

The New—in Review

Sara M. Krentzman, Editor

LEARNING TO UNDERSTAND boys and girls was the object of the group of teachers and teaching-principals who volunteered to cooperate in a study sponsored by the Commission on Teacher Education, developed over a period of years, and becoming a process of continuous child study in this particular school system. The report of this study, *Helping Teachers Understand Children* (Washington, D. C., American Council on Education, \$3.50) is a significant contribution to the literature of child study as well as to that of group stimulation for in-service education. These teachers seriously undertook the business of studying their own students, using local leadership and outside resources. In this book they have revealed their problems, their procedures, their experiences, and their own development as more effective teachers.

The report is organized to show the step-by-step development of the teachers as they worked. Daniel A. Prescott, head of the Division on Child Development and Teacher Personnel, has contributed a preface introducing the report and pointing out the difficulties in publishing descriptions of real youngsters or of teachers in a real school system. He describes the collaboration of many groups and individuals in preparing this book and points out the value of this method of producing such material.

The first two chapters—"What It Means to 'Understand' a Child" and "Learning To Describe Behavior"—are concerned with the purpose and beginnings of the study. The chapters following describe the procedures, the help received from specialists, the use of group meetings as a study method, and the study made of the interaction of children in groups. Included are an honest evaluation of the project and suggestions for conducting a child study program. The summarizing chapter, "What Experience Has Taught Us," offers practical suggestions for improving teacher-pupil relationships.

Teachers who are aware of their need for

knowing how to study and to understand children will welcome this book. Principals, supervisors, and others interested in stimulating such an awareness will find the experiences recorded in *Helping Teachers Understand Children* filled with valuable suggestions.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of this publication is its simple, readable style and its use of anecdotes and personal sketches to make the project seem alive. This is no dull research report; it is a warm description of the experiences of a group of teachers as they seek to solve the problem that all teachers face—that of learning to understand the boys and girls they teach.

SEVENTH-GRADERS BECAME HISTORIANS in North Salem, Westchester County, New York, and under the direction of Frances Eichner, teacher of social studies in Central High School, they collected and wrote the stories in *When Our Town Was Young; Stories of North Salem's Yesterday* (Central High School, Purdys, Westchester County, New York, \$2). The making of this attractive book became a community project as the oldsters provided information and the youngsters were occupied with weaving the facts into interesting stories. A historical map of New Salem appears on the end papers of the book. The contents include an introductory chapter telling how the book happened, and many stories of the pioneers, churches, schools, transportation, industries, and other phases of the early life in the community. There are many interesting photographs and directions for three historical tours of North Salem. The experiences of these boys and girls offer a challenge to other communities to engage in a project as worthwhile and as interesting.

SCHOOL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE welcome the news that publication of *School Life*, the regular monthly journal of the Office of Education, has been resumed. Dur-

ing the war, the biweekly *Education for Victory* took its place in bringing timely and pertinent information to educators to help them solve wartime problems. Now that the war is over, that publication has been discontinued and *School Life* will serve again as a medium of communication between the U. S. Office and educational leaders.

In the first issue, plans announced for the coming months include departmental sections on school administration, secondary education, vocational education, elementary education, auxiliary school services, and international educational relations. *School Life* attempts to present the reports of significant studies in the various educational fields, to give official information about federal legislation of interest to educators, to report on trends and progress in educational activities everywhere. A monthly listing of new government documents with annotations and buying information is most helpful.

Paid-up subscribers to *Education for Victory* will receive *School Life* until the expiration of that subscription. New subscribers may send their orders to a magazine dealer or directly to the Superintendent of Documents. (Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., \$1 a year).

THE SCHOOL LIBRARY WORKSHOP at the North Carolina College for Negroes prepared a selected list of books entitled "Books By and About the Negro" (Raleigh, N. C., State Department of Public Instruction, 3¢ postage). There are three sections of the bibliography: Negro Books for Primary Grades, Negro Books for Intermediate Grades, and a subject list of Negro Books for High Schools.

USING THE CLASSROOM FILM, a sound motion picture demonstrating recommended procedures for teaching with motion pictures, is now ready for distribution by the Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., 20 North Wacker Drive, Chicago 6, Ill. The purchase price is \$85, less a 10 per cent discount to educational institutions, and the film may be rented for \$4 per day plus transportation both ways.

Photographed in cooperation with the Laboratory School of the University of Chi-

cago, this two-reel sound picture on 16 mm. safety stock is recommended for teachers' meetings, conferences, workshops, for supervisors and administrators, and for Parent-Teachers' Association meetings. A film "The Wheat Farmer" is used with a seventh-grade social studies class to demonstrate proper procedures for the preparation of the teacher and the pupils for the motion picture, the actual showing of the film, and the follow-up discussion and planning in the classroom. Teachers and supervisors at all levels will find this film helpful in developing the technique of using the motion picture as a teaching aid.

FIVE NEW PUBLICATIONS of interest are offered by the Association for Childhood Education, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Teachers of nursery school, kindergarten, and primary age children will welcome the *Portfolio for Nursery School Teachers* (twelve leaflets, price 50 cents). The descriptions in these leaflets of conditions necessary for good school living reflect a careful study of the characteristics and needs of children 2 and 3 years old.

Materials for Work and Play (twelve leaflets, price 50 cents), prepared by the ACE Committee on Equipment and Supplies, gives simple, helpful information on the many types of materials needed for creative activity—drawing and painting materials, clay, building blocks, wood-working tools, science materials, toys, musical instruments, puppets, textiles, and books. One of the leaflets is a bibliography and another gives simple recipes for "this and that."

A Bibliography of Books for Children (89 pages, 75 cents), a revision prepared by the ACE Literature Committee, presents a selected list of books with annotations, price, classification, and suggested age levels.

Herbert Zim has prepared a bulletin *This Is Science* (44 pages, 50 cents) which is designed to help the teacher recognize opportunities in children's everyday experiences for learning about science, to present suggestions for techniques in teaching science, and to indicate sources for equipment, supplies, books, pamphlets, and free materials in the science field. There are eighteen descriptions of children's science experiences. This pamphlet is full of suggestions for elementary

teachers as to how, why, and when to teach science.

The Arts and Children's Living (28 pages, 35 cents) was prepared by seven teachers and describes experiences which they believe to have art value because they "have to do with living creatively with oneself and with others." This bulletin attempts to direct the art program in our schools toward a functional relationship with everyday living rather than toward a formal presentation of the various art forms. Correlations with arithmetic, science, writing, reading, dramatics, and social studies are suggested.

All of these publications grew out of the experiences of teachers and children and offer valuable aid to elementary teachers.

CIVILIAN EDUCATORS will find many implications for their programs in the bulletin *Use of Training Aids in the Armed Services* (Bulletin 1945, No. 9, Washington, D.C., Superintendent of Documents, 10 cents). This report of the Committee on Military Training Aids and Instructional Materials states that the use of such materials in the educational programs of the Armed Services is significant to civilian education and should be studied by educators interested in more effective use of training aids.

After an introduction summarizing briefly the training given in the Armed Services, the Committee devotes much attention to the following specific materials, devices, or techniques which it felt were most successful and deserved the attention of civilian education:

1. The use of films, film strips, slides, posters, graphic portfolios, and other materials to assist in the creation of desired attitudes.
2. The use of humor, "eye appeal," and naturalness to stimulate an interest in the immediate learning situation.
3. Creation of materials highly suitable to the level of the ability of the learner.
4. Variety and flexibility of aids and devices.
5. The use of aids and devices to create training conditions which are as nearly as possible like real conditions of action.
6. Sensory learning.
7. Service aids, devices, and materials highly functional.
8. Emphasis upon integrated programs of "learning by doing."

NEW BOOKS AND IDEAS of especial interest in the South are reviewed in *The Southern Packet*, a new monthly publication edited by Virginia Terrell Lathrop and published in Asheville, N. C., by George Myers Stephens. Signed reviews of new southern books of general interest and an announcement column of other new publications are included each month. A topic relating to the South's culture is covered by a special book-list.

The Southern Packet may be obtained for 50 cents a year from The Stephens Press, 48 Walnut Street, Asheville, N. C.

THE CONSUMER EDUCATION STUDY, sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, has produced four teaching-learning units of interest to secondary-school teachers. These materials are prepared to encourage young people to become more intelligent, more effective, and more conscientious consumers in the present-day world. The four units now ready are: *The Modern American Consumer*, *Investing In Yourself*, *Learning to Use Advertising*, and *Time On Your Hands*. (Consumer Education Study, National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.). The pamphlets are priced at 25 cents each, with discounts for quantity buying.

A LONG AWAITED BOOK LIST is "A Supplement to '500 Books for Children'" compiled by Nora E. Beust and Eleanore F. Clift and published in the October 1945 issue of *School Life*. The purpose of the supplement is "to assist educators, parents, and librarians to become acquainted with the varied types of books for boys and girls that are available today." Suggestions are made for books for grades one through nine. Those of special interest to pre-school children and those particularly valuable for reading aloud or for story-telling are indicated.

The supplement has been reprinted and may be had for 5 cents a copy (Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.). Remittance may be made by check or money order, but not by stamps. A discount of 25 per cent will be allowed on orders of 100 or more copies when sent to one address.

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