

## Significant Books in Review

Column Editor: Ruth Streitz

► Nesbitt, Marion, *A Public School for Tomorrow*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953. 161 p.

From time to time, but all too rarely, an insightfully written book captures both the spirit and substance of what is involved in creative work with children in a democracy. Marion Nesbitt has contributed such a book. It can be read and understood and appreciated alike by parent, student, or seasoned educational practitioner.

*A Public School for Tomorrow* tells, with simplicity and power, with sincerity and without sentimentality, the story of the experiences of boys and girls in the old (1888) Matthew F. Maury School of Richmond, Virginia. It is a shining account of "some of the processes, the human relationships, the materials, which seem necessary" to create an environment where every child can grow upward and outward toward self-realization.

The foreword to this volume is by William Heard Kilpatrick. Etta Rose Bailey, principal of Maury School, prepared the introduction.

The chapter headings themselves indicate something of the philosophy that permeates the living and learning in this outstanding community school:

This Is Maury  
We Plan Our Living  
We Play, We Eat, We Rest  
We Listen, We Talk, We Read, We Write  
We Need Music Every Day  
We Use Art in Our Search for Beauty  
We Deal with Quantity and Space  
We Explore Our Universe  
We Seek To Live Well with Others

We Work To Be at One with Our Community  
We Look to the Future.

The splendid school-community living created at Maury School, and reflected in Dr. Nesbitt's pages, exemplifies educational leadership demonstrating at its best a sound blend of philosophy and a knowledge of children. The spirit of democratic education which animates each page is beautifully, even poetically, caught in the closing phrases: "We accept the responsibilities of our day and time and go forward with faith and hope in the future. We go forward with faith and hope in the boys and girls of Maury. *We cannot chart their course but we shall forever hope to equip them with wings for their flight.*" —Harold G. Shane, professor of education, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

► Mursell, James I. *Psychology for Modern Education*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1952. 610 p.

In this new book of psychology and education, a distinguished educational leader undertakes to place psychological findings as they relate to teaching and learning at the finger tips of the educational worker in the classroom. He has succeeded, to a notable degree, in making psychology a workable tool for the teacher and supervisor.

Dr. Mursell has focused his discussion on the proposal that "the essential reality of education is the shaping of personality." Throughout the book emphasis is placed upon that function of education as the author endeavors to adjust psychological terminology and its significance to this central purpose

of education as he sees it. He states very clearly in the preface his purpose in writing the book when he says, ". . . the great majority of students and teachers need above everything else an intelligent point of view brought into practical application upon their work; and for them technical details can often be a cause of confusion and obscurity." Perhaps one of the cogent reasons for the lag between what we know and what is practiced in classrooms lies in this statement. Teacher education so often entangles the student mind in obscure psychological terminology to the extent that the student returns, when he begins to teach, to the "sure" ground of the way he remembers having been taught. The psychological principles enunciated in Dr. Mursell's most recent book are plainly and sensibly set forth in the language of the teacher rather than in that of the psychologist.

In the first chapter the tone of the book is set as the reader is made familiar with the pattern of the material and the place which educational psychology plays in teaching and learning as the author wishes it to be done. He presents three phases of the meaning of personality and shows how the three become one in the definition of personality as ". . . the total pattern of his [man's] ways of dealing with the challenges and problems of life." Emphasis is placed on a man as a total unit and on the fact that what one has learned about man has to be used in terms of that total unit. The author also stresses the fact that education in terms of the shaping of personality must, of necessity, include more than schooling by itself. The school is, however, the institution deliberately set up to have a dominating influence upon the formation of personality of young people and

must be regarded as a major influence of personality development.

In this book Mursell explains motivation as a concept of somewhat broader implication than the average teacher understands it. As the author explains it motivation consists of both a challenge and the discovery of a method of dealing with it. "Learning," as he defines it, "consists of knowing what things must be done, finding out how to do them, and finding out how to make a constant self-check to see that they are done."

Much learning takes place through practice but practice itself is not merely routine repetition but "a quest and a discovering." Therefore, practice becomes of value only when it is sufficiently vital to include an aspect of discovery that is very inherent in it. That concept challenges a major portion of the teaching going on in classrooms all over the country on every level. Countless youngsters are learning less than they might be because of the sterility of their teaching. This book shows in graphic ways how teaching may be broadened by what we know is true psychologically to include discovery and vitality which will capture interest and lead consistently to increased learning by boys and girls.

The book should be of value to the teacher or the supervisor who is concerned about methods which he recognizes as not producing vital learning on the part of students but who is not sufficiently sure of himself to try more sensible ways of teaching. Here he has backing from a professional psychologist and educator for what creative teachers have long recognized as being better ways of directing learning.—*James C. MacCampbell*, supervisor of instruction, Public Schools, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

►East, Marjorie and Dale, Edgar. *Display for Learning*. New York: The Dryden Press. 1952. 305 p.

With increased emphasis upon learning and the learner instead of upon teaching and the teacher the school of today gives its attention more than ever before to the materials which are to be used in the learning process. The organization of these materials and the methods of using them are interestingly portrayed in the book, *Display for Learning*.

After a brief discussion of the theory of display, the materials of display are presented in the form of chapters entitled "Pictures That Teach," "Your Drawings Can Teach," "Graphs, Charts and Diagrams," "The Copy" and "Clippings from the News." Thus one finds subject matter enriched in countless ways.

### Developing Meaningful Concepts

The underlying psychology of this book is sound in that pupil activities and interests are paramount. Thus, a high degree of learning is assured. Difficult concepts become meaningful through models, through diagrams and through touch and manipulation. Pictures help one "see" or they may broaden one's view. They may be realistic or they may be symbolic in character. The objective is the same—to stimulate thinking. The chapter entitled, "Your Drawings Can Teach," is of great value to the teacher who has grown accustomed to saying, "I can't draw a thing." Here with simple directions and the assumption that "you can learn to draw" is just what is needed to make teaching come alive.

The discussion of graphs, charts and diagrams is most helpful not only to teachers and pupils but to those doing research work and who have fallen into

a dull and monotonous form of reporting data. Here many and varied suggestions stimulate creative ideas! Parts of the book dealing with "copy" and "tools for design" will serve the more advanced students but even in these chapters there is help for the child of elementary school age. The pages dealing with evaluation or appraisal are concrete and to the point. No words are wasted, but the idea "gets across." This is a most stimulating and helpful book and one that teachers will welcome. —Ruth Streitz, professor of education, Ohio State University, Columbus.

### OTHER SUGGESTED READINGS

Baker Brownell of the Department of Philosophy at Northwestern University has directed a penetrating mind and writing skill toward higher education in *The College and the Community* (Harper and Brothers, 1952, 248 pp.). He recognizes failures in higher education noted by such writers as "John Dewey, Master American in the field, or Robert Hutchins, sincere, powerful, and wrong" (p. 3). Then he builds upon his early point that "The great cleavages in modern culture between work and leisure, practical and ideal, material and spiritual, technology and humanities, are being accentuated rather than reduced by the present educational system" (p. 17) to produce a wise and often profound book. It is truly worth while to progress with Brownell to his concluding statement (p. 241) that education involves "a love of human beings in their communities, and a belief above all in their importance."

Students of curriculum will wish to read or re-read *New Schools for a New Culture* (Harper and Brothers, 1953 [2nd Ed.] 196 pp.) which tells of the development of the core program in

the New School of Evanston Township High School. Charles MacConnell, Ernest Melby, *et al.*, have revitalized the idea of experimental education, often neglected in the face of post World War II pressures. The easy, narrative-anecdotal account remains both moving and readable.

In the field of general school administration two recent, comprehensive treatments merit attention. John T. Wahlquist, *et al.*, have developed a symposium in *The Administration of Public Education* (Ronald Press, 1952, 611 pp.). Skillful planning and editing have led to a well-articulated presentation of such topics as the board of education, school finance, management and plant, and special services. A great deal of painstaking but rewarding effort has gone into B. F. Pittenger's *Local Public School Administration* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1951, 512 pp.). Richly documented and authoritatively written, Pittenger's volume almost certainly will have a place for years as a standard work in the field.

Invariably interesting and provocative are the books of Harold Rugg. One of his most recent, *The Teacher of Teachers* (Harper and Brothers, 1952, 308 pp.) examines the role of the educator of teachers as "The chosen change agent, the clear guide for the culture-molding process" (p. 3).

A new and comprehensive introduction to measurement in education seems likely to be popular because of its clarity and specific information. This is A. M. Jordan's *Educational Measurement* (McGraw-Hill Book Company 1952, 533 pp.). The author treats problems in measurement by various fields (e.g., mathematics, foreign languages), and intelligence and personality testing.—*Harold G. Shane*, professor of education, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

#### RECENT PAMPHLETS OF MERIT

Certainly not a new pamphlet, but one that should not be missed is *American Education Through the Soviet Looking Glass*, by George Counts (Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951). In this frank discussion of an article by N. K. Goncharov, a Russian, Counts presents the fully translated article. He has also carefully traced and checked Goncharov's citations and references to the American source. Counts concludes the pamphlet with an interpretation of the Russian article. The final statement by Counts characterizes the booklet: "Nineteen Eighty-Four may be closer than you think!"

Clarence A. Newell has prepared a *Handbook for the Development of Internship Programs in Educational Administration* (Teachers College, Columbia University, May 1952), which will serve as a useful guide for the internship programs presently in practice. Newell discusses the initiation of the internship, the experience needed in order to be effective, and the research and experimentation which seem to be lacking. Besides ably presenting his discussion of the subject, Newell has included in this pamphlet a limited summary of a doctoral project by Gordon A. Wheaton who obtained information relative to the status of internships in educational administration in 1949-50.

*What To Pay Your Superintendent*, (Sept. 1952), a pamphlet published by AASA and the NSBA, offers a concise over-all picture of the superintendent's position with emphasis on the salary question. This publication is designed for boards of education, people of the community and, of course, superintendents.—*Robert M. Finley*, Public Schools, Glencoe, Illinois.

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