

- Merry Wives of Windsor, The, Shakespeare  
 Mice and Men, M. K. Ryley  
 Midsummer Night's Dream, Shakespeare  
 Miss Civilization, Richard H. Davis  
 Much Ado About Nothing, Shakespeare  
 Nathan Hale, Clyde Fitch  
 Neighbors, Zona Gale  
 Nevertheless, Stuart Walker  
 'Op O Me Thumb, Payce and Fens  
 Passing of Third Floor Back, The, Jerome  
 K. Jerome  
 Peg O' My Heart, Hartley Manners  
 Piper, The, Josephine Peabody  
 Pot of Broth, The, W. B. Yeates  
 Professor's Love Story, The, J. M. Barrie  
 Quality Street, J. M. Barrie  
 Riders to the Sea, J. M. Synge  
 Rising of the Moon, The, Lady Gregory  
 Rivals, The, Sheridan  
 Romancers, The, Edmund Rostand  
 Rosalind, J. M. Barrie  
 School for Scandal, The, Sheridan  
 Scrap of Paper, A, Sardou  
 Sherwood, Alfred Noyse  
 She Stoops to Conquer, Goldsmith  
 Silver Box, The, John Galsworthy  
 Six Who Pass While the Tentils Boil, Stuart  
 Walker  
 Spreading the News, Lady Gregory  
 Taming of the Shrew, The, Shakespeare  
 Three Pills in a Bottle, Rachell Field  
 Trifles, Frank Shay  
 Twelfth Night, Shakespeare  
 Twig of Thorn, A, Mary J. Warren

There are several new books of one-act plays which should be of interest to the high school coach and also to the pupils. They are listed as follows:

1. One-Act Plays by Modern Authors, by Helen Cohen. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York.
2. Plays for Classroom Interpretation, by E. Van B. Knickerbocker. Holt, New York.
3. The Atlantic Book of Modern Plays, by S. A. Leonard. Atlantic Monthly Press, Boston.
4. Contemporary One-Act Plays, by B. Roland Lewis. Scribner, New York.
5. A Treasury of Plays For Women, by Frank Shay. Little, Brown & Co., Boston.
6. Fifty Contemporary One-Act Plays, by Frank Shay and Pierre Loving. Stewart Kidd, Cincinnati.
7. One-Act Plays, by Webber and Webster. Houghton Mifflin, Boston.

BLANCHE A. RIDENOUR

If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.—Thomas Jefferson.

## QUOTATION

### FUNDAMENTALS IN EDUCATION

THE dismay of the President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching at the discovery that the United States was spending about a billion dollars a year on public education in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and twenty is superficially an occasion for mirth. The retort that most naturally occurs to mind is the flippant query: "Ain't it awful?" A billion dollars that might have gone for battle-ships or to increase the army, or for tobacco, or to increase the efficiency of the boot-legging industry, or to supply needed capital for the equipment of railways, has gone into teaching millions of children. Think of it! We have been living heedlessly, recklessly in this era of unparalleled educational extravagance. The average citizen has gone about his business without once "viewing with alarm" this evidence of our entrance upon an insidious downward course. If he had known that educational expenditures had risen seven hundred percent while national income had increased only a paltry five hundred percent, he might even, in his thoughtless way, have "pointed with pride" to his proof of interest in our public schools. Now he knows better.

The condition of affairs is made still more ominous by the fact that while the increase in attendance in the elementary schools has about kept pace with the growth of the population, the high school population has increased a thousand-fold. Children aren't leaving school to go into shops, offices, factories and farms at the age of twelve or fourteen anything like as much as they used to do. If this keeps on (and if immigration continues to be restricted) who is going to do the hard, rough and dirty work of this country? Already more and more youth are insisting that they want a college as well as a high school education. Well may we ask, "Where is this thing going to end?" And there is the interest of the tax-payer to consider; it is well known that the greater part of the taxes—direct taxes, that is to say—are paid by the better-to-do-members of the community, the responsible pillars of society, who have but few children anyway, and many of whom have private schools for the children where they pay tuition besides taxes. The larger part of

the parents who send their children to the public schools pay next to no taxes—direct taxes. Truly a parlous state of affairs, men and brothers. President Pritchett comes none too soon to the rescue.

While such flippancy is justifiable enough, it is not wholly opportune. It is not a matter of levity that many citizens of wealth will agree in their clubs that Mr. Pritchett is thoroughly sound and that many radicals will seize upon these utterances as further proof that the great Foundations represent a conspiracy on the part of capital to secure control of popular education. There is enough class division and mutual suspicion as it is; the flames do not need feeding. But the truly serious thing is that any such discussion as that of the report distracts attention and thought from just the concerns that do demand inquiry and criticism. To say that one of our great troubles is that too many youth go to school, distracts attention from the unsolved problem of better individual adaptation of education to the needs of those who attend.

To say that the remedy for the existing congestion of studies and existing uncertainty of aim and method is to contract the curriculum, to confine it to the few things regarded by Messrs. Smith, Jones and Pritchett as "fundamental," is to shirk one of the most difficult intellectual problems that exists today: the development of a curriculum at once rich and unified. Just because there is so much to criticize in existing public education, just because there is force in the charges which the report makes—much more force than novelty—it is serious that haphazard, superficial and inherently impossible remedies should be suggested.

As for the number of children and youth in schools: the report says that "in no country in the world does so large a proportion of the energy of the teaching profession devote itself to the tedious task of lifting ill-prepared children and youths through courses of study from which they gain little or no good." Our acquaintance with the world is not sufficient to permit us such sweeping generalizations, but without reference to other countries there is a serious problem indicated. It is the problem of discovering studies and methods which will be adapted to the multitude of individual children and youth from all classes of society who now go to school. But to President

Pritchett there is no genuine social and intellectual problem in this state of affairs; no question for continued experimentation and hard intellectual work. The whole affair is already diagnosed: the schools are "overcrowded." The remedy is already known: fewer children should go to school.

It is generally admitted that the twelve years of the elementary and secondary schools naturally divide into periods of six-and-six. Theoretically children would finish the first period at the age of twelve. But make it fourteen years of age. We pray the reader to call up in imagination as many actual children as possible of the ages from twelve to fourteen. Then let him imagine that the schooling of these children now terminates. What have they got? How much is it possible for them to get at this age even if teaching were much improved? Then let him ask himself what are the prospects of our future society, we shall not even say democracy, when schooling ends for the great mass of human beings at this stage of maturity? If he thinks at all he will admit that their future will be determined almost exclusively not by education but by accident. The notion that schooling should end for all but the ablest and most fortunate at twelve to fourteen years of age is a monstrous survival of everything that we as Americans are committed to getting away from. It represents an abdication of social intelligence and nature; a surrender of society to blind chance with the odds all on the side of those already favored by fortune.

Nevertheless no sensible person will claim that the greater number now in school get from it what they should get. Mr. Pritchett says that the schools "retain" great numbers who are ill-suited for formal study but who have marked ability in other fields of study. This is true. But is the moral that they should be turned loose at an immature age or that schools should adapt themselves to dealing with these other forms of ability as well as with those that manifest themselves in formal study? If this question has even been asked it is safe to say that the entire discussion of the present situation would have been radically other than what is now given.

Schoolmen in the field were long ago forced to recognize, as greater numbers of pupils came to them and came to them from sections of the community not habituated to education,

that the old formal studies would not meet the need of larger numbers. They began experimenting to find out what studies and what methods would meet it. Mr. Pritchett gains an essay and useless victory by his statement of the idea underlying the enrichment of the curriculum. According to him it is the notion that every child should study a little bit of everything. But as a matter of fact the present undoubted congestion and consequent superficiality of instruction has a totally other source. It is the product of reaching out to discover, with little in the past to give any aid, just what studies and methods will reach the mass of children, as over against those of a group selected from the intellectual class.

No very positive result has yet been achieved. The older type of education has behind it a history of two thousand years. The new type has not succeeded in thirty or forty years in finding a scheme of instruction as well adapted to the individuals of an unselected mass as the older one was to those of a selected class. This is unfortunate, but hardly surprising. But to urge as a solution a return to the "intellectual" standpoint and aim of the older type only indicates that the rudiments of the problem have not been grasped. Mr. Pritchett's attack should have been directed not against the schools but against the forces which are changing society. That elementary education should consist of the "fundamentals" is as true as gospel. But whenever we find a person who is quite sure that he already knows the fundamentals of modern life and education, we find also a person who thinks fundamentally in terms of past epochs of history. He thinks he is thinking when he is only railing against the fundamental forces which are making modern society. It does not follow that these forces are good because they are modern. But it does follow that they cannot be ignored; advice to return to the principles of a past age when the forces that made that age are past is futile and barren.

Attempt to act upon the advice merely injures to the advantage of one present class and the disadvantage of another. There is no danger or, if you please, there is no hope of a return to the schooling of even forty years ago. But there is danger that utterances like those of the report will give added force to a movement to curtail the schooling of all but the well-to-do-children of the community and

to foist upon the schools a narrow trade training so as to keep children in the social stratum of their parents. There is waste enough and confusion enough in our public education. But it has been saved so far from these infinitely greater evils. A transitional and often incoherent society has reflected itself in a transitional and confused education. Coherency and unity are badly needed. But they will not be found in methods which turn present forces into fixed channels of division. We need to discover fundamentals just as we need to spend a good deal more than a billion of dollars upon our schools and to keep many more much longer in schools than we now keep them. These needs require for their fulfillment faith in humanity and faith in inquiry and continued experimentation. Social snobishness, fear for the pocket of the tax-payer and complacent assurance that fundamentals are already known render only a disservice.—*The New Republic.*

---

An attractively illustrated article in the April number of *The Ladies' Home Journal*, entitled "Every Day in Every Way Their Kitchens Grow Better and Better," represents the work of Miss Lillian V. Gilbert, a graduate of the State Normal School at Harrisonburg, Class of 1914. Miss Gilbert will be well remembered both by students of this school and by people who have kept in touch with the development of the Home Demonstration movement in Virginia, because her accomplishments have time and again attracted public attention. Miss Gilbert deserves wide recognition for the character of work she is doing.

---

The Association is now in a position to exercise a professional leadership in education in the country that can be assumed by no other organization, institution, or group of individuals. By reason of its numbers, its resources, its National character, its form of organization, and not the least by reason of its professional, impartial, democratic, and American principles and standards, it can win and hold the confidence of the members within the profession and claim and secure the respect, the approval, and the cooperation of the public.—Dr. William B. Owen, President of the National Education Association, Chicago, Illinois.