

The New—in Review

Alice Miel, Editor

A STIMULATING TYPE of curriculum report is the book, *New Schools for a New Culture*, by Charles M. MacConnell, Ernest O. Melby, and Christian O. Arndt (New York, Harper, 1943, \$2.50.) It tells the story of the development of New School, an experimental unit which forms a part of Evanston Township High School. While the book is more than a report on this particular school, its great value lies in the detailed and candid account of the problems faced, the mistakes made and the satisfactions and successes achieved when a group of educators tried to organize a secondary school which would furnish a real "implementation of the democratic philosophy" and would actually operate on the theory that we learn by doing.

The authors go into enough detail to give a feeling of how they met such problems as cooperative planning of areas of study, discovering suitable kinds of evaluation, and helping parents to have an active part in the school. Some chapters are more general and deal with such topics as the kind of pre-service and in-service education of teachers that will help fit them to work in experimental situations, and changes in family life that would further real democratic living. But an outstanding characteristic of the book is the fact that it is written out of experience in a dynamic situation.

The authors frequently warn the

reader that this report is not to be taken as a pattern. "Each new center for experimentation," they say, "will become a new hub from which will radiate encouragement to other communities to attack problems directly instead of adopting patterns already established."

There is cause for optimism about the future of secondary education and of its place in American democracy if the kind of creative thinking and planning done at New School becomes more typical of American high schools. —*New Schools for a New Culture* reviewed by Dorothy Gray, on leave from Central Michigan College of Education and the Mt. Pleasant Public Schools.

STRONG INTEREST in teacher education in Connecticut is evidenced by the appearance this year of a new publication, *Teacher Education Quarterly*, put out by the State Department of Education. The new quarterly keeps Connecticut educators informed concerning national developments in teacher education as well as those within their own state.

THE AMERICAN RUSSIAN Institute has materials that would be of value to those making a study of the U.S.S.R. A wall map may be obtained for 50 cents. A packet of fifteen postcards showing Soviet life and containing descriptions on the reverse side

sells for 15 cents. A helpful study outline, *The Soviet Union Today*, is a 112-page syllabus and bibliography priced at \$1. Several 10-cent pamphlets are available: *Soviet Health Care in Peace and War*, *The U.S.S.R. at War*, *50 Questions and Answers*, and *The Constitution of the U.S.S.R.* Another pamphlet at 25 cents traces the development of the exact sciences and describes twenty-five years of power development in the U.S.S.R. A series of picture charts with related text (dimensions 17 x 22 inches) is now in the process of production. One on Soviet industry is ready for distribution. The next to be issued will be one on the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. The address of the Institute is 56 West Forty-fifth Street, New York 19, N. Y.

OUT OF MICHIGAN come two reports of projects that have been co-extensive and mutually reinforcing. One is *The Education of Teachers*, edited by David M. Trout and published by the Michigan Cooperative Teacher Education Study (Lansing, 1943, \$1.25). The other is *The First Five Years of the Michigan Study of the Secondary School Curriculum, 1937-42* (Lansing, State Board of Education). The former volume is a frank report of the findings of a statewide study of teacher education, noting weaknesses in practice as well as encouraging signs of progress. Specific recommendations are made regarding ways of improving the education of teachers. Readers will find special challenge in Chapter I, "The Role of the Teacher," by Mr. Trout.

The second report, which was prepared by J. Cecil Parker, Wilmer

Menge, and Theodore D. Rice, is organized around a past, a present, and a future. One learns not only how the staff has operated to help bring about improvement in secondary education in Michigan, but also its "Current Plans and Activities," and its "Proposals for Consideration in Future Planning."

NO AREA of the elementary school curriculum has been more puzzling than the social studies. As we make the transition from war to peace, it will be more important than ever before that the social studies play the role they can and should in the lives of children. For help in thinking through the problem of how this may be done, by all means read every word of a new little pamphlet, *Social Studies for Children*, published by the Association for Childhood Education (1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C., 35 cents). Here, one feels as he reads, is a vision of really sound social education for children—its content in broad outline, the way in which social development takes place, and concepts toward which social development should be directed in a democratic framework, all treated by Agnes Snyder; experiences that will lead toward social maturity, reports from practice gathered by Daisy Parton; and finally some criteria for social development from the pen of Lois Barclay Murphy.

For suggestions regarding content of the social studies program suitable for the present war period turn to W. Linwood Chase's *Wartime Social Studies in the Elementary School* (Bulletin No. 3 in the Curriculum Series of the National Council for the Social Studies, same address as above, Septem-

ber, 1943, \$1.). Prof. Chase has gathered his materials from people and publications the country over. In considering how to use his suggestions, it would be well to heed the advice of Miss Snyder in *Social Studies for Children* when she states how important it is that young children "should not come to take a war world for granted as the normal world" but that another kind of world should be kept before them. Miss Snyder's analysis on pages 6-7 would help a teacher do just that for she shows that most of our war problems are but special cases of age-long problems of "intelligent use of our earth resources" and "making a fair distribution among people of the products of the earth."

In addition to suggesting many kinds of pupil activities (some more appropriate for elementary age children than others) *Wartime Social Studies in the Elementary School* supplies some rather elementary background material for the teacher on 1) the war as part of the curriculum, 2) democratic living, 3) friendliness toward other people, and 4) the worldwide setting of modern life. One of the most interesting features of the bulletin was a detailed record of how a unit on Mexico was developed with a group of fifth grade children (pages 36-40). A bibliography of books about Negroes suitable for elementary grades (page 36) is useful, and among thirty-one suggested approaches to intercultural education every teacher should surely find help in getting started in this area.

A less recent book but one which makes some thoughtful recommendations with regard to another phase of social studies is Ruth Wood Gavian's

Education for Economic Competence in Grades I to VI (New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1942, \$2.10). See especially chapter six, where the author's conclusions and recommendations are set forth.

PICTURE PORTFOLIOS are a new venture of the East and West Association (40 East Forty-ninth Street, New York 17, N. Y.). Now ready are *The Life of a Family in China*, *The Life of a Family in India*, and *The Life of a Family in Russia*, which sell for 50 cents each. Pictures are attractive (black and white) and authentic; captions are carefully checked. A set used in the order indicated by the table of contents tells a consecutive story, a story showing that "family life is a great and basic part of human experience which all people have in common." Pages are unbound so that they may be used in various ways in classrooms and study groups. The set on Russia has sixteen pages containing eighteen photographs and an additional page giving the table of contents and a foreword by Pearl S. Buck.

NO PUNCHES are pulled in the current issue of *Building America* on the subject "The Consumer in War and Peace." Some of the topics which are discussed in a straight-forward manner are "What Determines Prices?" "Problems the Consumer Faces in Making Choices," "Laws Help Protect the Consumer," and "Voluntary Efforts Aid the Consumer." The study unit closes with a discussion of problems brought to the consumer by the war and prospects for the future. The prob-

lems are summarized by these words: "If we are successful in our fight against inflation during the war, and during that equally dangerous period between the war's end and the time when the wheels of American production can turn swiftly for peace production; if we can meet our goal of full employment in the postwar days, the main problem of most consumers will be solved. What will they do then to solve their problems of making choices and of still better legal protection?"

FREE VISUAL aids and literature for the study of our forest resources and their conservation may be obtained from American Forest Products Industries, 1319 Eighteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C. Among the items distributed upon request are an instructive and decorative map, "Where We Grow Our Trees," a chart showing "Products of American Forests," a group of four posters, and three supplementary reading booklets suitable for upper elementary and high school grades. In addition, a twenty-minute sound film, *Trees for Tomorrow*, may be booked without cost except prepayment of return transportation.

A READING LIST on the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter recently compiled for the National Council for the Social Studies, the American Library Association, and the National Council of Teachers of English may be ordered from the last-named organization, 211 West Sixty-eighth Street, Chicago 21, Ill., Price 15 cents. References are given for each of the Four Freedoms and for each article of the Atlantic Charter in turn.

PORTLAND HOLDS a unique position in radio in education since it is the only school system in the United States that now owns and operates a standard wave-length station, KBPS. The School District employs a full-time program manager, whose duty it is to program, rehearse, and direct all broadcasts from the school station as well as coordinate all educational programs broadcast by the local commercial stations. Twenty-six weekly programs are being broadcast this spring term for in-school listening in the Portland Schools.

Station KBPS is located in the Benson Polytechnic High School. It is technically operated by Benson students enrolled in electricity and radio and offers them an outstanding practical experience.

Opportunities in programming for KBPS are provided both for original broadcasts prepared and produced by the pupils and for series to be used for in-school listening to supplement the classroom work.

Some of the programs have consisted of interviews with well-known children's authors. In one broadcast Beach school interviewed Mary Jane Carr and then produced their own adaptation of *Young Mac of Ft. Vancouver*. There have been interviews with the mayor about the city government, with the governor about the State forestry department, and with the Chinese, English, Brazilian, and Mexican consuls about children and schools in their countries.

Station KBPS is on the air every school day from 11 until 1 o'clock and from 3 to 5.—This report on radio in Portland schools was prepared by Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Gilmore, Program Manager, KBPS, Portland, Ore.

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