

The New—in Review

Sara M. Krentzman, Editor

OF PRACTICAL VALUE to teachers and parents is Katherine E. D'Evelyn's *Individual Parent-Teacher Conferences* (New York, Teachers College, Bureau of Publications, 1945, 75 cents). Although there is much said about school and home cooperation, the average teacher does not understand the counseling procedures and consequently fails to lead parent conferences into constructive planning. After reading this monograph, one realizes that there are too few conferences with parents if the school recognizes its responsibility for the total development of the child.

In the first seven chapters, specific conferences are recorded. Each report is preceded by a brief description of teacher aims and preparation for the meeting. It is followed by a discussion of the technics used and the cues to behavior that may help both parent and teacher.

The information in Chapter VIII on the writing of conference reports is helpful. The author would have these records brief, objective, and ethical and very wisely insists that confidential material is not necessary. A statement of the difficulty encountered, the cooperative planning for the child's development and the result of the action should be included in each pupil's cumulative record folder.

Chapter IX sets forth a few problems which confront teachers and administrators who would like to increase the number of parent-teacher conferences. It is thought that a teacher of small children could not have more than twenty pupils if she is to have an understanding of the needs of each individual. The main difficulties that block successful parent-teacher conferences are three: (1) Teachers have not been trained in this type of guidance, (2) Administrators do not appreciate the importance of such conferences enough to give them a place in the regular program. Too frequently, the teacher must meet the parent after a long day's work in

the classroom, (3) Because of the heavy class loads teachers do not have the time or the energy to conduct these conferences.

The concluding chapter lists a few principles for the teacher to use in her relationships with parents. These suggestions stress the fact that parents must feel that the teacher is an understanding person who wants to help, not condemn the home and all that live therein. Without a feeling of mutual interest, respect, and sympathy, there is little accomplished in any meeting. Those who wish to do more extensive reading on home and school relationships or personality problems will find the bibliography useful.

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RURAL TEACHERS often face a serious problem concerning what to do with beginners in the one room school situation. A suggestive program for handling five-year-olds in such a situation is given in *Teaching Beginners In a Rural School*, written by Clara O. Wilson, Professor of Elementary Education, Teachers College, University of Nebraska (Lincoln, Nebraska, The University Publishing Company, 1946, 40 cents). Clever line drawings add to the readability of the booklet, which is brief and direct in style.

Clara Evans, Assistant Professor, University of Nebraska, makes the following comment on this publication: "Psychologically sound, practical, and sure to be helpful is this booklet of suggestions for the first year in the country school. Designed for both rural teachers and teacher-training institutions, it is based on five years of research into the spontaneous interests of five-year-old children in seven widely scattered counties. Further, the activities current in successful kindergartens have been adapted to a rural seasonal setting. This booklet fits schools as they are and should prove of definite value to teachers."

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON READING, organized at the University of Chicago in 1938, has provided each year for a critical discussion of reading problems at the various levels of general education and for promoting further study of the complex problems in teaching reading which schools face continually. The theme of the 1945 conference, "The Appraisal of Current Practices in Reading", was chosen because those who planned the conference felt that in the field of reading, as in other areas of instruction, every effort should be made for improvement in the postwar world.

The proceedings of the 1945 conference have been published in a volume entitled *The Appraisal of Current Practices in Reading*, compiled and edited by William S. Gray (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1945, \$2). The study is divided into the following parts, each of which includes contributions from well known educators: Introduction; Reading Programs; Reading Materials; Adjustment to Individual Needs; Provision for Poor and Disabled Readers; Interpretation in Reading; Word Perception; Literature; Summary of Criteria; Progress in Making Textbooks. One chapter contains lists of significant books for library and class use published since the 1944 conference.

Educators throughout the country who were unable to hear the proceedings of this reading conference are fortunate that they have access to a printed account of the thinking that went on there. This publication should be read and studied by all teachers, supervisors, or administrators interested in improving the quality of instruction in reading.

INEXPENSIVE AND HELPFUL are the fifteen leaflets on school library problems prepared by Velma R. Shaffer, Associate Professor of Library Service, University of Tennessee and published by the Tennessee State Department of Education, Division of School Libraries. Each of the leaflets may be purchased singly for a few cents or in quantity at a cheaper price from the Tennessee State Department of Education.

The leaflets are brief, simply written, and filled with practical information concerning various aspects of school library problems. Titles in the series include: "The Principal's Responsibility in Developing the School

Library Program;" "Types of School Library Services;" "Scheduling in a Combined Elementary and High School Library;" "Use Made of the Assigned Library Period;" "Ways to Encourage the Maximum Use of the Library;" "Personnel of the School Library;" "Training Student Assistants for School Library Service;" "Discipline: the Librarian's Bugaboo;" "Book and Magazine Selection;" "Book Reports;" "Binding Library Books;" "Weeding the School Library Collection;" "Integrated Library Instruction;" "Sources for Suggestions on School Library Publicity;" "School Library Records;" "Library Room and Equipment."

CURRENT RADIO PROGRAMS are valuable materials of instruction if the classroom teacher has adequate information about what is available early enough to plan for using such programs wisely in the school program. *Radio Programs for Student Listening*, a monthly list of sixty-one radio programs selected by the Advisory Committee of the Federal Radio Education Committee, U. S. Office of Education, gives specific guidance to teachers in choosing radio programs of value. This publication is available each month in mimeographed form from the U. S. Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C.

While this list is not complete, it is the only available composite listing of educational programs broadcast nationally. Programs during and after school hours, up to 10 P.M. EST., are included. Such definite information as the title of the program, the network, program length, day of the week, and Eastern Standard Time is given. Space is included for addition by the teacher using the list of local time and local station identification. Grade levels for which the programs are appropriate are indicated. Commercially sponsored programs are included provided the product advertised is appropriate for presentation to school students.

The criteria upon which selections for this list were based include: (1) Educational significance—or what the program said; (2) Radio program quality—or the way it was said; (3) Instructional adaptability. The only news programs listed are those of a dramatized nature. Musical programs appearing for the first time are carefully described.

Annotations for the various programs are packed with information concerning the pro-

grams and suggestions for their use in the classroom. This list will greatly facilitate the use of radio programs in classroom instruction.

All schools should apply to be placed on the mailing list of the Federal Radio Education Commission, U. S. Office of Education, for any of their publications and particularly for their *Service Bulletin*.

CHILDREN FROM THREE TO SIX years of age should have a rich educational experience, according to the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association. The Commission's new Publication, *Educational Services for Young Children*, developed by a special subcommittee including George D. Stoddard, Prudence Cutright and Maycie Southall, proposes the extension of educational services downward and close integration of these services with the rest of the program of public education. This pamphlet may be secured from the National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. for ten cents a copy. It provides valuable material for faculty and parent study and for panel discussions or similar programs.

From the same address, one may get the pamphlet, *Health and Physical Fitness for All American Children and Youth*, prepared by committees from the Educational Policies Commission and the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. The price is ten cents, with the usual discount on quantity. This brief booklet highlights basic concepts in all phases of the health program, including healthful living, health instruction, physical education, the athletic program, and recreation.

BUILDING AMERICA continues to provide some of the most authentic, well written, and usable material available for use in modern schools. The new issue, *Machinery for Foreign Relations*, stresses the importance of international cooperation in a most effective way. Background material about our own government organization and the history of foreign relations is presented, with instructive photographs and pictures. A graphic description of the United Nations Organization is included, with a clear discussion of the chances it has for succeeding. The final re-

sponsibility for world peace is placed on the individuals who make up the world.

WHAT . . . WHY . . . WHERE DO PEOPLE READ? is the inviting title of the report of a survey made for the American Library Association and seventeen cooperating city libraries by the National Opinion Research Center, University of Denver. The report may be secured from the University for fifty cents.

Those interested in studying people's reading habits will find the conclusions reached in this study most provocative. Chief among them are the following:

1. Reading is a favorite diversion for 2 out of every 5 adults in the 17 cities surveyed.
2. Most people spend more time reading newspapers and magazines than reading books.
3. Adults say they prefer non-fiction to fiction and are more interested in subjects such as human behavior and interesting personalities than in more specialized areas like politics or poetry.
4. A third of the public say they buy most of the books they read, while about a fourth get their books from libraries.

Graphs, charts and direct quotations enliven the reporting of this survey of people's reading habits and interests and of their knowledge and use of public libraries.

BENJAMIN FINE'S new book, *Democratic Education*, (New York, Crowell, 1945, \$2) is a report on the colleges which points up anew the controversy between "Aristocratic" and "Democratic" education. As preparation for his book, Dr. Fine surveyed five thousand veterans who have returned to college, to determine what they would like to get from their college experience, as well as many parents and high school students. Dr. Fine concludes that "Democratic" education, as advocated by Franklin, Jefferson, Horace Mann, and John Dewey is what the country needs.

This book has aroused much controversy due to its clear statement of conflicting views of educational philosophy today. It's the kind of book that attracts attention from the ordinary citizen as well as from the professional educator.

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