

PROFESSION ACHIEVING STATUS:

Education's Greatest Need: Teachers

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Discussion of problems in education invariably end with the conclusion that the real values we are striving for in our public educational system depend, in the final analysis, on the teacher. The best buildings, the best curriculum, the best textbooks, the best intentions, important although they may be, will not in themselves ensure a good educational system: the vital spark, the important and necessary element is the well trained, competent teacher.

Much Criticism

Complacency, of course, cannot be long tolerated in a democratic society which by its very nature is ever changing and striving for improvement, but non-constructive criticism can so belittle worthwhile effort as to discourage those striving for improvement and to cause the public to lose faith in that which is worthy of support. There is much criticism of our schools and our school system, based, no doubt, on the feeling that all is not well; this manifests itself in the names of some current books on education as: "Education at the Crossroads," "American Education Under Fire," "Crisis in Education."

Solid Achievement

There has, perhaps, not been enough said about the very solid achievements of the last twenty years, achievements which have been reached in spite of war and threats of war, in spite of inflation and fear of inflation, and in spite of those lacking courage and vision who predicted, and still claim in the face of accomplished improvements, that it couldn't be done.

Consider these facts — During the last ten years over twenty million dollars have been spent in New Brunswick on better school buildings; regional high schools, new vocational buildings, new rural schools have revolutionized the school housing situation in this province. Our rural school housing programme is one of the best on the continent. In addition high school privileges have been made available to all our young people through regional high schools, special tuition grants and an excellent conveyance programme. Surely this is a worthwhile achievement and one in which New Brunswick's citizens can take justifiable pride.

CURRICULUM CHANGE

In addition to these material achievements a complete change in the curriculum has been brought about. The old "survival of the fittest" concept has been replaced with our democratic philosophy. This has been a difficult and perplexing task; it is not complete and by its very nature will never be complete. A flexible ever-improving programme is the aim. Admittedly, mistakes have been made, more will be made, but no one who understands what is being done would go back to the rigid, inflexible curriculum which had little or no regard for the handicapped and very little for the average student. Many complain about the failure of the school, but the objective investigation shows that compared with practices of twenty or more years ago the methods of teaching, reading and number work have been improved, more content has been added to science, history and English courses, and concern for the individual has become the rule. The good students of today are as good, if not better than those of former days. Perhaps too much emphasis is placed on the failure of modern education and not enough on its achievements. It is easy to criticize and to look back on one's school days as the "good old days" when things were done properly, but the idea of the comparative failure of the modern school just does not stand critical examination.

TEACHER SUPPLY

This does not mean that all is well. In one important aspect reform is needed; it is in the teacher supply situation. The aim of our schools, to produce good democratic citizens, is very difficult to attain; to create high ideals, a sense of judgement, respect for one's fellow men, the willingness to co-operate for all is the never-ending job of the school. It cannot be achieved without the keystone of the whole educational process, the good teacher. Here there is room for justified complaint and criticism. It is useless to provide the best of rooms, buildings, equipment, and the best of text books if the keystone in the whole educational framework is weak. Admittedly we have many excellent, well trained, conscientious

teachers, men and women who in spite of the lack of support for the profession have made it their life-work, but there are not enough of them. Space does not permit a discussion of the causes of the failure of the teacher supply; low pay in relation to that in other occupations requiring the special abilities of the teacher is no doubt one of the most important causes, but lack of status, conditions of tenure and low qualification for entrance to, and certification in, the profession are very important.

To keep schools operating, licenses of one kind or another have been granted to those without qualifications. This has undermined the profession and has a cumulative effect on the whole system; if it is not remedied it can cause failure. Modern methods require skilled, well trained teachers. The modern programme cannot succeed without skilled directing personnel. The day of the sergeant-major type of teacher has passed. If our modern programme is to succeed, teachers at all levels need at least four years post-high school training; the best of our graduates are needed in the ranks of our teaching profession.

COMPENSATIONS

The teaching profession offers to young men and women the highest type of service. Teaching is not easy; hours are not as short as they appear to be, many weeks are spent in conferences and obtaining special training. Modern methods require special ability. Modern methods require special ability and a solid background of knowledge. There are, however, compensations. Conditions of work are improving. The new schools of New Brunswick are well equipped and offer pleasant working surroundings with congenial people.

On Recreation:

No Cows, No Cream

By CANON W. J. CLARKE

Whether we think of recreation as the tune of the Don who sat by the fire poking between the bars, and composing a symphony, or a tall bronze-like lad with a Herculean chest, "Steam-Engine in breeches," who gave us a dictionary after his own name recreation is one of those things which make for happiness in life. Not least in the life of a University.

While there may be other important periods in life which emphasize conduct, good relations and efficiency in profession, there will be a necessity in making good use of leisure time. We must know how to "poke between the bars," we must know when a word exhausts its meaning. A good fisherman not only knows how to cast and take cover; but also when the season starts and ends. Good fishing and good gardening are basic forms of recreation; one for competitive and the other for co-operative interests. Bacon once said: "God Almighty planted a garden, and put into it the purest of human pleasures." The more you develop the skill and the art, the more fascinating is the interest in it, and the assurance of profitable returns. The efficiency of making good use of leisure time finds its greatest form of recreation in the use of books for pleasure.

In this way you learn to meet the authors in their best spirits. Theodore Hook, when dining with the author of a work called "Three Words To The Drunkard," was asked to review it. "Oh, my dear fellow, that I have already done in three words — pass the bottle."

MORE PLEASURE

Some one has said, "Whenever a new book comes out read an old one." That was the advice my Scottish grandmother gave to her children. Disraeli said that the man who did not acquaint himself with the best writers would one day be mortified to observe that his best thoughts are their indifferent ones, and it is from the great books that have stood the test of time that we shall get the most lasting pleasure.

Of all forms of literature, poetry is the greatest contributor to recreation; it is a bulwark of defence in a "push-pin" world of technocracies, and a tonic against boredom in solitude in a levelling age or situation. With-

With stronger teacher organization and awakening awareness of the importance of the work salaries gradually are being improved. Many beginners earn over \$2400 and the better high school positions pay well over \$4000. Opportunities for the successful teacher are unlimited. With the expanding school enrollment the demand for trained teachers is much greater than the supply.

If you like to work with young people, if you have a sense of humour, if you desire to serve your country in a vital and important work, investigate the opportunities offered in a career of teaching. The profession is again achieving status, standards of selection and training are being improved. If you have the talents required you will never regret choosing teaching as a profession.

out defence we are dependent on charity, chance and our ability to "pay the piper who calls his own tune." The field of recreation is not in the gallery or the bleachers or the trench which are all alike, open only at two sides with a forward look only. The product of the spectator-mind breeds a sense of loneliness similar to that of the old Quaker who said to his wife, "Fannie, all the world is a little queer, except thee and me — and thee is a little queer." There is no loneliness in recreation, it offers opportunity as its sole security, co-operation with deterministic freedom, and an involvement of joyful living. I think it was the late President Roosevelt who said: "He is not fit to live who is not fit to die, and he is not fit to die who shrinks from the joy of life or from the duty of life."

TO BE ENCOURAGED

Here is the joy of life as something to be cultivated, something to be encouraged equally with the duty of life. Here is recreation at its best, refreshing, sublime and a thing of beauty. "Oh," said a lady to Turner, the artist, as he showed her his paintings, "do you expect me to see sunsets as

you paint them?" To which the artist replied: "Don't you wish you could, madam?"

Consider the seasons, and sit beneath the stars, spoon with the joys of Spring, and draw nigh unto Mars, the splendour of summer sun-rise blends with the sunset of autumn colour, and the rays of truth protects man's golden inlet.

Not all recreation is confined to the realms of leisure, but whether its confines be to the gym, the playing field, the library, or where you will, whether the medium of function be ball or a book; the definition of recreation goes beyond. Sir Oliver Lodge at the age of eighty walked four miles a day and spent fifteen minutes in the gym with a punching bag, was once asked about his philosophy of life, to which he gave the answer: "No cross, no crown." But said a war near by, "please explain." An old farmer up in the gallery called out: "NO COWS, NO CREAM."

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