

The Curriculum Commentator

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Moral and Spiritual Values in the Schools

THE controversy in recent years over the teaching of religion in the public schools and the use of public funds for the education of children in parochial schools has resulted in a renewed interest in the whole question of moral education. The question is not one of the failure of the public schools to teach values, for all teaching inevitably takes place in a value pattern with moral learnings resulting for all participants, but of whether the public schools have planned a deliberate program of value education that is as effective as it should be and also one of whether parochial education has contributed as fully as it should to the development of a common heritage of democratic citizenship. Judging from the numerous books issued in recent years, these discussions augur well for a clarification of the issues and the improvement of our total efforts in the development of a high level of citizenship among the oncoming generations of this country.

The character education movement of the 1920's and early 1930's, paralleling as it did the awakening concern for what was happening to children in our traditional approach to schooling, undoubtedly stimulated the introduction of more democratic procedures in our teaching and administration and in the development of a school climate in which children could more readily grow and develop in socially-approved and morally responsible ways. But after educators had generally accepted the concept of wholesome child development as a dominant factor in curricu-

lum planning, with the resultant gains for pupils in ability to make sound decisions, to work with one another democratically, to accept responsibility, and similar virtues, attention to deliberate programs of moral education may have waned in the ensuing years.

Hence, it became relatively easy for some critics to claim that the public schools were neglecting the development of moral and spiritual values. Many persons may assume erroneously that education in ritual and dogma is synonymous with moral education. Certainly religious instruction will contribute to moral education, but it hardly seems to be the sole method for developing morally responsible citizens. If it were, the great number of our citizens who have had little or no religious instruction would be deficient persons, indeed. Religious teachings undergird much of our culture and have been the bases from which much of our value pattern has evolved. But by basic decisions made by the framers of our constitution, and since reinforced by our courts, the state is not to assume responsibility for religious instruction or for the fostering and development of religious creed.

Moral Values Without Religious Doctrine

The task of the public school, then, becomes one of developing basic moral and spiritual values without the sanction of particular religious doctrine. Freeman Butts, in his recent book, *The American Tradition in Religion and*

Education (Beacon Press, Boston, 1950), carefully and thoroughly analyzes the basic elements in our historic policy of separation of church and state. Court decisions are cited and analyzed and the issues involved are well stated. Anyone concerned with the question of the place of religious instruction in public schools or with the question of public aid to parochial schools and their pupils will find this book an authoritative source for evidence and points of view.

Even though we accept wholeheartedly the principle that public schools should not and cannot teach sectarian religious doctrine or religious creed, we nevertheless believe that schools are contributing significantly to the development of moral and spiritual values among their pupils. This becomes evident from a reading of the most recent pronouncement of the Educational Policies Commission, *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools* (National Education Association, Washington, D. C., 1951, \$1.00).

This significant report not only scores a direct hit in repudiation of the claim that the public schools are "godless," but it draws the broad lines of a program that will expand the school's efforts in moral education, yet respect fully the real intent and import of the First Amendment to the Constitution. Both those educators who believe in the public schools and those who recognize the individual's right to attend a private school of approved quality will indeed be grateful for this excellent statement, since we all look to our schools to develop citizens who are morally responsible.

The ten values which the commission selected as basic to the American way of life may all be developed significantly by public schools without resort to doctrinaire teaching. These

values, of course, are based on religious convictions of the deepest sort, yet they are accepted so universally by the American people as being foundation stones of upright, democratic citizenship that all likely will agree that the schools are contributing significantly to value education when they foster the development of these behavior patterns among children. The commission's report outlines a program for schools that is certainly far-reaching enough to challenge their entire attention in value education without resorting to *Bible* reading, memory gems, and released school time for sectarian religious instruction.

Teachers, administrators and other curriculum workers will still need to spell out in more complete detail the procedure which the school will follow in value education. The commission has only suggested in general terms some approaches to curriculum planning. Let conscientious school workers now proceed deliberately to improve our efforts in all schools to inculcate the ten values stated by the commission.

Elementary School Program

If we accept the commission's point of view that value education can and does permeate the whole life of the school, and certainly most of us do hold this viewpoint, then we should look at the program of the school as much broader than the teaching of the basic skills and the essential knowledges.

Hollis L. Caswell and A. Wellesley Foshay give us a picture of such a comprehensive program in *Education in the Elementary School* (American Book Company, New York, 1950, \$3.25). This book is a revision and extension of the earlier volume by Caswell, with new chapters on the teaching of science and

on guidance. Caswell and Foshay, each noted for his forward-looking point of view in curriculum planning, draw the lines for a program of elementary education that would assure not only the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge but also the development of wholesome, integrated personality. The book is essentially a statement of a viewpoint with broad sketches of the kind of program that would implement this concept of a well-rounded program of elementary education. The chapter on the characteristics of a good elementary school program is particularly penetrating, and sets the sights of the reader for the fuller development of each aspect of the school in later sections of the book.

Three other recent books will be of particular interest to those concerned with the elementary school. Each of these books is developed within a framework that is consistent with our broader concepts of value education and education for worthy citizenship.

The book by John Michaelis, *Social Studies for Children in a Democracy* (Prentice-Hall, New York, 1950, \$4.25), is written for teachers of the social studies in the elementary schools. The entire book is well done, but the chapters on purposes, child development, group process, and evaluation are especially fine. Purposes are defined in terms of child behavior. Teachers gain not only a knowledge of the developmental growth characteristics of children but are shown the specific implication of these characteristics for improved teaching of the social studies. The material on group process identifies the role of student leaders as well as that of the teacher in group-planning. Evaluative material does not stop with a discussion of what is desirable but develops specific techniques which show vividly how the teacher may do

the job. Elementary teachers should consider this fine book a "must."

The concept of wholesome development of the child is further amplified in *Guiding the Young Child* (D. C. Heath and Co., Boston, 1951), edited by Helen Heffernan for the California Association of Elementary Supervisors. This practical and interesting book very effectively describes the proper role of the teacher as guide and counselor. Helpful suggestions are given to aid the child in making the transition from home to school. The kindergarten curriculum is defined in terms of children's experiences in the community and in social living, natural science, language expression, literature, music, art, physical development and personal-social adjustments. Principles and generalizations applicable to work with five- or six-year-olds are "spelled out" in vivid descriptions and in attractive photographic illustrations of children's experiences. The appendix includes a very useful bibliography, evaluative criteria and a guide to use in studying young children.

A third book of special interest to elementary school workers is Edward Dolch's *Psychology and Teaching of Reading* (The Garrard Press, Champaign, Illinois, 1951). The outstanding feature of this book is its readability. The material is presented in a vocabulary virtually devoid of highly specialized technical terminology. Rather than presenting additional lengthy descriptions of research studies of eye movement, of materials, tests and the like, the author uses the results of this great bulk of research for developing an understanding of the reading process from the psychological viewpoint.

Action Programs in Citizenship

Development of upright, conscientious citizens is certainly one of the major

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end products of organized education. Good citizens are those whose conduct carries into action our moral and spiritual values. For the past five years the Citizenship Committee of the National Education Association in cooperation with the United States Department of Justice has sponsored an annual national conference on citizenship. The report of the fifth meeting, entitled *Fifth National Conference on Citizenship—Report* (The National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1950, 50¢) is an inspiring document. The descriptions of four action programs in citizenship show what can be done when the chamber of commerce, the League of Women Voters, the schools and the newspapers become concerned about the need for citizenship improvement. Statements by Vice-President Barkley, Attorney-General McGrath, Senator Ives, NEA President Andrew Holt,

Justin Miller and others serve to clarify the issues and recommend courses of action.

School Improvement Programs

Curriculum Improvement in Public School Systems, by Hollis L. Caswell and Associates (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 462 p. \$3.00), gives curriculum workers an opportunity to "visit" a number of school systems that have developed exceptionally interesting programs. It presents background material and guiding principles that will assist in evaluating programs of curriculum development. This volume will help all persons who are concerned with creating a school program which will meet more adequately the needs of our times.

Two types of material are presented. The first five chapters contain back-

ground material to assist in evaluating programs of curriculum development. The basic factors which make continuing curriculum improvement essential in American schools are first presented; experience in curriculum programs as the modern curriculum movement has developed is then appraised; and this is followed by an indication of the kind of administrative provision considered desirable to facilitate sound curriculum work and a statement of general criteria for appraisal of a curriculum program. The remaining chapters provide reports of current curriculum programs of various types.

A more detailed review of this significant work will appear in this column in an early issue.

World Educational Developments

For broadening our understanding of educational developments around the world, three new publications are now available. The *Proceedings of the Fourth Delegate Assembly* of the World Organization of the Teaching Profession (National Education Association, 1950, 50¢) and the *WOTP News*, issued by the same organization, are interesting reports of what educators are doing in the democratic nations.

Efforts of a nation to build an educational program geared to the needs of the common man, as these needs evolve in a unique cultural pattern, is well delineated in the penetrating analysis by George F. Kneller, entitled, *The Education of the Mexican Nation* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1951, \$3.50). This book is the first comprehensive work on education in Mexico. Professor Kneller, on the basis of his investigation of the cultural background and historical development of Mexico, concludes that the educational program of the past no longer serves the needs of this emerging nation. He

sees in the new schools of Mexico a real hope for the development of an educational program that meets the needs of the average citizen.

The third of our books on international education is the report published by UNESCO, *Broadcasting to Schools* (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 59-61 rue La Fayette, Paris, 1949). This book offers a comprehensive picture of the various concepts and methods used and the results achieved through educational broadcasts in thirteen nations of the world. The history of school broadcasting, methods of supervision and control, management and financing, and the educational aspects of the broadcasts are presented in separate accounts for each country.

Among the many guidance bulletins published by state departments of education, the recent publication of the California State Department of Education, *Improving Guidance Programs in Secondary Schools* (Bulletin of the State Department of Education, Vol. 19, No. 8, Dec. 1950) by Donald E. Kitch and William H. McCreary, serves the useful purpose of providing a basis for evaluating the guidance program. Numerous check lists may be used as a basis for appraising informally the program and the planning of next steps in the improvement of such services.

In a continuing effort to inform the people about education in the state, the State Superintendent of Florida has issued a brief statement of *Supervision* (Florida State Department of Education, Tallahassee, 1950). The pamphlet answers the questions as to what supervision is, why it is desirable, and what it is seeking to accomplish.

While those working in youth-serving agencies may find some helpful suggestions in Ben Solomon's *Leadership of Youth* (Youth Service, Inc., Putnam

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vitaly concerns
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IN EDUCATION

This Happened in Pasadena

By DAVID HULBURD

Willard Goslin, an educator of national reputation, was invited early in 1948 by the Board of Education of Pasadena to become Superintendent of its public schools. Two and a half years later the Board that hired him requested his resignation. Why?

This book tells the full story, and shows with frightening clarity how a local crisis in public education can be used by outside

forces to further their dangerous end: the undermining of the independence of our democratic school system.

Every teacher, school administrator, and school board member should read David Hulburd's complete story of the Pasadena affair: the personalities, issues, and machinations which lost an able educator his job.

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Valley, N. Y., 1950), his concept of leadership is a restricted one, emphasizing the role of a leader who does something for or to his followers. Missing is the concept of leadership which is emergent within the group itself.

Rudolf Flesch's *How to Write Better* (Science Research Associates, Chicago, 1951, 40¢), offers many helpful suggestions on how to write interestingly and simply. The booklet is one of the series of Life Adjustment Booklets and is intended for the non-professional writer.—Galen Saylor, University of Nebraska.

Developing a Functional Curriculum

William B. Featherstone, in *A Functional Curriculum for Youth* (New York: The American Book Company, 1950, 276 p.), has made a thoughtful and useful contribution to curriculum literature. He has written provocatively

and, apparently, with the deliberate intention of clearing up some of the fuzzy thinking prevalent with regard to young people's experiences in school.

At the outset, in his preface, the author clarifies what is meant by a functional curriculum. He points out that it involves "education for use rather than for mere possession; education for a reasonably direct and obvious contribution to the improvement of daily living . . . education for all aspects of an individual's necessary and inescapable involvement in community life" (p. vii). Later he carefully points out that the school cannot be charged, however, with all the myriad responsibilities that some lay citizens and educators alike would delegate to or claim for it: "the total welfare of youth is far too complex to be discharged by any single agency," he writes (p. 42).

Typically blunt and provocative statements include the point that "At best a typical community is little more than a collection of self-centered and self-seeking groups of people," (p. 25) and the view that "The school's responsibility is to determine how much of a youth's life it must control for educational purposes, [and] to hold tenaciously to that much" (p. 42).

Featherstone attacks loose usage of the term, "curriculum," and points out that it is in danger of becoming meaningless unless educators realize that it must have purpose, substance and form (p. 91-2). He then proceeds, in the major portion of his book, to deal with the actual development of a functional curriculum, his stated interpretation (p. 92) being that "The substance of the curriculum is the experience of youth," but that it "does not necessarily include all of a youth's experiences for the same reason that the school is not all of education and education is not all of life."

The book is recommended, particularly for school workers at the junior and senior high school levels.

Developments in Guidance

An Introduction to Guidance, by Lester D. and Alice Crow (New York: The American Book Company, 1951), strikes a responsive chord in this reviewer, particularly when its authors recognize at the outset that "There probably is no term which has been used more loosely or more incorrectly than the word *guidance*" (p. 5). From this matter-of-fact point of departure, the authors go on to develop an understandable, highly informative picture of the nature and status of guidance with regard to elementary, junior and senior high school levels, in college, and at the adult level. Because of the breadth of the areas covered the material is of most value to the teacher seeking a survey

of the field, and to the beginning student. Points made frequently are somewhat obvious to the seasoned school worker.

Guidance of nursery age children is treated briefly. At the elementary level the developmental nature of children is suggested as a key to guidance. The Crows point out that "teachers and guidance counselors must know what are the needs and interests of the growing child and make provision for meeting these needs" (p. 230). Some statements are, however, oversimplified, as when the authors state that "Curriculum materials on the elementary level are becoming child-centered instead of subject-centered" (p. 233). They rightly recognize that guidance services in elementary education center in the teacher (p. 236).

The junior and senior high school programs in guidance are intelligently developed in this volume but are based on the existence of somewhat formal school offerings and fail, to some extent, to point to ways in which guidance might contribute to newer trends in curriculum organization. The Crows state (p. 270), for example, that, "The definite objectives toward which education at the high school level is aimed include the *seven cardinal principles of secondary education* recommended in 1918." No reference is made at this point (although there is passing mention elsewhere) to other more recent sources of direction for a sound educational program for youth. The work of the Eight-Year Study is neglected, for example, and little attention is given to the NEA Educational Policies Commission's four general objectives.

Guidance writers always are open to the threat of criticism because their work cuts across many areas of education. Naturally they cannot be expected, in all fairness, to be as thor-

oughly familiar with each of these areas as specialists in each level would be. If this concession is made, it is reasonable to say that the Crows have prepared a book of real value to the less sophisticated student in the field of guidance.—*Harold G. Shane*, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

Resource Development and International Conditions

Occasional assertions have been made that a community school approach or concern for resource-use education would result in a provincial outlook. Such a result need not follow, however, if clear recognition is given to the relation of resource development to national and international conditions and problems. Some materials of recent date which present this point of view may prove of interest:

Teachers Go Camping. (University of Tennessee College of Education and the Tennessee Department of Conservation, 1950. Copies of the report may be obtained from John W. Gilliland, College of Education, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.) Report on a project in which state park camping facilities were used for providing out-of-doors experiences for teachers of Bledsoe County. This report should be particularly valuable to supervisors and others planning conferences and workshops whose purpose is curriculum improvement through teacher growth in the understanding and use of natural resources.

The United Nations. Its Record and Its Prospects. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 405 West 117th Street, New York City, 1950.) A good review of the origin, development and activities of the United Nations. An excellent summary for those who wish

in a short time to get a broad view of the accomplishments of the UN.

United Nations Kit—1950. (Committee on International Relations, National Education Association.) Prepared for assistance in observing United Nations Week. Especially valuable for social studies teachers. Contains several bulletins as well as four charts.

Our Foreign Policy. (Department of State Publication 3972, 1950.) This publication is a compilation of documents bearing on United States policy toward the Korean crisis.

Using Current Materials. (The Junior Town Meeting League, 400 South Front Street, Columbus 15, Ohio.) An attempt to give guidance on how to select current materials for schools, how to improve their effectiveness, and how to procure such materials while they are still current.

Let's Listen to Youth. (H. H. Remmers and C. G. Hackett, Science Research Associates, 228 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago 4, Ill.) A summary and brief analysis of problems of teen-agers as revealed through questions asked of youth themselves. Interestingly written and pointed toward youth concerns.

Your Rugged Constitution, by Bruce and Esther Findlay (Stanford Univ. Press, 1950), attempts to make the Constitution understandable to young people in their early teens. Each Article of the Constitution is printed in bold type and is accompanied by a running commentary and lively drawings. Sections of the Constitution which have been changed by amendment are marked out and the commentary explains the change. Following the explanation of each article or clause is a statement of what "you give" and what "you get" by virtue of this section of the Constitution.

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