

Front Lines in Education

Henry Harap, Editor

CURRICULUM STUDY AT TEACHERS COLLEGE. Under the direction of Hollis L. Caswell, three research groups at Teachers College, Columbia University, are at work on studies which will be used as a basis for experimental changes in the curriculum of the Horace Mann-Lincoln School and other schools. George S. Counts heads the group studying developing social conditions. The development of children socially, emotionally, and physically as well as intellectually is being studied by a committee under the chairmanship of Arthur Jersild. A third group, under the leadership of Irving Lorge, is making a general appraisal of existing practices in curriculum organization. Two larger committees will convert the recommendations of the research groups into experimental programs. Florence B. Stratemeyer is chairman of the Committee on Childhood Education and Hamden L. Forkner is chairman of the Committee on Youth Education. It is estimated that it will take three years to complete the project.

CURRICULUM REVISION IN MAINE. The Maine State Department of Education is about to begin a program of curriculum revision. A central commission will be appointed which will include representatives of all the important groups in the state: superintendents, teachers, private colleges, teachers' colleges, and the lay public. According to present

plans, a general statement will be formulated by the commission which will be used as a basis for stimulating experimental work throughout the state. In this way, a body of material will be slowly developed which will be used eventually to revise the present course of study.

CURRICULUM DIVISION OF OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY. At the request of the Ohio Superintendents' Association, the Curriculum Division of the Bureau of Educational Research at Ohio State University will furnish technical assistance in carrying on a curriculum study during the coming year. The superintendent of Ashland schools has indicated an interest in organizing a workshop in the secondary school curriculum during the winter quarter, and arrangements have been made to carry on curriculum revision in the Akron high schools.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SURVEY. A committee, headed by Frank N. Freeman, recently published the report of a survey of the San Francisco elementary school curriculum. The *San Francisco Public Schools Bulletin* for October 29, 1943, contains a summary of the report. Here we have space for a few of the more significant recommendations concerning supervision: "The modern conception of supervision embraces all

of the activities and influences available to the school administration for the purpose of assisting teachers to do better work. . . . Good supervision is best evidenced by a spirit of cooperative relationships in which the teacher and supervisor are intent on the improvement of the teaching service."

The Committee recommends: "that there be established the position of director of curriculum, closely articulated with the office of the deputy superintendent in charge of the elementary schools as well as with the corresponding official responsible for the secondary schools . . . that the deputy superintendent in charge of elementary education have a staff enlarged to include at least four assistant supervisors . . . that a systematic program of development of the curriculum be undertaken with large participation of teachers, principals, and supervisors."



AN ELEMENTARY CORE CURRICULUM.

The latest venture in the elementary schools of Lorain, Ohio, is a course of study in social education. Material is organized into a "core" curriculum covering the first six years of school. Its subject matter areas are health and safety, natural science, history and geography. The content is divided into a series of units, the sequence arranged with regard to pupil interest in and ability to comprehend the concepts presented. Daily teaching periods vary in length from approximately forty-five minutes in the first grade to nearly a half day in the upper elementary grades. The application of skills in reading, writing, spelling, music, art, and English is strongly emphasized in the subject

matter fields of the core curriculum. This tie-up of the reading program with the social studies does not in any way interfere with, but rather contributes to, an individualized reading program which is built upon a series of levels.—Erma J. Beckwith, *Elementary Supervisor*.



ENGLISH PLANS FOR POSTWAR EDUCATION. According to the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, which has been debated in the press, on the platform, and in Parliament, basic changes in the English educational system may be expected after the war. School attendance will be compulsory only from the age of 5, as before, but nursery schools for the training of children below the compulsory school age are to be provided wherever they are needed. The upper age limit of compulsory school attendance is to be raised to 15, with provisions for raising it later to 16. Secondary school education, to begin at 11, is to be free to all. There will be three kinds of secondary schools: grammar schools; new modern schools which will absorb the existing senior elementary schools and have a curriculum laying more stress on practical subjects after the age of 13; and technical schools which will be developed out of the present junior technical colleges and greatly multiplied over the number now in existence.



HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS CARE FOR CHILDREN. Utilizing as work-experience centers the four nurseries for children of working mothers being operated in Highland Park, Mich., with help from Lanham funds, about 800 ninth and

tenth grade girls in the Highland Park schools are receiving a total of twenty hours of experience and training in child care each semester. Plans provide for simple pre-work instruction, job supervision, and follow-up discussion of the experience these girls have at the child-care centers. A health check-up is given each girl before she reports to the nursery. Each center, in addition to its regular personnel, is assigned four high school girls each period.—Roy E. Robinson, *Administrative Assistant in Charge of Instruction*.



A UNIVERSITY PROGRAM OF COMMUNITY SERVICES. The University of Indiana makes available the following services to the communities of the state: speakers' bureau, package libraries, motion picture lending library, home-study courses, guides to study and discussion, and advisory service. In addition, the School of Education offers a short course for improving the efficiency of teachers. The advisory services which are available include help on local government problems, the establishment of a council of social agencies, the organization of nursery schools, and the revision of the school curriculum.



CURRICULUM GUIDES FOR LINCOLN TEACHERS. A three-year plan to develop curriculum guides for English in the Lincoln (Nebr.) public schools was started this summer. Three work committees made up of teachers and supervisors worked on the problem simultaneously. One group worked in the elementary field, another in the junior high school area, another on the senior

high school level. A steering committee, composed of the chairmen of each work committee and his assistant together with the assistant superintendent of schools and the director of curriculum, coordinated the work of the three groups. The document produced by each work committee was submitted to all teachers who were to use it. Teachers were asked to give the preliminary study document a thorough trial in the classroom. A new committee will revise the curriculum guide on the basis of suggestions submitted by the teachers. This procedure will be repeated a second year.—A. E. Folsom, *Principal, Irving Junior High School*.



SHORT COURSES FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS. For some time, the John B. Campbell Folk School at Brasstown, N. C., has given a short course for rural youth and adults during the winter season. The Bricks Rural Life School in North Carolina conducts a training school for Negro farmers in January and February. Ohio State University, as do some other agricultural colleges, offers short courses on specialized subjects for farmers. The American Labor Education Service has conducted short summer courses designed to train prospective leaders in the labor movement. The Danish Folk School is a short-term educational program for youth and adults. The White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, which has had general approval in England, recommends the establishment of rural young peoples' colleges to be used for a short continuous term by farm boys during the inactive season in winter and as camps for town boys during the sum-

mer. If short courses for rural leadership are being conducted by the American public schools, they have escaped our notice. Here is an idea for a pioneering school administrator.



NEW CURRICULUM PAMPHLETS. In his introduction to *Adapting the High School to Wartime and Post-War Needs*, the first of a new series of pamphlets on the modern school curriculum, Dean W. E. Peik says that the present period of reconstruction was chosen as an opportune time to launch these new publications. The first pamphlet was prepared by G. Lester Anderson, Director, and the staff of University High School of the University of Minnesota. It is a report of the changes in administration, guidance, and curriculum that have been made in the high school as a result of the war and in anticipation of postwar needs. The curriculum adjustments are presented in specific terms and include getting boys ready for the services, meeting wartime needs, developing an understanding of world affairs, and preparing students for the postwar world.



READING MATERIALS FOR RURAL CHILDREN. The lack of reading materials designed specifically for the rural child has led two educational foundations to give financial aid to groups preparing original books which contain information based on settings familiar to country children. The Sloan Foundation experiment in the improvement of living has yielded numerous pamphlets dealing with food, clothing, and shelter in the rural environment.

Recently, the Julius Rosenwald Fund has assisted the West Georgia College in the preparation of a series of four booklets for which the text was written by Eva Knox Evans and the drawings were done by Mary A. Giles. The booklets were prepared with the help of children and teachers of the rural elementary schools in Carroll County, Georgia, and with the counsel of the students and faculty of West Georgia College. The publications are *Let's Plant Grass*, *Let's Raise Pigs*, *The Doctor Is Coming*, and *A Primer on Food*. The books may be obtained from the Committee on Publications, West Georgia College, Carrollton, Ga. Single copies are 15 cents each; sets of twenty-five cost \$2.50.



BRIEF ITEMS. The three newly elected members of the Education Policies Commission are active members of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development. They are: Prudence Cutright, Acting Superintendent of Schools, Minneapolis, Minn.; Paul T. Rankin, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Detroit, Mich., and Maycie Southall, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn. . . . The Minnesota State Legislature has appropriated \$10,000 for the printing of a new elementary course of study. T. J. Berning, Assistant Commissioner, writes that plans for this project will be made "in the not far distant future."

"Front Lines in Education" brings you news of significant developments in education throughout the nation. This department is edited by Henry Harap of George Peabody College, Nashville, Tenn. Readers are invited to send accounts of activities in their schools to Mr. Harap for possible inclusion in "Front Lines in Education."

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