

Significant Books in Review

Column Editor: Harold G. Shane

Under direction of Harold G. Shane, professor of education, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, this regular feature column will continue to present critical evaluations of a wide variety of books and other materials considered to be of special significance to school people. It will be the policy of this department to solicit the assistance of outstanding critics in various fields in the writing of such reviews.

► Beck, Robert H., Walter W. Cook and Nolan C. Kearney. *Curriculum in the Modern Elementary School*. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1953. 584 p.

► Mc Nerney, Chester T. *The Curriculum*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1953. 292 p.

► Ragan, William B. *Modern Elementary Curriculum*. New York: The Dryden Press, Inc., 1953. 570 p.

Here are three newcomers in the area of curriculum. All three volumes indicate a real concern for the integration of curriculum content and teaching methodology. Content is suggested but not dictated. Abundant attention is directed toward the relationships among objectives, needs and practices. One of the three, *The Curriculum*, is concerned with both elementary and secondary school curriculum practices; the others are devoted solely to the curriculum of the elementary school. In each case attention is directed toward basic foundations for curriculum considerations commensurate with the authors' frames of reference. As materials of this nature become available, teachers of college courses are going to have increased difficulty in choosing textbooks.

Curriculum in the Modern Elementary School is subdivided into three major parts. Part one is labeled "Introduction" and is concerned with such

background information as curriculum evolution, psychological foundations, basics of methodology, and socio-cultural foundations. The second part, entitled "Curriculum," presents the nature of curriculum structure, procedures for determining goals, and suggestions for subject-matter content in terms of organization and goals. The third part presents three interesting case studies intended to show the principles indicated in the first two parts at work in specific situations. Experienced teachers and administrators, in particular, will enjoy these case studies because they will recall for them some very personal experiences.

In the act of organizing *The Curriculum*, Dr. Mc Nerney has reminded us that public school educators are charged with the responsibility for considering the school curriculum as a part of one total concept—the public school. We are also informed that although there are many common objectives, principles and subjects for both the elementary and secondary school, differences in function insist that objectives may vary and therefore content and methodology will vary in the two segments of the public school system. Throughout the book emphasis is placed upon function.

Modern Elementary Curriculum is subdivided into four parts. Part one spells out the nature and foundations of curriculum. Part two is concerned

with the organization of curriculum from the point of view of the type of curriculum desired, methodology involved, and staff organization. Part three is devoted to curriculum content areas. In these chapters content, objective and method are nicely intertwined. Part four is devoted to evaluation. The reader will be pleased with the challenging problems and projects offered to stimulate thinking at the end of each chapter. Readings and appropriate films are suggested throughout.

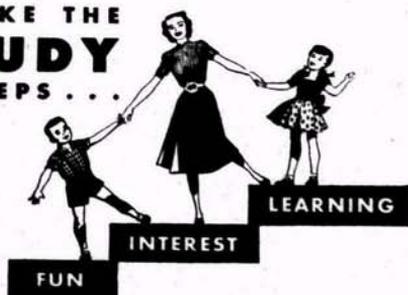
—GEORGE BEAUCHAMP, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

Some contributions in the elementary and secondary fields. Until the recent past good books concerned with the methods, the content and the spirit of good elementary science teaching were few. Now a number of excellent publications are joining the titles once limited to Craig, Croxton, and a few others. Among the current crop is an outstanding, comprehensive volume by R. Will Burnett, *Teaching Science in the Elementary School* (New York: Rinehart, 1953, 540 p.). The author deals with theory and materials in the first third of the book, then concerns himself with content. Teachers in service will find it an excellent reference and it should be a popular text for elementary science classes. In the same area are two helpful manuals, Julian Greenlee's *Teaching Science to Children* and *Science Activities for Children* by L. W. Nelson and G. C. Lorbeer (Dubuque, Iowa: W. C. Brown, 1951 and 1953, respectively). These booklets are spiral bound and simply printed, but have a value beyond their modest cost. The latter book, with over 200 illustrated science activities, is a practical reference for teachers.

Perhaps because their preparation is a peculiarly arduous task, books in the

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field of children's literature are rather rarely published. An excellent addition to present titles is *About Books and Children* by Bess Porter Adams (New York: Holt, 1953, 573 p.). Mrs. Adams combines scholarship and a readable style in a pleasantly illustrated treatment of the topic including children's magazines, the home library, and story hours for the young. Also current in the elementary language field is a re-issue of Alvina T. Burrows *et al.*, *They All Want to Write* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953, 240 p.), a widely recognized and pleasant treatment of children's written expression.

That able and prolific writer, Gertrude Hildreth, is the author, with others, of *Educating Gifted Children* (New York: Harper, 1952, 272 p.), which is an intelligent treatment of modifications of the program in the ele-

mentary school operated by Hunter College in New York. Her chapter on issues and problems in educating the gifted is a highly satisfactory review.

Additional books almost certain to interest those readers of this journal who specialize in elementary education are Ruth L. Murray's *Dance in the Elementary School* (New York: Harper, 1953, 342 p.), J. A. Hickerson's *Guiding Children's Arithmetic Experiences* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952, 322 p.), and *They Learn What They Live* (New York: Harper, 1952, 392 p.), by Helen G. Trager and Marian R. Yarow. The last named is an engrossing report on prejudice in young children and clearly suggests that much more can be done by teachers to promote socially desirable values.

At the secondary level relatively few books were received for review. Two recent revisions of familiar texts were J. P. Leonard's *Developing the Secondary School Curriculum* (New York: Rinehart, 1953, 582 p.) and J. G. Umstatt's *Secondary School Teaching* (Boston: Ginn, 1953, 488 p.). Both are brought up to date.

Publications in school administration. Both the scholarly and the educationally curious will enjoy Edgar Knight's *Readings in Educational Administration* (New York: Holt, 1953, 534 p.). Knight has filled his pages with an almost completely uninterrupted flow of source materials from the 18th century through the recent past. In the present era of criticism of education one finds in this study of the past both perspective and encouragement—encouragement with regard to old battles won and perspective as to the long, tortuous path of educational progress in administration.

John Bartky has drawn on his practical experience in important positions of leadership in the preparation of *Supervision as Human Relations*

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(Boston: Heath, 1953, 308 p.). Dr. Bartky's views are consistent and well-supported throughout, and are fully worth careful reading. This is a book likely to be used a long while for graduate study. Less formal in style, and presumably designed for readers with a less sophisticated background, is the recent *Basic Principles of Supervision* by Harold P. Adams and Frank G. Dickey (New York: American Book Company, 1953, 320 p.), a clearly written general approach to the topic.

Of particular value to the superintendent and professor of school administration is *Problems and Issues in Public School Finance*, a symposium edited by R. L. Johns and E. L. Morphet (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952, 492 p.), to which specialists contributed: Mort, Chisholm, Lawler, Cornell, Norton, Fowlkes, and many more. Current in a new fourth edition is the familiar *Administration of the Modern Secondary School* by J. B. Edmonson, Joseph Roemer, and Francis L. Bacon (New York: Macmillan, 1953, 614 p.), thoroughly transformed since its original debut in 1931 and likely to remain popular.

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