

program. Unless future events cause school costs to increase greatly, the current program of 50 per cent state aid and 50 per cent local aid will meet the established goals of the teaching profession in Oregon.

It is unlikely that the 1951 Oregon state legislature will attempt to take away from the schools what the people

have voted. The distribution of the money to the various local school districts will be a major problem at the 1951 legislative session. Oregon educators are fortunate in that the initiative, referendum and recall operate in this state.—*Cecil W. Posey*, Executive Secretary, Oregon Education Association.

## The Curriculum Commentator

Column Editor: Prudence Bostwick  
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### Social Competence and Individual Competence

IF one thing has become clear in the period since 1945, it is that we have to do much more about developing social competence. We face large-scale group predicaments, and it is imperative that we develop ideas that match the scope of our problems, and find words for our ideas.

This isn't easy for educators. Until recently, our focus on the individual has largely prevented our thinking very profoundly or for very long about the big social problems with which we must deal. Schools have consequently done a spotty and uneven job of helping children grasp the significance of the social problems which they face.

Individual differences, individual needs, interests, abilities, individual adjustment and the development of individual competence are important concepts, but they are not sufficient for us. We have to do better than deal with children one-at-a-time. Child study has to be supplemented by a genuinely "social" study—a study of all aspects of society—if we are to measure up in the global contest that is upon us. Our exclusive emphasis on the individual

suggests a naive view of the way the world goes, for it implies a world in which individual striving is the whole story—and everyone knows better than that. The most important problems we face, we face as a group. To meet such problems, we have to act as a group.

Fortunately, a number of books, films, pamphlets and recordings have been appearing recently which help our understanding of the big problems.

One of these is *The Lindenwood Conference on International Relations* (Committee on International Relations of the National Education Association, 1951, \$1.00) in which a successful effort has been made to present the big issues in a way that provokes thought. Readers will find the "study guides," which appear throughout the volume, a particularly good source of ideas. In each case, the emphasis is on issues, not answers.

We have to face moral issues squarely, and learn to think well about them. How are we going to do this? For one thing, we have to see how adequate our learning tools are. This has been done in part by Dorothy

McClure in *The Treatment of International Agencies in School History Textbooks* (Unesco Relations Staff, Department of State, Washington, D. C., 1950). This is the report of a research study in which the most widely used elementary and secondary history texts are analyzed. McClure concludes that there are relatively few errors of fact in the books, but that there are "probable misconceptions (which) students may gain because of brief or incomplete presentations." Other conclusions follow from this: facts and generalizations are often unrelated; relationships among events are often inadequately established; terms are not adequately explained.

If one believes, with Ruth Cunningham, that "the need for a better understanding of human relations is manifest in problems ranging from those of personal adjustment, classroom living, family relations, and vocational efficiency to those of intergroup tensions and international relations," then *Understanding Group Behavior of Boys and Girls* (Ruth Cunningham and Associates: Anna Elzi, James A. Hall, Marie Farrell, Madeline Roberts; Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1951, 462 p., \$3.25) is a "must" book. Maybe it's "must" reading even if one seldom thinks about such things, and simply wants to do a better job of teaching. This book is the report of a cooperative study by the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of Teachers College, Columbia University, and the Denver Public Schools. The authors have endeavored to survey the problems and advantages of studying group behavior in classrooms. They have developed and adapted an impressive array of instruments for appraising the status of thinking and feeling about groups. The instruments used are thoroughly ex-

plained in Chapter XI and in a long appendix.

The body of the book is a well-illustrated, readable account of a long series of informal experiments. While the authors carefully avoid over-generalizing their findings, they nevertheless suggest some fascinating, and plausible, ways of thinking about a great many aspects of group behavior.

Particularly interesting is the section, "Five Patterns of Interaction," in Chapter II, in which the authoritarian—laissez faire—democratic business is reduced to actual classroom behavior by real teachers and real children. What is accomplished in this regard is done with a number of other abstractions: group goals, group structure, group adjustment. The emphasis is on adaptation of the known principles to the usual classroom problems. The authors set themselves a difficult task, and pulled it off handsomely. The only criticism possible is that in a sense they didn't finish their job. They turned up many more ideas and hunches than they could deal with adequately. Perhaps, though, this is simply another way of saying that the book is provocative.

*Elementary School Student Teaching*, by Raleigh Schorling and G. Max Wingo (New York, McGraw Hill, 1950, 452 p. \$3.75), gives an excellent treatment of its subject. The distinctive characteristic of this book is its down-to-earth quality—its freedom from cant. The book is redolent of the classroom; the authors have talked directly from classroom experience, keeping their lay audience in mind. In addressing themselves to students who are about to begin student teaching, they have spoken well and truly to all of us. The book serves its purpose admirably.

*Elementary School Organization and Management* (Revised edition), James

H. Dougherty, Frank H. Gorman, Claude A. Phillips (New York, Macmillan, 1950, 367 p.), presents a somewhat generalized approach to the elementary school. The authors' point of view is suggested by the title—that the elementary school is primarily an institution demanding techniques of organization and management. Three new chapters have been added, on in-service education, the curriculum, and the principal.

The 1950 Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education of the NEA is called *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, which suggests a dull survey. Actually, the book looks forward to the future county superintendency, basing its forward look on the best that is being done. The authors are candid about present difficulties and shortcomings—and they sometimes have to strain a little to find examples as good as their ideas. Chapter 4, "Democratic Leadership Procedures," by John S. Carroll and staff associates, is particularly good. Many specific suggestions are offered, and the whole matter is placed squarely in the county situation.

### Bulletins and Pamphlets

Much good common sense, and some uncommonly good ideas are presented in *A Good School Day*, by Viola Theman (Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1950, 59 p., .60¢). She sees the good day as having variety, but she goes far into the reasons for and meanings of variety, in the course of discussing the importance of studying the community, pupils' needs, and cooperative activity. The book is wonderfully specific. There isn't a tentative word in it. It's in the Parent-Teacher Series, and can easily be the basis for productive work with parents.

Vernon Jones is the author of *Character and Citizenship Education* (National Education Association, Washington 6, D. C. 149 p., \$1.00), a syllabus to be used for a course of similar name in teacher training. This is the third publication in the series sponsored by the Palmer Foundation. It consists of eighteen units, each with problems suggested, aids to study and discussion offered, and a bibliography displayed. Thorndike is cited several times as a source of the psychology of learning on which the approach is based.

In *Helping Children to Read Better* (Better Living Booklet series, Science Research Associates, 228 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago 4, 48 p., 40¢), Paul Witty addresses parents and teachers in an informal manner on the subject of reading.

Science Research Associates have added another title to their Life Adjustment Series: *Getting Along With Brothers and Sisters*, by Frances Ullman (Chicago, 48 p., 40¢). Like the others, this pamphlet, addressed to youth, is a helpful, practical discussion, right to the point.

Bulletin #11 of the Illinois Secondary School Curriculum Program is *How to Conduct a Follow-Up Study*, by Kenneth G. Henderson and John E. Goerwitz, both of the University of Illinois. (Obtain from Vernon L. Nickell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield, Illinois). This will be an indispensable tool for the large number of curriculum directors and others who wish to conduct such studies. Techniques and problems of organization and interpretation are carefully explained.

By the spring of 1950, no less than seventeen School Study Councils had emerged, following the example and the purposes of the Metropolitan School Study Council at Columbia University.

These study councils have developed in all regions of the country except the Southwest and the Northwest. The history and common problems of these councils are now set forth in *The School Study Councils at Work*, a report of the first national conference of School Study Council leaders. (Central New York School Study Council, 219 Slocum Hall, College Place, Syracuse 10, New York.)

Speaking of these councils, the Metropolitan School Study Council's bulletin, *Fifty Teachers to a Classroom* (Committee on Human Resources, New York, Macmillan, 1950, 65¢), offers a variety of ways to involve laymen in classroom work. It might be a good ice breaker if you want to start some thinking on this matter.

One of the internal tensions we face is due to prejudice. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has issued another of its Freedom Pamphlets, *The Negro in Post-War America* (The League, 212 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, 25¢, 1950), by Arnold M. Rose. Like the others, this one is hard-hitting, yet calm and logical. You'd better read it.

The exchange of teachers through the English Speaking Union is surveyed and described in *Teachers Abroad*, by Paul E. Smith (Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin 1950, #10, 40 p., 10¢). In an unspectacular way, 818 British and American teachers have exchanged places since 1946, thus developing international friendships and understanding where they will have the greatest long-term effect.

In three pamphlets, Film Centre Limited (167-168 Tottenham Court Road, London, W.I., England, one shilling each) has set forth so that nothing is left to chance, the care and operation of film projectors. See their bulletins #2: *Film and Filmstrip Projection in Fundamental Education*,

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#3: *Choice and Care of Films in Fundamental Education*, and #4: *Choice and Care of Filmstrips in Fundamental Education*.

Little needs to be said about the excellent *Recommended Equipment and Supplies* for Nursery, Kindergarten, Primary and Intermediate Schools, from the Association for Childhood Education International (Washington 5, D. C., The Association, 1200 Fifteenth St., N.W., 1950, revision, \$1.00). If you don't know this pamphlet, it's time you should become acquainted with it.

Send to the Communications Materials Center, Columbia University Press, 413 W. 117th Street, New York 27, for their catalogs. A recent one includes films on citizenship education, social sciences and Russia. They will help your PTA to organize a film program, with recent materials. Their new catalog on Health includes leaflets, films, radio transcriptions, phonograph records, posters, display cards and even a television script. It's all for rent, of course.

*Adventuring With Books* is the name of the annotated and graded list of books for elementary children selected by Margaret M. Clark and a committee, and published by the National Council of Teachers of English (211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, 60¢, 1950). The items are conveniently arranged and categorized. This is an authoritative list which may be relied on. It is based on classroom experience with the books listed.

### Folk Records for School Use

America has a rich folk music tradition, stemming from its early beginnings. The English, the French, the Spanish, the African, and the people of many other lands contributed to this tradition, bringing something to it from

their own countries, and adding to it from their day to day experiences as Americans. That the collecting of this folk music was not undertaken until comparatively recently is very surprising not only because of its interest as pure music, but also because of its historical and educational value.

Lately there has been an up-swing of interest in American folk music, as well as in folk music at large, and many recording companies have been issuing popularized folk song performances. There are "swing" versions of folk songs like "Irene," "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You," "The Roving Kind," etc., but these are offered as individual items for the most part, and not as part of the American scene.

One company, however, the Ethnic Folkways Library, of 117 West 46th Street, New York 19, which specializes in authentic folk music of the world, maintains high standards of selectivity and offers material that can very profitably be used in the classroom. This company recently issued an album, prepared under supervision of Beatrice Landeck, entitled, *Who Built America?*, which contains a new approach to the use of folk music. The songs, presented with a view to historical significance and chronological order, tell the story of the growth of America, and the folk singer, Bill Bonyun, acts as interpolator and narrator in a delightful fashion. The focus is on the contribution of different social and economic groups to the building of America. Various periods in American history are touched upon by the songs, including early settling, the Revolutionary War, slavery days, westward expansion and European immigration. Children will enjoy the songs and gain some historical perspective at the same time.

Another Ethnic Folkways Library album which can be used advantage-

ously in the classroom is *Songs to Grow On*, vol. 2, which contains fourteen American folk songs specifically selected for children and sung by such outstanding folk singers as Lead Belly, Charity Bailey and others. The two albums mentioned, *Who Built America?* and *Songs to Grow On*, have special appeal to children of elementary school and early junior high classes.

### Music of Many Cultures

Ethnic Folkways also issues a series of record albums of indigenous music of many cultures, recorded on location by anthropologists and experts in the field. This series, while more academic in approach, is edited for general appeal. With each album is a well documented pamphlet, giving the background of the music and information as to its social setting and significance.

An album in this ethnic series of special interest is *The Music of the Sioux and Navajo*, recorded in the communities of two of the largest tribes of the Southwest and of the plains. There are songs of worship, such as "The Sun Dance," an example of a traditional tribal ceremony held each year at the full moon of midsummer; the "Night Chant," for special initiation ceremonies; a "Peyote" cult song, particularly interesting in that it blends Christian symbolism and beliefs with native Indian traditions. The album also contains songs concerning the agriculture, spinning, corn-grinding and other occupations of the Indians.

Other ethnic albums interesting musically and educationally include folk music of the peoples of India, Ethiopia, Cuba, Haiti, Palestine, Indonesia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Korea, and Negro music of Africa and America.

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