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Imitation is the sincerest flattery. —Colton.

History Teaching.

DR. GEORGE W. FULLER, head of the Michigan State Historical Commission, is well within the bounds of fact when he criticizes the past methods of teaching history in the public schools. How much is due to the American Historical Association for changes for the better in teaching this subject, we do not know.

If the association has had a considerable part in this, it is entitled to public appreciation. History has, as he says, in most schools been made "a live subject." It could be made much livelier in most of them.

The war has been most useful in converting many teachers from teaching history wrong end to. After a smattering of American history in about the seventh grade, it used to be permanently laid aside along with geography.

What was given, also, was mainly to impress the pupils with the wickedness of Great Britain; how we had licked her three times and could do it again. American history was an anti-British chip to be worn on the shoulder of every true American.

Having disposed of what might have had a present and personal interest had it been rightly taught, history was dropped until the high school. The pupil was then hurled back into the dusty, mouldy, clammy past and from there through college, got dabs of this, that and the other, of Greek, Latin, English and maybe something reaching back to tradition, all wholly disconnected, unrelated, and so far as told "irrelevant and immaterial."

A boy in making a toy discovered what "fractions were for." Many an adult boy, in reading of the war in Macedonia, Thrace, at Gallipoli, in Asia Minor and along the Adriatic, discovered the "why" of history.

He ran across the names that brought back school days. They were like childhood playmates. He remembered them as forgotten friends he had met when playing tag with the Greeks and Latins. He was quite thrilled.

Then he began to wonder why history had not been turned around and taught the other end to. Why our own system of government, our own laws, our own customs, our today of immediate personal interest, had not been the starting point in American history. Why this had not all been traced back to the revolution, to the colonies and then across the ocean into English history.

He wondered why history began with ancient, then took medieval and then modern. Why did the dark ages precede the light ones; why did it not start with the people of now, and find where they came from and why, what was their heritage and from where?

He discovered, perhaps, that history has such a thing as sequence; that every period had a meaning developed in a subsequent period. He found that history is inseparable from geography and geography from history. That in fact pretty much everything he had had in all his school life was marvelously correlated with history.

If he had chanced to inquire, he found that now history includes current events. But that current events is still tacked on without much rhyme or reason, though it is the part the children like best.

So he kept on wondering when if ever current events would be the basis of the beginning, the constant companion and source of inspiration of every course in history from our own back to the Chaldeans.

Maybe this will come some day just as in many schools geography begins with the pupil's own home town. But strangely enough education moves slowly in its methods, as slowly as Congress changes in its attitude toward the schools of Washington.

Ludendorff the Prussian.

Ludendorff is a typical Prussian. He has not changed since the war. He cannot change. He is a militarist and nothing else.

He never has had and never can have the civilian point of view. To him a

civilian is of use only as a support to the army. The civilian in office is but a nuisance; he is apt to stand in the way of military operations and control.

He holds that all branches of the government should be in the hands of men who wear uniforms. He has no sympathy with or appreciation of any factor of government that is not devoted to the upbuilding of military power.

Since the war General Ludendorff, who speaks for General Von Hindenburg as well as for himself, has written two books to show that victory was lost to Germany not by the army, but by the civil government and the German people.

He contends that the army would have won but for discontent, amounting to revolution among the people and failure of the government to give the limit of support in armament. His theory was to supply the lack of man power with machine guns.

By this agency he would have equalized the superior numbers of the allies. He wanted them in enormous quantity. They were not furnished.

The civil authorities did not defy public opinion. They were close to the war weariness of the people. They felt the pressure for peace at almost any price. They faced the difficulty of meeting the labor demand.

Against their better judgment, they yielded to the army and navy demand for ruthless submarine warfare which finally brought the United States into the war. So far as the actual record goes they, in fact, did all that was possible to meet the Ludendorff demands.

It is only because Ludendorff is what he is that he still maintains as he always has, that the army was undefeated. Yet it was he and Hindenburg who urged peace upon the Kaiser. They first admitted defeat and that to prolong the war would assure military disaster.

The fundamental mistake of the armistice was that it permitted the German armies to march back with their arms and colors. This made possible for the Grand Staff to claim that it was undefeated. The army paraded home with bands playing and colors flying.

But Ludendorff knows better. He is bloating in truly Prussian style to once more deceive the German people, to bolster the conceit and "Kultur" of Prussia, to consolidate the militarist spirit of the Prussians, to arouse their arrogance and dominant pride and confirm his leadership.

He is the worst enemy Germany has. So long as he lives he will menace his own country's peace. Mr. Kerensky's story that he now heads the monarchial cabal that would recombine the Prussian, Hungarian and Austrian monarchists in a revolution to restore the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs, may have little substance.

But that Ludendorff is ready and willing for this or any other like venture, is wholly probable. He is a dangerous piece of furniture; he embodies the hatred and vengeance of disappointment, with the distilled materialistic spirit of unadulterated Prussianism.

The Physical Handicap.

In a recent volume called "The Privilege of Pain," the author in her foreword says: "No physical disablement is a barrier to achievement. This is the glorious fact which illustrious men and women have proved beyond the possibility of dispute."

"To cripple and hunchback, to blind, deaf and dumb, to those chained to a mattress-grave" and to those who have been mentally unbalanced, they have bequeathed this precious legacy of Hope."

It is no doubt true that we have too press agents of health to the one press agent of the casualty ward of genius. There are too many notable instances of success won by "physical failures" for the disabled to be discouraged.

Young men who have returned from the world war disabled, will find that history provides a parallel debility transmuted into strength. Alexander the Great was an epileptic and so were Julius Caesar and Napoleon.

Lord Nelson at the height of his efficiency had lost an arm and an eye and was sick every time he went to sea. Cervantes' health was shattered when he wrote "Don Quixote" and Fielding was a martyr to gout when he wrote "Tom Jones." Sir Walter Scott was lame from childhood. Horace was a man of feeble health. Milton was blind. Pope deformed. Keats suffered from consumption and Moliere lived on a milk diet. Heine, one eye gone, spent eight years on a mattress. Rousseau and Voltaire were physical weaklings and most of us can remember the struggles of Robert Louis Stevenson against tuberculosis.

In our business life of today many of the men who are doing things have been victims of physical handicaps. Steinmetz, the electrical wizard, is a hunchback. A. M. Andrews, the Chicago banker, had lung trouble at 16 and was forced to quit selling newspapers. At 40 he is a multimillionaire and in perfect health.

John T. Brush, who owned and directed the New York Giants, was a hopeless cripple. Breckenridge Ellis, the Missouri novelist, who has written 28 volumes—three of them best sellers—has been unable to walk since birth. And so on and so on. Hundreds of cases could be noted.

The truth is that we can no longer plead our infirmities as an excuse for our weakness, our mental sterility or failure.

Where Children Like to Learn

New Departure in Method of Teaching Youngsters Produces Results.

A SCHOOL where the children find their work more interesting than their vacations, and where the word "hookey" is unknown, has been built in Emporia, Kans., by completely junking the old-time recitation with its "take the next five pages for tomorrow" and replacing it with the "project method." This departure from the old method has been made in the training school of the Kansas State Normal, where some 350 children, from the kindergarten through the junior high school, are being fed on a mental diet of "projects."

"A 'project,' as explained by Dr. H. G. Lull director of the training school, "is an exercise in which the child, not the teacher, sets up a purpose to do or learn something, then makes his plans and tackles the job. The child takes the initiative, the teacher assisting by suggestions and directions rather than by commands. The project may rise in connection with any subject, may be done by a single child or a group of children, or may be finished in a single class period, or may extend over weeks, but always it grows out of the child's own interests, and is so immediately connected with his own life that he can see a reason for doing the work."

How the Plan Works in Training School.

A visitor at the training school last week found the twenty-nine children of the sixth grade enthusiastically writing letters to Mrs. Kate Douglas Wiggin Riggs as the last exercise in a project that had been under way for six weeks. The project originated when one of the children asked their teacher, Miss Gertrude Brown, to let them dramatize the "Flag Raising at Riverboro," from Kate Douglas Wiggin's "New Chronicles of Rebecca."

Their language period for two and a half weeks was spent in dramatizing the story. They added new characters until they had a part for every member of the class. They gave their play at the training school chapel, then at the Lyon County community fair and published it in their school paper, the Searchlight, which is a project in itself, furnishing the motivation of print for the composition work of the intermediate grades. Then someone wanted to write a letter to Mrs. Riggs, telling her of their work and again the entire class was off on a new task, competitive, too, for the best letter was to be sent.

"All the letter writing of the training school is done on real letters," Miss Brown said, "and the children never tire of the work. They correspond regularly with other school children, write to our French war orphans and write invitations and business letters in connection with our programs. Fully two-thirds of the composition work in the intermediate grades is done for the Searchlight and there is an immediate purpose back of every exercise."

Free Choice Room Is Novelty. A free choice room, where the children spend two hours a week, is maintained for the primary grades. The room is equipped with dolls and material for doll dresses, hammers, saws, nails and boards, modeling clay and other materials for construction work; dominoes and other games that require the use of numbers; Mother Goose rhymes and pictures and stories that suggest reading; blackboards and crayons, brushes and water colors to suggest writing and drawing. The children are free to work with any of the materials in the room, the only restraint on any child being that he must respect the rights of the other children by being a "good citizen."

"Two-thirds of the projects in our primary work start in the free choice room," Miss Acheson Harris, primary supervisor, said. "Here the children discover the need for reading, writing and number work and they come back to the classroom eager to learn. For example, a fortune telling project that included reading, writing and spelling, originated here and was continued in the class room. The teacher consented to let the children tell fortunes by means of written slips of paper drawn from a basket. She started them off with the incomplete sentence, 'You will be...' the children to fill in the blank. By the next class period one second grade boy had learned to spell twenty-five new words such as president and baseball player, and a score of others had learned a dozen or more new words."

The junior high school students have made a survey of Emporia that led to a study of the city health ordinances, water supply, sewage and garbage disposal and the writing of letters to the mayors of other Kansas towns to learn how the health of the citizens is protected.

A Four-Year Trial in Emporia.

The "project method" has been tried out at Emporia for four years and the training school teachers are unanimous in declaring it superior to anything they have seen under the old way of teaching. There are practically no cases of tardiness, no cases of "hookey" and no problem of attendance except to keep the children at home when they are ill, according to the teachers.

"There is never a dull minute for the children," Miss Brown said. "They enter into the projects with so much interest that they never think of gazing at the clock to see when it is 4 and with few exceptions they find their vacations less interesting than their school work."

"Will the plan work in other schools? Yes, as fast as the teachers will work it," Mr. Lull said. "It is just beginning to take hold and the teacher is the only obstacle in its way. But it is hard to jar the average teacher loose from her old methods. The new generation of teachers, however, is learning to use projects and the children of the next decade will be taught by the 'project method.'"

From the Kansas City Star.

"IN CHANCERY"

"In Chancery," John Galsworthy's powerful new novel (Scribner's) headed the list of fiction in demand at the Mercantile Library, Philadelphia for the week ended December 18.

The Choir, Westminster Abbey



The "Unknown Warrior" of Westminster.

"For King and Country." A phrase kin to medievalism and the recruiting slogan Cut deep into the stone above your dust's eternal home. I wonder if your lean, jaunty ghost Ever comes by and reads it. Do you come when the green frost of the moonlight Congeals the great gray shadows that lie within the buttresses Into a motley dim of wavering swords, stiff ruffs and moldered velvets? Or do you come by daylight and watch the pearly-faced mothers Who leave flowers upon your tomb In hope that you may be a son lost in all but sharp memories? And, Soldier of the Shadows! Has she who bore your flesh passed by And known you there without sign or motion of the air? Or, do you wait like a little boy alone, Hoping that she will come, sometime, somehow.

MARY V. HARRIS.

What in the World Will the President Do?

Senator Capper will not accept the position of Secretary of Agriculture in the Cabinet of President Harding; Frank E. Grimes has advised Senators Curtis and Capper that he will not accept the post-mastership at Topeka or the job as United States marshal or collector of internal revenue; and one or two others have declined offices that have not been offered to them. We are very much pleased at this unselfish devotion to party welfare and do not purpose to be outdone in the good work. We therefore take this means to say to President Harding that under no circumstances shall we accept the appointment as Secretary of State in his Cabinet, Ambassador to the Court of St. James or Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.—Jack Harris in Beloit (Kansas) Gazette.

A Warning to Germany

The German people, so far as can be foreseen—and I am forced to acknowledge it with the deepest sorrow—will not awake until it is too late. Just as the old imperial Germany of 1914 slept through four years of war and awoke only at the defeat, so the republican Germany of today will slumber until the flourish of trumpets of the new militarism announces to it the downfall of all that has been painfully won by the revolution. Then will follow a Titanic combat between the military caste and the proletariat, wherein the great mass of the bourgeoisie, again as in 1918, will take no active part. Unhappy Germany will be devoured by an internecine war such as the world has not yet seen. Then will come the political and economic disaster, already showing its grinning death's head, which will carry down with it all that is still standing. From this supreme misfortune, may some kind of fate save my people! But, if they are to be saved, immediate action must be taken. Therefore, in this last remaining hour, I cry aloud this warning to the leading men of Germany: "Iddent, consideres ne quid detrimens republica capiat."—Dr. Richard Grelting (author of "J'Accuse!") in the January Yale Review.

Shadow Thoughts.

When the lights of the autumn nights burn low, When hours lengthen and the shadows grow, And forms of things are lost in gathering gloom I see your shadowy hair about the room. Late in the night, when people say I sleep, I think of you and thought and feeling flies; As in a trance I deeper sink, sink deep Into the glowing iris of your eyes. —From the Japanese of H. Aray by Yukio Ozaki in Asia.

Irrigation Canal Kept Open by Odd Dredge

For a great many years Florida held the record for early-vegetable and garden truck production on a commercial scale. But no more, for the Imperial Valley in Southeastern California is now providing enormous quantities of "garden sass" even for the Christmas holidays, writes E. L. Poor, in an illustrated article in the January Popular Mechanics Magazine.

The soil of the valley, hundreds of feet deep, consists of silt washed down by the Colorado River, most of it through the Grand Canyon. It is so impalpably fine that it follows wherever the water runs. One would even draw it at the kitchen sink or into the bath, if special precautions were not taken to settle it. So it finds its way into the irrigation canals, and spreads out over the land, the best fertilizer in the world, but it would soon fill the canals unless cleaned out frequently. No satisfactory method was found until a continuously operating dredge was built by a blacksmith resident in the valley. The work is done by large steel buckets of special design, attached to an endless chain operating on an elevator at the rear of the machine. As the machine advances the buckets revolve with this chain, and scoop up the mud in the ditch, depositing it on the bank. This elevator may be operated for the excavation of a new ditch or to clean the bottom of a canal eight or ten feet deep.

AUTUMN NOSEGAY.

There are more kinds of poets today than there are Heinz varieties. If you have a well developed palate no one is fonder in fact you only begin to appreciate flavors when they are considered together or contrasted sharply. B. W. Huebsch, Inc. makes an autumn arrangement of unusual variety. D. H. Lawrence, writer of strange prose and still stranger verse, is author of two books, "New Poems," containing the provocative preface, and the prosodic announcement of his success as a married man, "Look, We Have Come Through!" issued in its second printing. No one could set him off more completely than Winifred Welles whose "Hesitant Heart" has no such victorious shouting in it, rather the charm of quiet words that fall like water. Lola Ridge, as sharp as her name, is issuing her second book, "Sun-Up," psychological free verse. William Ellery Leonard, the thoughtful professor from our Lake country ignores his old subjects for a new and compelling one, the Negro, in his book, "The Lynching Bee and Other Poems."

Norval Richardson's picture of diplomatic life in Rome, in his new novel, "Pagan Fire," just published by Charles Scribner's Sons, is grounded on personal knowledge and experience. The author spent some years in diplomatic service in the Italian capital, and is thoroughly familiar with life both in the American colony and in upper Italian society. He is now in charge of the American Legation in Chili.

Have Americans Love of Figures?

World Almanac Called Index To Culture Of Masses

The first of the year always brings reminders of that curious custom of shops and manufacturers, the "taking of inventory," and the coming of the new World Almanac. A book review of the new World Almanac, offhand, might seem about as lively as a book review of the dictionary or the Congressional Directory. And yet this volume, prepared by the New York World each year, has been called an excellent guide into the thoughts, customs and philosophies of the American masses.

Every person who has had his turn at answering the telephone in a newspaper office knows the old familiar voice which asks what is the highest peak in the world or the longest river, whether John L. Sullivan was ever a professional ball player or what is the tallest structure in the world. He usually precedes it with this statement: "We've got a little bet on and we want you to decide it." And the person who has been thus asked, invariably says in reply: "Wait just a moment," and reaches for the World Almanac.

It may be true of all peoples that their minds run to statistics, arguments about the relative size and importance of cathedral spires and potatoes, steel mills and "first families." English writers accuse Americans of having a peculiar passion for such facts, however, and dwell upon them in their thoughts, to the exclusion of others (to English writers) more important.

"Sooner or later," the English man of letters will tell you, "every American will become disturbed in his mind about what country may boast the greatest waterfall or the longest railroad. He believes, of course, that the United States of America may own both. But mere belief will not satisfy him. He must know and he can not sleep in peace until he has got the figures."

And then, if he finds that, quite beyond question, America has not the greatest of these, he will be quite put out for a time. But he always may be comforted upon to show that America has something else equally, if not more, important. "That is the reason Americans find the World Almanac a most prized book. It shows American supremacy in natural wonders and in many important industries and enterprises, impressively, flatteringly."

This observation is that of an hypothetical Englishman, but it reflects the attitude frequently taken. His kind think we are rather absurd about it. But we suspect that they, if they were in our place, might do likewise.

The Englishmen will swap you Victoria Nyanza, very prominently, for Niagara Falls. Speak of areas and he will quote you figures on the combined square miles of the Dominion of Canada, Australia and India. And so on. There may be a sort of British World Almanac from which he gets such information. I don't know. But it's a pity if he hasn't. It is such a handy sort of thing.

It is a comfort, beyond doubt, to be able to read that the eyes of children in American schools are given the greatest care; that the Duluth-Superior interlake traffic during 1918 was valued at \$37,519,000 (which is some sum); that the total railroad mileage in the United States is 253,626 (which is some miles); that there are (at least) only two peaks higher than our Mt. McKinley in Alaska, and one of those is in South America; that the center of our population is in the city of Bloomington, Ind. (or was, in 1910); that the chief cause for divorce in the United States is desertion; and that there stands in our forests "not less than 5,200,000,000,000 feet of merchantable timber, a greater quantity and variety than upon any area of similar size in the world."

We can tell just how, among the families of New York, is most important, by looking into the World Almanac, and Babe Ruth's batting record and how much higher the Woolworth Building is than other structures by just looking at "Buildings, High N. Y. C. and Europe."

I suspect that the person who said that the World Almanac is a true indication of the things in which we are, as a people, most interested, hit it quite right.

There having been the decennial taking of the census in the United States, the publishers of the World Almanac probably have had to take a lengthy inventory and cast out a lot of old and now useless tables. So, in the forthcoming issue, we Americans have a treat in store—brand new statistics in which we may fairly revel!

B. P. G.

GIVE A HAND.

In every community there are successful men—men of experience, men of means. In every community there are young men who might make a success of life. They have it in them, all they lack is some one to give a hand. It may not be money they need, perhaps only an interested friend. Somebody helps whenever a young man gets started right in anything. Somewhere every successful man got a start by someone's help. To keep the world moving on an upward slope the process must be made perpetual. Each man, once started, should become a starter of others. And who starts another gets himself along at a more rapid gait. There is that in helping another that reflects not credit alone to the agent, but a bent of mind, an outlook on life, a generosity of soul, that wins a way forward for himself also.—From the Thrift Magazine.

THE VALLEY OF VISION.

A book of deep religious faith and mystical beauty is "The Valley of Vision," a small volume of spiritual experience and reflection, published with a preface by the Bishop of Edinburgh, by E. P. Dutton & Co. The unnamed author is a Sister of the Scottish Church, and the little record of things seen and experienced in the spiritual world is very simple and very beautiful. The Bishop of Edinburgh says in his foreword: "It contains so many passages of spiritual beauty that none who peruse it will do so without feeling the better even though they may not agree with all that is written."