it makes clear that each type has its uses and its weaknesses.

One of the best examples of use of animation to present highly technical material is a brand-new film, "Sending Radio Messages." A special feature of this film is the use of frequent cumulative reviews of the material developed up to a certain point.

Most of the large university film lending libraries have these films for rental. However, no one of the films mentioned is likely to become out of date very soon and larger school systems may be interested in purchasing some of them. Each is one reel, sound, and may be purchased in 16 mm. for \$50. Catalogues and information regarding an "installment" plan of purchasing may be obtained from the Erpi Company, 1841 Broadway, New York 23, N. Y.

- Free materials on the United Nations continue to be available. *The United Nations: Who They Are—What They Are Doing* is the title of a little twenty-page "newspaper" published by the United Nations Information Office, 610 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. From the Australian News and Information

Bureau at the same address may be had *The Job Australia Is Doing. Canada at War* is a monthly publication obtainable from the Wartime Information Board (Canada), 1205 Fifteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. *South Africa at War* may be had from the South African Public Relations and Information Office, 3101 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, D. C. *India's 3rd Year of War* is available from the British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N. Y. For a list of materials on China, write United China Relief, Inc., 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

- Connecticut educators have prepared a bulletin that promises to be really helpful to elementary teachers: *A Program of Nutrition Education in the Elementary School* (Bulletin XXVII, Connecticut State Department of Education, March, 1943, 15 cents). This publication not only gives general advice regarding nutrition education but, for each level of the elementary school, has arranged in useful chart form "objectives" (brief, pointed ones), "factual information" (useful), and "activities and experiences" (an adequate and suggestive list). Also included are sources from which teachers can obtain materials and suggested questionnaires and record forms to be used in evaluation.
- People who share the opinion that a given elementary school can make little progress in improving its program until certain administrative arrangements are changed will be pleased with the firm and reasonable stand taken by Willard S. Elsbree in *Pupil Progress in the Elementary School*, Number 5 in

the series "Practical Suggestions for Teaching," edited by Hollis L. Caswell of Teachers College, Columbia University (obtainable from the Bureau of Publications for 60 cents). Grouping of children, promotion practices, and marking of children all are dealt with. Dr. Elsbree is undoubtedly right in his assertion that chronological age is the best *single* criterion for classification of children. He failed to present other possibilities, such as abandoning attempts to group children homogeneously even with respect to age and attempting to form well-balanced heterogeneous groups.

- Little changed perhaps except for a new introductory chapter and bibliographies brought up to date, the new edition of Hockett and Jacobsen's *Modern Practices in the Elementary School* (Ginn, 1943, \$3) is nevertheless worth calling to people's attention. It remains one of the books on elementary education which classroom teachers find readable and practical.
- Aviation kits for teachers are coming to be a popular type of material. United Air Lines (Room 305, Palmer House, Chicago 3, Ill.) has put out a series of three good ones at 25 cents each. One kit is designed for grades 1-3, another for grades 4-6, and the third for the secondary school. Each contains a manual for the teacher, a directory of aviation material available from various sources such as other air lines, forty folders for distribution to the pupils, twelve aviation pictures (12x17), one color print of "The Mainliner," and other items selected especially for the grades the kit serves.

Piper Aircraft Corporation (Lock Haven, Pa., Dept. B 13) has put out a high school kit for \$1. This kit includes several nomenclature wall charts and a wall chart showing movement of controls and their effect upon altitude of the plane.

- Radio contributes to consumer education in "Washington Reports on Rationing" every Sunday afternoon, 3-3:15, Eastern War Time, NBC, Ernest K. Lindley and guest speakers. This is a program that high school students might be encouraged to listen to. It would be especially valuable if followed with class discussion.

- Drama in a book on teaching English in secondary schools is a large order, but it is achieved in *English for Social Living*, edited by Holland D. Roberts, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Grayson N. Kefauver (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1943, \$3.50). Real English teachers tell their stories of experiments in their classrooms, experiments that are stimulating and exciting in their possibilities. The unique aspect of all their practices is the unity of purpose, the basic philosophy that activates all their classroom procedures.

These teachers participated in the Stanford Language Arts Investigation, a three-year program in curriculum revision under the direction of the editors of this book. One hundred fifty-one teachers and administrators and 10,000 students in twenty-eight secondary schools participated. A statement of the methods and practices used by the staff and the participating teachers in the Investigation is made in one of the chapters of the book.

Deserving of careful study is the first chapter in which the editors set forth and analyze the goals for teaching language arts. It is the kind of analysis needed to revitalize the outworn modes prevailing still in many schools, for it will help English teachers to relate their purposes to the wider field of human welfare.

The accounts written by the teachers are grouped according to what aspect of human development they took for a goal. Democratic class procedures were set up by a variety of means; individual development was the aim of other techniques; relating the English class to the community was another objective achieved by a number of different methods. Reading and writing skills were emphasized as means to an end.

Suitable for setting up in many school organizations, these procedures should offer to the English teacher who questions present methods practical ways of attaining important social objectives. But let her beware of assuming that ease will be the lot of that teacher who tries these procedures. Zeal and hard work are necessary, as most of these accounts emphasize.

The chapter on semantics is bound to be useful in the practical value of its suggestions that show how applied semantics may become a vital part of the English program.

For those schools interested in revising their curriculum the practices of the Stanford Language Arts Investigation present a pattern worth emulating in all its aspects.—*English for Social Living*, reviewed by Constance M. Stegenga, Supervising Teacher of English, Central Michigan College of Education, Mt. Pleasant, Mich.

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