

## Significant Books in Review

Column Editor: Ruth Streitz

*This issue of Educational Leadership inaugurates a new service column: Significant Books in Review. Under the guidance of Ruth Streitz, professor of education, Ohio State University, this department will select for review significant books in education. This department makes its appearance in response to the expressed wishes of ASCD members.*

- Childs, John L. *Education and Morals*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. 1950. 299 p.

In 1931 a most penetrating and challenging book written by John Childs entitled *Education and the Philosophy of Experimentalism* was acclaimed by thoughtful students of philosophy and education. Great concern was felt when a few years ago this book became a collector's item because of being "out of print." Now, most fortunately, another book has appeared from this same author's pen under the rather prosaic title *Education and Morals*. It is only when the reader delves deeply into the content of this book that he finds the clear-cut definition, explanation and analysis of the term "moral" as it pertains to the significance of education.

### Adult Responsibility for Education

Moral refers to adult responsibility for the education of the young. The author states clearly that "As used in our discussion, the term *moral* refers to both the ends and the means of this organized effort of the school to guide the process by which the young achieve the forms of their being, their thinking, and their doing."

And again Childs says, "As we have already stated, the term *moral*, as used in this discussion, does not pertain to a restricted phase of the work of the school. The moral interest pervades the entire educational program. It is

involved whenever a significant choice has to be made between a better and a worse in the nurture of the young. The moral factor appears whenever the school, or the individual teacher, or the supervisor, is *for* certain things and *against* other things. The moral element is pre-eminently involved in all of those selections and rejections that are inescapable in the construction of the purposes and the curriculum of the school."

### For Mature Students of Education

In many ways this is a better book than its predecessor and shows the years of thought and study which Childs has given in refining his ideas, clarifying his meanings and extending his analyses of the educative process. Too often books intended for graduate students are written on the level of undergraduate understanding and experience and therefore do not challenge either the ability or the intelligence of more mature minds. *Education and Morals* is definitely a book for graduate students and should be required reading for all who seek the higher degrees with a major interest in education. Furthermore, this is a book which must be studied deeply, discussed critically and evaluated continually in the light of additional experience.

To read such a book with thoughtful absorption and enjoyment is to become a member of that small and exclusive

group designated as scholars. This does not mean that the book is too difficult or is beyond the average person enrolled in graduate school. Far from it! But it is a book which only the more thoughtful student of education can peruse with any degree of insight and understanding. This is as it should be. Mature students need a much richer intellectual diet than is generally accorded them.

While deeply philosophical this book is also exceedingly practical but it is a kind of practicality that only the more thoughtful student of education will understand. To come upon a sentence filled with such significance that a whole train of thought emerges as a result of this one expressed idea is to find the highest form of intellectual stimulation. Such are the pages of this book!—R.S.

► Millard, Cecil V. *Child Growth and Development in the Elementary School*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1951.

The last few years have witnessed a number of books appearing in the field of child growth and development. Some dealt with the same old material of the mechanistic psychologists based upon animal learnings and watered down for parent and teacher consumption. Others dealt with the testing and measuring movement stressing the individual differences. And still others dealt with the rather sentimental materials which all too often appear in syndicated columns of the daily press. To find a book based upon scientific findings and interpreted in the light of good modern educational principles is indeed a rarity.

#### **Direct Study of Children Advocated**

Millard in his book entitled *Child Growth and Development in the Ele-*

*mentary School* calls attention to the limitations of the earlier studies which placed an "emphasis upon statistical interpretations." He gives full credit to the contributions of anatomists and pediatricians and "the contributions of guidance clinics" and then presents the modern or "organismic view" which interprets all aspects of development with respect to a life pattern. His emphasis upon the concept of change, the need of studying the total child, the demand for a more adequate curriculum and better teacher education programs will be seconded by those who teach college courses in these areas as well as by teachers who work directly with children of varying age groups. Of special significance is his thesis that "to be effective, an understanding of children must be derived from direct study and observation of them rather than from a study of the literature."

Basic principles of growth are stated so clearly and effectively that even a prospective teacher just beginning professional course work will be challenged by what it means to be a teacher of children. The experienced teacher will find scientific evidence to reinforce what she has already discovered to be true about the children with whom she works: namely, that growth is individual, that children differ in the amount of variability, that growth is modifiable and that each child possesses his own growth pattern within the general growth pattern of the race.

#### **Basic Research and Modern School Practices**

The book is divided into three parts: Part I, "Basic Concepts of Growth"; Part II, "Aspects of Development"; and Part III, "Concomitants of Growth and Learning." While some of the chapters, particularly those dealing with the motor aspects of growth and with the

nature of intelligence, follow the traditional presentation of these subjects, the pages dealing with the social climate in relation to learning are in keeping with the most modern educational practices. Perhaps the most helpful chapters for the teacher are those which emphasize "the role of emotions in child development," "the development of moral and ethical behavior," "the development of personality," "discipline and the growth process" and "mental hygiene from the standpoint of growth."

One is impressed with the number and extent of the scientific findings which serve as the basis for this book but one is more impressed with the fact that the author spent years in study and research with children in actual situations before attempting to write the book. This coupled with wide clinical experience, gives the book a high degree of practicality not often found in such works.—R.S.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

- Blough, Glenn O., and Huggett, Albert J., *Methods and Activities in Elementary School Science*. New York: The Dryden Press, 1951. 310 p.

This recent contribution to the field of elementary science *honestly* merits use of the over-worked phrase, "It is a real resource for the classroom practitioner." Blough and Huggett have combined a brief but adequate treatment of theory and method with highly useful descriptive suggestions bearing on work with children in 19 areas of experience (e.g., the sun and planets, machines, living things and seasons).

Excellent photographs and illustrations probably justify the slick, eye-straining enamel-finish paper on which the book is printed.—H.G.S.

- Elsbree, Willard S., and McNally, Harold J., *Elementary School Administration and Supervision*. New York: American Book Company, 1951. 457 p.

Smoothly written and carefully organized as it is, this volume probably will be widely used in administration courses for some years to come. Elsbree and McNally apparently had the elementary principalship in mind when they drafted the 29 brief and readable chapters included. They have done an able job in creating an introductory textbook. While seasoned practitioners will find it oversimplified in certain respects the beginning principal and aspirant to administrative jobs will almost certainly profit from the material included. Part VI, "Integrating School and Community Life" will probably prove of particular interest to a majority of readers.—H.G.S.

- Anderson, Vernon E., Grim, Paul, and Grahn, William T., *Principles and Practices of Secondary Education*. New York: The Ronald Press, 1951. 508 p.

This book is a readable and comprehensive treatment which should find a place among standard works used in undergraduate and introductory graduate courses in the high school field.

The viewpoints held by the authors are modern, but they have not lost touch with reality by stressing atypical programs of educational interest to the neglect of down-to-earth recommendations applicable in a majority of secondary schools. Among topics considered are principles, program, guidance, administration, and teacher status. The book concludes with an excellent summary of challenges to be met in the high school.—H.G.S.

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