

with anything that bears an "adult education" label.

There is no excuse today for such practices. Films, pamphlets, recordings, film strips, and slides are available to facilitate learning, and, moreover, to make it an enjoyable and fun-giving experience.³

Where Does the School Fit In?

4. Finally, the school must increasingly exercise its logical function as a coordinating center for the fuller use of other community resources and agencies carrying on adult education activities. This should be done, not with any thought or intent of restricting or controlling such activities, but to insure that through cooperative effort, overlapping and duplication may be avoided, and the needs of all sections of the community served. Programs of community education are now being promoted by

³ Write to New Tools for Learning, 280 Madison Avenue, New York 16, N. Y., for a free catalogue of "New Tools."

business men's groups, service clubs, unions, women's groups, citizens' committees on the problems of the peace, and countless other autonomous and independent organizations. This is all to the good, but somehow, somewhere along the line, some agency at the community level must give some thought to fitting the pieces of the puzzle together. That agency, logically, is the school.

The emphasis in this article has been on the things which need to be done by the school if we are to explode the myth that present efforts in the education of adults have more than scratched the surface of the job to be done. It would have been a much pleasanter task to have reported on the very fine achievements which individual schools have already accomplished in extending services to adults. Perhaps, when there is more "hay in the barn," so to speak, *Educational Leadership* will give us space for reporting the pride of accomplishment which will then be rightfully ours.

¶ *Wise teachers combine books with experience to give real meaning to education*

EDUCATION IS WITHIN FOUR WALLS

● EDGAR G. JOHNSTON

THE CONCEPT of education as something which happens—God willing—in a classroom, is almost as pernicious as the point of view that all desirable learning is imprisoned between the covers of a textbook. In each case there is a tendency to divorce learning from experience and to place undue emphasis on verbalization.

Unquestionably an alert and vital teacher may do much to bring the breath of life into the classroom—through use of multiple sources of information, through a consistent search for practical applications, through the use of visual and auditory material, through invitations to representatives of community agencies to share experi-

ences with the group, through constructive activities which call for abilities other than memorization, through group organization for cooperative attack on common problems. The fact remains, however, that education "within four walls" is by and large a process which begins with the selection of subject-matter-to-be-learned and ends with its eventual regurgitation. As Edgar Dale puts it in a recent editorial, "The schools still remain little islands isolated from the main stream of life."

Without Benefit of Classroom

A brief reflection on the part of the reader will convince him that in his own experience, some of the most vivid, significant, and lasting learning takes place without benefit of classroom. The store of factual information used daily in your occupation as teacher or administrator may be, in part, the product of professional preparation; in large measure, it is the result of learning on the job. The information and skills (and more important, the attitudes) which characterize you as automobile driver, citizen, member of a family group, golf partner; those emotional reactions which prompt you to listen with satisfaction to the Brahms trio (or to Frank Sinatra), have been the product of countless contacts, experiences, and associations, few of which can be credited to the school.

There have been refreshing indications in recent years that some teachers and school administrators are awakened to the educational possibilities available in the physical features, the cultural resources, the social institutions, and the economic agencies of the communities in which they live. The scope of this

One of the most frequently voiced criticisms of education is that it is something apart from life itself. The traditional school, where the youngsters show up at a certain hour and sit glued to their stiff little chairs until "the bell rings," deserves the sneers of practical-minded people. Far-sighted educators are equally impatient with that kind of pedagogy. Edgar G. Johnston of the University of Michigan School of Education discusses here the progress we have made toward exploding the myth that education must be dispensed within the limits of four walls.

paper does not permit extensive descriptions of specific school programs, but a few illustrations may serve to indicate trends.

The "excursion" or field trip has been made a regular feature of the educational program in some schools, not only in biology and agriculture classes, but in English, social studies, and mathematics. Trips to Washington or to the State capital, to the coal fields of West Virginia, to a New England village, to a school-owned camp, have become a regular feature of the educational program in some schools. War-time restrictions on travel have almost eliminated such trips, but it is reasonable to expect that this type of learning experience will be expanded after the war.

The Community as a School

Even more significant are those instances where school groups have participated actively in the study of community problems and contributed toward their solution. Paul Hanna's *Youth Serves the Community* presents numerous examples of constructive community projects carried on by school and non-school organizations of

young people. Many other illustrations might be given. School forests where pupils plant and care for the trees, study forest and wild life development, and budget the income for school projects are fairly common in some parts of the country. A school in Alabama studied methods of erosion control and, with the cooperation of nearby farmers, set up demonstration projects to test the effectiveness of check dams, strip cropping, diversion channels, and various types of vegetative growth.

A small school in the hill section of Kentucky has a Community Service Committee. Girls have helped a public health nurse disseminate information about children's diet and rural sanitation. Boys have taken a kit of tools and provided craft work in outlying one-room schools. A "packhorse librarian" makes weekly trips with books and periodicals up mountain trails. In countless communities from Virginia to California high school young people have played a large part in organizing, equipping, and administering community recreation centers which represent one of the healthy outgrowths of the current wave of concern about juvenile delinquency.

In particular, young people have played a large part in contributing to the war effort. School war councils have supervised a wide range of activities from the sale of defense stamps and collection of waste paper and scrap iron to messenger service, surveys of fire hazards, and forums on postwar problems. Pupils have picked apples, harvested beans and tomatoes, and even topped sugar beets. In defense areas they have worked on the assembly lines and held down men's jobs in stores. The

value of these activities has not been solely in terms of crops harvested or bombers built. There has come to be in recent years a healthy recognition by school people of the educational values of work experience.

While the illustrations given indicate that distinct progress has been made in expanding the horizons of the school, it would be a mistake to assume that these trends are universal or even quite general. The walls of Jericho show some rifts but they have not yet toppled. The general introduction and effective utilization of extra-school experience is an educational chapter yet to be written. Sound policies for the integration of school and out-of-school learning will emerge as the result of countless experiments by individual schools and teachers, exchange of experiences, and extended discussion by those seriously concerned with making secondary education more functional.

It may be appropriate to close this paper with the warning that enthusiasm must be tempered with judgment if the maximum value is to be achieved from extension of the schools' horizons. The following cautions are among those to which the writer would give emphasis:

A Word to the Wise

1. *The educational purpose of extra-mural activities must be clearly analyzed and firmly held.* If the experience is not to be aimless busy work, there must be constant reference to educational goals—greater insight into community problems, first-hand contact with working conditions, and increased sensitivity to significant factors in the environment.

2. *There should be a close relationship between experiences outside the*

classroom and in-school learning. Consistent effort to establish relationships will doubtless entail frequent modification of "lessons planned"; not the least value will be found in the necessity for two or more teachers to work together where the outside experience involves more than one group.

3. *The school has a definite responsibility to safeguard pupils from exploitation and hazard to health or safety.* The importance of careful supervision of transportation and of working conditions of minors is generally recognized. A danger which has not been so clearly seen by many is that of exploit-

ing child labor under the guise of patriotic emergency and the value of "work experience."

4. *Explosion of the myth that "education is within four walls" will demand a more realistic type of teacher preparation.* Teacher education itself has frequently taken place within the four walls of an ivory tower. If teachers are to make the environment a vital part of the educational program, they must themselves have had first-hand contact with it. One is reminded of the old Scotchman's comment on the local schoolmaster. "Outside o' book learnin', he's a verra ignorant man."

☛ *Supt. Brown resolves to do something to stop the modern trend toward making schools more useful*

9 to 3 for NINE MONTHS

● C. E. RAGSDALE

AFTER a particularly trying meeting with "his" board, Supt. Brown retired to his bed and sought forgetfulness in sleep.

That day some well-meaning but misguided citizens had presented a request for the use of a school building as a youth center in the evening and during summer vacation! They obviously did not understand the havoc that would be created in a well-kept building if it were opened to teen-aged boys and girls outside of school hours.

Then—as harassed Supt. Brown lapsed into fitful dreaming—the unthinkable happened. By unanimous vote the formerly tractable board resolved to

put the local schools on a six-day week and a fifty-two-week school year. Furthermore the school plant was to be open daily from 8:30 A.M. to 10:30 P.M. for children and adults. Each teacher

Supt. Brown of this story likes "his" school system JUST the way it is. He likes it that way because "that's the way it always has been." Then an awful thing happens. Someone suggests a change. Supt. Brown is panic-stricken and immediately begins to defend "his" system, never once considering that the new suggestions might offer an improvement over his own tried and true ways. The sad plight of Supt. Brown is described here by C. E. Ragsdale, Professor of Education at the University of Wisconsin.

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