

A Apple	B Bull	C Cat	W Whale	V Vine
DDog	EEgg	FFish	ZZen	YYoung Lamb
GGoat	HHog	J Judge	AA Apple	BB Bull
KK King	LLion	MMouse	DDog	EEgg
NNag	OOwl	PPig	GGoat	HHog
Q Queen	RRobin	SSquirrel	KK King	LLion
W Whale	V Vine	T Top	NNag	OOwl
ZZen	YYoung Lamb	XX Marks	Q Queen	RRobin
AA Apple	BB Bull	CCat	W Whale	V Vine
DDog	EEgg	FFish	ZZen	YYoung Lamb
GGoat	HHog	J Judge	AA Apple	BB Bull
KK King	LLion	MMouse	DDog	EEgg

56

He that ne'er learns his A, B, C,
For ever will a Blockhead be ;



*With the Compliments of
Delegation of the United States of America*

But he who to his Book's inclin'd,
Will soon a golden Treasure find.



PUBLIC SCHOOLS
IN OUR DEMOCRACY





Detroit (Mich.) Public Schools

PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN OUR DEMOCRACY

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CONTENTS

Part I THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF AN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

CHAPTER 1	Who Is in Our Public Schools?	5
CHAPTER 2	Who Staffs Our Public Schools?	22
CHAPTER 3	Who Is Interested in Our Public Schools?	39

Part II HOW OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAME TO BE

CHAPTER 4	Education in the Colonial Period (1600–1779)	61
CHAPTER 5	The Development of Our Public Schools (1779–1860)	71
CHAPTER 6	Extending and Improving Our Public Schools (1860–Present)	88

Part III WHAT OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE TRYING TO DO

CHAPTER 7	Deciding What Our Public Schools Should Do	107
CHAPTER 8	How Do We Learn?	129
CHAPTER 9	How Is the School Instructional Program Organized?	153
CHAPTER 10	How Do We Organize, Supervise, and Pay For Our Public Schools?	171

Part IV PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN OUR DEMOCRACY

CHAPTER 11	Our Public Schools	197
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INTRODUCTION

THE establishment of a republican government without well-appointed and efficient means for the universal education of the people," wrote the great Massachusetts educator Horace Mann in 1848, "is the most rash and fool-hardy experiment ever tried by man." In the century since Horace Mann lived and worked, Americans have heeded his warning well. Their answer has been what his was, the free public school, one of the most imposing educational adventures of all time, and today a characteristic feature of the American way of life.

This book is about that educational adventure. It deals with the public schools of our democracy. It tells the story of how they came to be. It discusses the many services they render and the many responsibilities they bear. Most important of all, it shows how the average citizen can help the work of the public schools in his own community. In other words, it is concerned with the stake of the public in public education. Its purpose is to make citizens better informed about public education, better able to solve some of its most important problems, and better able to judge its most important results.

The book is divided into four parts. In Part One there is a series of thumbnail sketches—the social scientists call them "case studies"—of students, teachers, and citizens in a representative American community called Maplewood. While Maplewood does not actually exist, it is typical of communities throughout our nation. Through these sketches you will gain some idea of the many different people in any community who are involved in public education: those, young and old, who attend the schools; those who teach and work in the schools; and those who are interested in the schools. Public education, as you will see, has tremendous scope.

The story of how our public schools came to be is told in Part Two. You will see how the public school grew out of attempts by Americans to promote certain great values and meet certain unusual conditions of American life. Here also is the story of the tremendous progress public schools have made since they were founded over a century ago. The buildings, textbooks, courses, and teaching methods of today are a far cry from what they were in 1850 or 1900, and it is important for citizens to realize why, how, and how much they have changed.

In Part Three some principles are developed for citizens to use in deciding how well the public schools of their community are doing their job. So that you may see more clearly how these principles work with real people in real communities, the case studies of Maplewooders in Part One are used to illustrate the points made. Here the matter of paying for public schools is also taken up—a matter of great importance to the citizens who pay school taxes. In a way, this part equips citizens to judge whether they are getting proper returns from the investment they make in the public schools of their community.

Finally, Part Four turns to some of the great problems that Americans have to solve if public education is effectively to continue its work. There are many ways for people like yourself to take an active part in the solution of these problems, and in public school affairs generally. Part Four shows you how to begin.

At the end of each chapter in this book, there are projects to think about or do. Most of these activities have a single purpose: to enable you to find out more about the schools of your own community. Although few students or classes will have time to carry out all of these activities, we think that they are most important. They are designed to help you become a school-conscious citizen—a citizen who knows the basic purposes of the schools in his community, who knows their strengths and weaknesses, who knows how to make judgments about the schools, and who knows how to use his knowledge to improve the schools.

• • •

We wish to thank Mr. Martin S. Dworkin and Mrs. Joseph Amof of New York City for a number of very helpful suggestions concerning the manuscript.

PART ONE



Palo Alto (Calif.) Unified School District



Part One



THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF AN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Think of a community—any community. It might be your own. Have you ever stopped to consider the people in it? Who are they? How do they earn their living? What do they hope to make of their lives? How do their hopes and aspirations affect the public schools?

Let's look at a typical American community named Maplewood and at some of the people in it. We will come quickly to understand how many different kinds of children and adults have an interest in our public schools today.

MAPLEWOOD is an average American community of fifteen thousand average American people. It happens to be in the Midwest; but it could really be a city in almost any region of the United States. In it, people are born, grow up, live, and die very much as they do in most places in America. It's simply an ordinary place—not too exciting, not too dull—just a normal American city.

Citizens of Maplewood have many national origins and many religions. There are German-Americans, Swedish-Americans, Polish-Americans, Italian-Americans, and Irish-Americans. There are Roman Catholics, Jews, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists—and even a few freethinkers. They all get along together rather well for they do not think of the differences among them. Frankly, most just think of themselves as plain Americans.

Maplewooders make their living in many different ways. There are three factories in the city, each employing more than a hundred workers. There is also a smaller bottling plant and a machine tool shop. Located in the same neighborhood as the factories is the Maplewood Trucking Company which employs close to fifty men during the good season. Around the community, but within its boundaries, are many small farms which produce vegetables, wheat, rye, barley, and hay. Near the northern outskirts are three large poultry farms and a creamery. The business district is large, serving not only the people of Maplewood but also the residents of the farm communities which surround the city. Many people work in the business district, in the large and attractive stores which line the square or in some of the smaller stores on nearby avenues. Because Maplewood serves the surrounding farm communities, there is also a large number of professional people like doctors, lawyers, teachers, ministers, dentists, and accountants. Thus, there is tremendous variety in the ways in which the people of Maplewood provide the goods and services necessary to live happy and comfortable lives.

Maplewood has no extremely rich or extremely poor families. Nevertheless, there are differences in class and wealth. The better houses, for example, are along Maple Avenue, a beautiful, shaded lane which takes its name from the two rows of trees bordering it for almost half a mile. In these houses live families like the Hopkins, the Grahams, the Mayers, and the Lees—old families with good incomes who have been living in Maplewood for two or three generations. There are also some beautiful houses on the northern end of Maple Street as well as in the new Rocky Hills Development Project in the northwestern part of the city. In these houses live business people and some professional men—most of them more recently arrived in the community. Many of the men who work in the factories—particularly the skilled workers—live in the eastern section of town and in the new Highview Housing Units. One also finds families of office workers in that area. Finally, there is the poorest housing in Maplewood at the southern end of town by the railroad tracks. While the area could not rightly be described as a slum, the houses are old and run-down and are generally occupied by families with the lowest income in the community.

Maplewood is not only organized as a city; it is also the seat of Maplewood County. The city is governed by a mayor and a council of seven citizens elected for four-year terms. Like most cities of similar size, Maplewood has its own police, fire, sanitation, and health departments as well as a city magistrate and justice of the peace. In a recent survey by a group of political science professors from the State University, all of these departments were judged to be running at fairly high efficiency. Most of the services are conducted from offices in the courthouse situated in the square, and it is to this building or to the main post office that citizens generally go when they have business of a public nature.

One of the most important of Maplewood's community activities is the maintenance of its public school system. Maplewood's school system runs from kindergarten through the senior high school. There are five elementary schools: the oldest and smallest of the five is the South Side School, located near the railroad just south of the state highway. A second school, the Maplewood School, is in the southeastern part of the city, several blocks from the trucking company and the bottling plant. A third school, called the Lincoln School, is near the Highview Housing Units. A fourth, the Washington School, is in the western part of the city near the Maplewood Hospital. Finally, the Rocky Hills School, built in 1947, is on the western fringe of the Rocky Hills section. The Lincoln School and the Rocky Hills School are six-year institutions; the other three schools take children through the eighth grade.

The most recent addition to Maplewood's public school system is the new junior high school, built at a cost of one million dollars in 1951. The school includes grades seven, eight, and nine, and draws its students mainly from the graduating classes of the Lincoln and Rocky Hills Schools. Before the new junior high school was built, there was much argument in Maplewood, first over whether Maplewood should have a junior high school to begin with, and then, if so, where the new building should be located. Dr. Benson, Maplewood's superintendent of schools, led the fight to have the school established, and to have it built next to Maplewood High School. He argued that to do so would be more economical because joint use could then be made of facilities like gyms and assembly halls.

Boys and girls who graduate from the junior high school enter the second year of Maplewood High School. When they do so, they join the boys and girls who graduate from the South Side, Washington, and Maplewood schools, and who enter the senior high school as first-year students. Maplewood High School is located two blocks west of Maple Avenue in one of the most beautiful parts of the city. The building dates from the late 1920's, but it has been modernized and kept up, and is neat and clean in appearance.

Maplewood has a number of other facilities which make it a pleasant place in which to live. A free public library has been operating on Maple Avenue since 1927. A hospital built in the 1930's contains the most up-to-date medical equipment and facilities. Generally, the foresight and planning of the city fathers has preserved the beauty and quiet of the community's residential areas. Because it has remained a pleasant place in which to live, many young people are content to grow up, build families, and remain in the community, living their lives in what they believe to be a happy and healthy environment for themselves and their children.



CHAPTER ONE



Who Is in Our Public Schools?

ON any ordinary weekday between September and June, roughly one in every five citizens of Maplewood—comprising most Maplewooders between the ages of five and eighteen—attend one of the community's public schools. They come in fulfillment of the state's compulsory school attendance laws. Yet they come with different backgrounds, different abilities, different interests, different problems, different purposes, and different goals. Who are some of these young people? What do they hope to get from Maplewood's educational system?

Jack Brown

Take Jack Brown as an example. Jack has never really wanted to go to school. Ever since his dad died two years ago, he and his younger brother have wanted more than ever to go to work and earn money for themselves and the family. Jack is sixteen now and has only one more year of compulsory schooling to complete. Many of his friends are older than he and work in filling stations, in one of the local factories, or at other jobs around town or on one of the local farms. Some of them earn as much as fifty dollars a week. Jack would like nothing better than to follow in their footsteps and have some "real spending money" for a motorcycle or for a TV set at home.

Budget . . . \$800,000

Teachers...150

To Milltown and Ryeville

ROCKY HILLS

SECTION



ROCKY
HILLS
SCHOOL

MAPLEWOOD
HIGH SCHOOL

JUNIOR
HIGH
SCHOOL

OLD
RESIDENTIAL

OLD
RESIDENTIAL

LINCOLN
SCHOOL

HOSPITAL

PUBLIC
LIBRARYWASHINGTON
SCHOOL

RESIDENTIAL

PROFESSIONAL
OFFICES

OFFICE

BUSINESS

STORES

0.15

STORIES

HIGHWAY

COURT

BUSINESS

MAPLEWOOD
SCHOOL

STATE _____ HIGHWAY _____

SOUTH SIDE
SCHOOL.

FORES

BUSINESS

RESIDENTIAL.

OLD AND
POORER BUSINESS

SOME
RESIDENTIAL

CHAIN ELEVATORS

WAREHOUSE

TRUCKING
COMPANYBOTTLING
COMPANY

FACTORY

R. R. STATION

FACTORIES

MACHINE TOOL SHOP

Jack doesn't really mind school. It's just that he can't see how many of the things he is asked to do from day to day make much sense. The other day, for instance, the English teacher asked the whole class to memorize "Old Ironsides" by Oliver Wendell Holmes. Jack thought the poem was all right, but he didn't see why he had to memorize it. So he didn't, and then he had the bad luck to be called on in class. Later that day, the social studies teacher requested that everyone make a scrapbook on our South American neighbors. Jack was simply not interested. It is things of this sort that Jack is thinking of when he talks about leaving school. He wishes there was some way that a fellow could take the shop courses and the auto mechanics work without "Old Ironsides" and our South American neighbors. Then school would be a "good deal" and might "pay off." But Jack figures schools just aren't made that way, so he waits for the day when he can say goodbye to school and teachers alike.

Mary Smith

Ever since she can remember, Mary Smith has liked school. Mary is fourteen, and happens to be enrolled in the same class sections of English and social studies as Jack Brown. Her family is not well-to-do; Mr. and Mrs. Smith run a small grocery store in the southern part of Maplewood, near the railroad. Both of her parents have always advised Mary to do as well as possible in school. They say that if she does, she won't have to work as hard as they do to earn a living and make ends meet.

Mary is enrolled in the college preparatory course of Maplewood High. She knows that her parents will not be able to finance four years at college unless she can win a scholarship at the state university or some other institution. Mary is determined to do so and has a good chance of achieving her goal because she is both interested in her work and able to do it rather well. When "Old Ironsides" was assigned last week, Mary not only memorized it, but went to the library and looked up some material on the U.S.S. *Constitution*, which "Old Ironsides" is about. She is now working on some ideas for her scrapbook on South America. She wants to give special attention to the growing industry of Brazil. Above

all, Mary is interested in science. She thinks she would like to major in bacteriology at college and then get a job in a research laboratory. Mary has made her interest known to Miss Booth, the science teacher, and Miss Booth has recommended some special books from the school library.

Mary knows Jack Brown and has been in many of the same classes with him since elementary school. She thinks well of Jack, but feels that he will never "amount to anything." Jack, in turn, has always thought of Mary as "a grind." He has often told his friends that she would be a really nice girl if she didn't spend so much of her time "with her nose in a book." They are friendly, however, and Jack voted for Mary as delegate to the student government last fall.

Bob Hopkins

Also in the student government of Maplewood High is Bob Hopkins. Bob is one of the most popular members of the senior class. In addition to being left tackle on a varsity football team that lost only two games this year, Bob is captain of the swimming team, and president of the Maplewood High School Service Society. Bob's grades are better than average. He does best in social studies, while math and science he calls his "downfall." One would think that Bob has every reason in the world to be a happy young man. Yet there are times when he is strangely troubled.

The Hopkins family is one of the best known in Maplewood. Dr. Hopkins is president of the county medical society and one of the most competent surgeons in the state. Mrs. Hopkins has for years been a leader of the local women's club and also participates in many charitable activities. Ever since his boyhood, everyone in and out of the Hopkins family has assumed that Bob would some day go to medical school and follow in his father's footsteps. Until very recently, Bob, himself, has never thought otherwise.

During this last year, however, doubts have grown strong in Bob's mind. He is not sure he wants to be a doctor. He is not even sure he wants to go to college at all. He doesn't really know what he wants to do, and almost wishes high school could last another year so he could have more time to decide. Bob has been almost



Standard Oil Co. (N. J.)

A great variety of necessary things are taught in the school.

afraid to discuss these things with his parents for fear of disappointing them. Yet, he is troubled. During the winter, when Mr. Henderson, the school guidance counsellor, asked Bob about his plans for the future, he said that he wanted to be a doctor. Now he wishes he had spoken about some of his doubts at that time. Mr. Henderson announced to the senior class that he would be happy to discuss their future plans with them at any time. Now Bob is thinking of arranging another appointment. If he could only be sure about what he wanted!

Jean Swenson

One of the twenty-seven other members of the Maplewood High School Service Society is Jean Swenson. Jean comes to school each morning on the school bus which brings students from Milltown and Ryeville, two towns just north of Maplewood. Both towns have their own elementary schools, but after the eighth grade, their young people attend Maplewood High. Jean lives with her mother, father, two brothers, and younger sister on the Swenson farm, near Ryeville. The farm produces wheat, barley,

and much of the hay used by the local dairy company for its cows.

Ever since she was twelve, and visited her aunt in Chicago for a month, Jean has wanted to live in a big city. Her plan is to graduate from high school and then leave Ryeville to find a job in Chicago. To prepare herself for this, Jean has taken the commercial courses at Maplewood High. Already, while still a junior, her typing and shorthand are excellent, and she is known as a "whiz" in the business arithmetic class. Jean has heard that good secretaries are much in demand in Chicago, and that a skilled stenographer can earn as much as seventy-five dollars a week after a few years with the same company.

About a month ago, Mr. Sanford, the business arithmetic teacher, mentioned in class the need for trained teachers in his field. After class, he asked Jean if she had ever considered going on to college to prepare for a teaching career. Jean has been thinking it over during the past few weeks, but she is still convinced that she wants to work in Chicago as soon as she graduates. Besides, her father has often said that he doesn't think girls should go to college.

Joe Randolph

Joe Randolph, who is now twelve, never gets tired of admiring the large and airy classrooms, the bright corridors, the gleaming fixtures of the cafeteria, and the variety of equipment in the gymnasium of Maplewood's million-dollar junior high school. Joe has good reason to admire them, for every other school he has ever attended—and he has already been to four—has been old, overcrowded, and dismal.

The Randolphs are one of the dozen new Negro families who have moved to Maplewood this year. Mr. Randolph, a lathe operator, found work in the machine tool plant soon after their arrival; and the Randolph family is slowly settling down to life in Maplewood and getting things in order. No one is happier than they about this. Life for the Randolphs in recent years has been moving, moving, and more moving. Everytime it seems as if Mr.

Randolph has steady work, something happens: once, the plant closed; then, there was a fire; and one time, it was trouble with the foreman. Now, the Randolphs have found a community where they think they can be happy—if only things work out.

Going from school to school hasn't done Joe any good. He doesn't read too well, and he has trouble with arithmetic. When he entered the junior high school this year, Joe took many tests, and the guidance counsellor had a long talk with Mrs. Randolph. The tests showed that Joe has a great deal of ability, and that if he applies himself he can "catch up" fairly soon. Joe is making every effort to do so, because, in his own words, he has "never had it so good!"

Jimmy Levine

About a half mile west of the junior high school, near the Rocky Hills section, is the Rocky Hills School. Little Jimmy Levine is enrolled in the kindergarten there. Jimmy is five, one of forty-one five-year-olds to enter the Rocky Hills School this year. While the authorities made plans for a large kindergarten group, no one expected forty-one children to appear at registration time. As a result, during the first week of the school year, another kindergarten teacher had to be employed.

Jimmy has looked forward to school for a long time. His older sister, Janet, is in the fourth grade. During the first days, Jimmy felt a little lost, and missed his mother a great deal. One afternoon, he cried bitterly, and Mrs. Levine had to come and take Jimmy home early. Nevertheless, as the year has progressed, Jimmy has come to feel very much at home in the kindergarten room of the Rocky Hills School. Mrs. Williams, the teacher, knows many stories and many games. Jimmy thinks she is almost as nice as his mother. Jimmy also likes to play with the other children, especially when they go out-of-doors on sunny days.

One thing Jimmy likes especially about going to school is the large number of picture books which Mrs. Williams keeps in the room. There are books about animals, about faraway places, and about other boys and girls. Often, Mrs. Williams reads to the chil-



Standard Oil Co. (N. J.)

With the youngest children the school begins to develop the physical skills needed for learning.

dren from these books. Sometimes, when the children divide up into groups to do different things, Mrs. Williams and Jimmy spend a few minutes looking at a book together.

Jimmy also enjoys the times when the class paints and draws. He has made many pictures of the house he lives in, of his mother and father and sister, and of the family dog. Once, the teacher even hung one of his pictures on the wall and he was particularly proud. The kindergarten also has a little band, and Jimmy plays the cymbals. He likes especially to play them in rhythm when Mrs. Williams plays the piano.

All in all, Jimmy enjoys kindergarten immensely. He can't wait each morning to begin a new day doing the many things that Mrs. Williams helps the children to do.

Dorothy Kelly

Dorothy Kelly is one of the five children from the Kelly family in Maplewood's public schools. Dorothy is ten years old and a student in the fourth grade at the Maplewood School.

During her first three years as a student, Dorothy disliked school very much. She was a poor student and had a great deal of trouble keeping up with the work. She did not read well, and found herself unable to understand fractions. This year, a remarkable change has come over Dorothy. Her work is much improved; she gets along better with her classmates; and she finds herself liking school more and more. What is the clue to this great change? It is a little hearing aid that Dorothy has been wearing since the beginning of the school year.

The story of how Dorothy got her hearing aid is a story of teamwork in the Maplewood school system. When Dorothy did not read as well as the other children in the first and second grades, Miss Johnson—who stayed with the group as teacher for two years—noted this fact on her record, and began to give Dorothy special help in reading. The problem remained, however, and at the end of the year, Miss Johnson recommended that Dorothy have an interview with the reading specialist of the Maplewood school system.

Dorothy did so at the beginning of the next school year, and Miss Horowitz, the reading specialist, gave her a number of tests. When the test results were in, Miss Horowitz suspected that there was some physical difficulty keeping Dorothy from reading well, and suggested that Dorothy have a thorough examination by the school physician. This examination quickly located the trouble: Dorothy was not hearing well, and had been working under a serious disadvantage. The physician recommended that Dorothy wear a hearing aid, just as some of the other children wore eye glasses. When Mrs. Kelly pointed out that the family couldn't afford to buy one right away, even though they wanted it very

much for Dorothy, arrangements were made for the school health office to bear part of the cost. The hearing aid arrived around Thanksgiving Day.

When the little instrument first came, Dorothy didn't want to wear it. She said it made her look ugly, and all the other children stared at her when she had it on. She soon got used to it, however, and found that when one can hear everything that the teacher and the other children are saying, it is easy to learn. It was then that Dorothy's great change began.

Hans Berger

Hans Berger comes to Maplewood High School long after most of the boys and girls have gone home. In fact, even the editorial offices of the Maplewood *Clarion*, the student newspaper, are dark when he arrives. Hans comes on Tuesdays and Thursdays after supper and a long day at the local container plant where he

As children grow older, the school confronts them with more complicated intellectual and physical tasks.

Cleveland (Ohio) Public Schools



works as a caretaker. He is twenty-nine and has been in the United States for three years. He lived his first twenty-six years in Austria. Now, the United States is his home, and he would like nothing more than to be an American citizen. Maplewood High holds the key to his goal: knowledge about America.

The classes which Hans Berger attends were organized about a year ago when a group of people like Hans, who had recently come to the United States, asked Dr. Benson, the superintendent of schools in Maplewood, if evening classes in American history might not be organized to help them qualify for citizenship. After a conference with Mr. Rogers, principal of the high school, Dr. Benson agreed, and the classes were established. The first group numbered twenty-two, and attendance was so regular and the results so good that an additional class in English was added for this year. Both classes meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and Hans enthusiastically attends first one and then the other. He looks forward to the time when he will speak and understand English well enough to enroll in some of the other evening adult education classes offered at Maplewood High School. Hans firmly believes that education can help him tremendously in his desire to build a full and productive life in his new homeland.

Angie Brooks

While Hans is in class on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, Mrs. Angie Brooks is down at the other end of the second floor in the domestic science laboratory. She and eleven other Maplewood women are—of all things—learning to improve their cooking.

When Maplewood organized its adult education program right after the war, Dr. Benson invited any group of citizens who wanted to use the school facilities for their own education to contact his office and make the necessary arrangements. Since that time, a variety of groups have pursued a variety of courses in their leisure time.

Last summer, Mrs. Brooks and a number of other young married women in the new Highview Housing Units thought it might be useful as well as entertaining if they organized an informal exchange of recipes and cooking tricks. Several of the young women

were recent graduates of Maplewood High School, and they spoke enthusiastically about the work of Mrs. Reed, the homemaking teacher. At the summer's end, the women decided to ask Dr. Benson if the services of Mrs. Reed and the facilities of the domestic science laboratory might not be obtained as an adult education project. After conferences with Mrs. Reed and Mr. Rogers, (at which arrangements were made to pay Mrs. Reed extra salary for the evening class), Dr. Benson agreed; and the twelve women meet twice weekly at the high school.

Mrs. Brooks is the wife of Don Brooks, a cashier at the bank. She was born and brought up in the East and met and married Don while he was in the Army. Angie—as Mrs. Brooks is called—had never finished high school; and what secondary schooling she did have was largely college preparatory. She is very happy at this opportunity to improve her work as a housewife and has already talked about continuing the course next year with other Maplewood housewives who might be interested. One of the other women in the class has also mentioned the possibility of a course in child care for some of the women who are finding their new babies “baffling.”



JACK BROWN, Mary Smith, Bop Hopkins, Jean Swenson, Joe Randolph, Jimmy Levine, Dorothy Kelly, Hans Berger, and Angie Brooks are all the concern of Maplewood's public school system. They reflect the great variety of responsibilities which public schools are today expected to carry in almost any average American community. Indeed, in many ways, they exemplify the 24,000,000 children who today attend public elementary schools and the 6,600,000 young men and women who today attend public secondary schools throughout the United States. Each is an individual, with his own educational needs and desires. When we put them all together, we learn some interesting things about an average public school system.

Maplewood's public schools include people of all ages. Not only children and young people, but adults, too, make use of Maplé-



Pasadena (Calif.) City Schools

Education is never completed. These women have returned to the classroom to learn something which they now consider important.

wood's school facilities. A hundred years ago, most people believed that schooling was only for children; when childhood ended, so did education. The idea that everyone should go to high school was unheard of; only a few young men and women went to high school and even fewer went to college. Today, in Maplewood, most young people graduate from high school; and a growing number of the graduates go on to college. While a community the size of Maplewood rarely supports a public college, citizens of Maplewood help to pay the taxes that support the State University—and many graduates of Maplewood High School go on to the College of Arts and Science, the College of Education, the College of Engineering, the College of Pharmacy, the College of Business, or one of the other schools at the State University. As

such, the State University is definitely a part of the public school system in Maplewood.

Then, too, more and more adults in Maplewood are, like Angie Brooks, finding themselves "back in school" years after graduation, voluntarily taking work in areas that interest them—from history to carpentry, from world affairs to household arts, from child care to bookkeeping. Psychologists and educators began to discover years ago that "you *can* teach an old dog new tricks." Today Maplewood's adult education program includes a great number of mature people who have for one reason or another felt the need to continue their education. They stand as loud testimony to the fact that education continues throughout a person's life, and that public schools can and do play a large part in this education in communities throughout America.

Maplewood's public schools include people of all classes, religions, and nationality groups. The names of a graduating class at one of the elementary schools or at the high school tell us a great deal about America. There are names representing a variety of religious and nationality backgrounds. Kellys, Levines, Swensons, Bergers, and Smiths—all have equal rights and equal opportunities in Maplewood's public schools.

In addition, children of all social classes and races in Maplewood enjoy these same equal rights and opportunities. Mary Smith and Dorothy Kelly come from poorer families. Yet, the way to opportunity is open before them; and, as has already been pointed out, Mary strongly hopes to win a scholarship and go on to college when she finishes at Maplewood High. Mary Smith and Bob Hopkins are both on the student council at Maplewood, and both are respected as people rather than as a boy from a well-to-do family and a girl from a poorer family. Finally, Joe Randolph, a newcomer to Maplewood, has equal use of the junior high school along with all the other children of the community.

Few Americans realize that this is *not* the situation in many other nations of the world. In some places, children of well-to-do parents go to one school, and everyone else goes to another. In other places, children of different religions attend different school systems; they rarely go to school together. On the other hand, the American public school has always been the meeting ground of rich and poor, Catholic, Protestant, and Jew, Italian-American,

Irish-American, German-American, Russian-American, and many others. For this reason, the public school has often been called a *common* school, one common to the children of all the people, serving them and also supported by them.

Maplewood's public schools include people of many different interests, abilities, and aspirations. Probably no fact stands out as clearly whenever you take a close look at the people attending a public school system. Each can do different things well; each would like to be able to do different things well; few, if any, do all things well.

Consider for a moment the four young people attending Maplewood High School: Jack Brown, Mary Smith, Jean Swenson, and Bob Hopkins. Jack Brown thoroughly enjoys working in the school shops; he dislikes the projects which are part of the work in social studies—the very work which Mary Smith likes so much. Mary Smith wants to go to college. Bob Hopkins doesn't know whether or not he wants to go to college. Jack Brown and Jean Swenson don't give much thought to college; they would like to go to work as soon as they finish high school. As a matter of fact, Jack doesn't even want to finish high school. Bob Hopkins and Mary Smith show interest in the out-of-class activities at Maplewood High School; Jack Brown and Jean Swenson do not seem too interested in that phase of high school life.

Three of the four have made no definite plans to leave Maplewood permanently when they graduate, although there is some indication that if Mary Smith realizes her goal and becomes a scientist, she will take a research job somewhere away from Maplewood. For the present, Jack Brown seems to want to stay. Only Jean Swenson seems determined to leave.

Three of the four also have fairly definite vocational goals. Jack would like to get some job around the community, preferably as a mechanic. Mary would like to be a bacteriologist. Jean would like to be a stenographer. One of the four, Bob Hopkins, is undecided about what he'd like to do. Whatever their goals, it is clear that they are quite different and demand different sorts of preparation and training. Maplewood High School is committed to helping all of these young people to discover what their vocational goals are and to aid them in achieving these goals.

The fact that the young people who attend Maplewood's public

schools differ in interest, ability, and goals should not obscure the fact that they have many needs and interests in common. All of them, for example, will some day exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. They must be taught the meaning of these important rights and responsibilities so that they can use them intelligently. All of them need to maintain good health, physically and emotionally, and this, too, demands a certain kind of education. Then, too, since all of them will be consumers, they need to understand how to purchase and use goods and services with wisdom and care. These and other needs which Americans share in common must be considered in planning what Maplewood High will offer to Jack, Mary, Bob, and Jean.

The point is that the many different kinds of boys and girls who attend Maplewood's public schools in many ways determine the kind of schools they will be. When Maplewooders plan courses of study, employ teachers, design school buildings—indeed, when they do all of the different things connected with the school enterprise—they must take account of the fact that these boys and girls share some needs and goals and differ tremendously in others. For when Maplewooders judge the results of their schools, they look for returns in fuller and more satisfying lives for the children of their community.



*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217–219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. a. We have used Maplewood to represent all American communities. Yet obviously American communities differ tremendously in size, composition, and character. People learn to understand the community in which they live by making a careful survey of it. Make a survey of the community in which you live by asking the following kinds of questions:

- (1) What things about the geography of your community make it different from others?
- (2) What different kinds of people live in your community?
- (3) What are the ways in which the people of your community earn a living? Are there many different ways of earning a living or only a few?
- (4) What are the differences among neighborhoods in your community?
- (5) About what things do people in your community usually agree? About what things do they usually disagree?

b. Notice the map of Maplewood on page 6. Make a map of your community which shows the same kind of things.

2. Organize a panel to discuss some ways in which a high school might take account of the different interests of Jack Brown, Mary Smith, Bob Hopkins, and Jean Swenson.



CHAPTER TWO



Who Staffs

Our Public Schools?

MANY different kinds of students, each with his own kind of problem, fill Maplewood's schoolrooms, as they do schoolrooms everywhere in America. In the background there must be adults—classroom teachers, specialists, and administrators—who instruct and guide these students in their daily work. What kinds of people are these adults? Where do they come from? How did they become teachers? How do they like their work? What are their hopes for the future? A closer look at these Maplewood educators will show them to be very much like school people in other Maplewoods from Maine to California, from Minneapolis to Miami.

Miss Horowitz

Take Miss Horowitz, the reading specialist, for example. As a child in a far-off city, she knew she would become a teacher. She still recalls how exciting it was when, as a girl of nine, she stayed after school to help Miss Davis clean erasers and sneaked a chance to sit at the teacher's desk. After graduation from high school, she went directly to the state teachers college. Here she took the usual college courses in English, science, and social studies. During her sophomore year at college, she had a course called Introduction to Education, which was followed by courses in human development

(a study of how people mature, emotionally and mentally as well as physically), in educational psychology (a study of how learning takes place), in methods of teaching reading, arithmetic, and other subjects, and in the "principles and purposes of education." These courses were followed by a six-week period of "practice teaching" in the elementary school operated as a training school by the state college.

When she taught a class of her own, Miss Horowitz discovered that the rules she had learned didn't always work. Some students, it seemed, wouldn't even try to learn; others tried hard with no results; and still others just didn't progress as she thought they should. Miss Horowitz decided to go to the state university for further help. Here she returned summer after summer to learn more about how children feel and act at different ages. She discovered more about the fact of "readiness," the fact that each person grows at a different rate and that at each age as he grows he can most effectively learn a particular skill. She found out that some students who start to read later than their classmates eventually overtake the early readers. She was shown how health problems can prevent a person from being interested in and learning from school. She learned new skills by which even a good high school and college student can improve his reading ability. She was taught to use tests and other devices to discover the causes of student failure and to help remedy failure. She discovered that a student's problems with his parents, his brothers and sisters, or his friends could handicap his learning, and she developed skills at working with teams of people on the problems of the individual student.

Becoming a specialist took a long time, and a lot of money. Miss Horowitz could not afford summer school every year, and by the time she had earned a Master's degree as a reading expert, she was eight years older than when she had first graduated from college. When she added up the total cost of her professional training, she found that she had spent around \$2,400 during the four years of college, and another \$2,000 on summer schools. Even so she was lucky. A person starting the same program now, even with free state tuition, would have to pay around \$5,500 for four years of college and a year of graduate school. One of Miss Horowitz's



Fulton County Schools, Atlanta, Georgia

A teacher uses new methods in order to get the children interested in what she would like them to learn.

friends, who had attended an expensive private college and had then gone to a large university, spent nearly \$10,000 for the advanced education to qualify herself as a reading specialist. These figures include, of course, the cost of board and room while attending college.

Miss Horowitz is one of several specialists in the Maplewood schools. Many smaller or less prosperous school systems in America cannot afford such experts. On the other hand, some of the larger districts provide a whole team of social workers, health officials, testers, and psychologists to work with well-trained reading experts. In some schools the reading specialists are people with two years of education beyond that required of classroom teachers, while in the largest districts such experts often have doctoral degrees.

Miss Booth

The case of Miss Booth is different. As a high school student she would have laughed at the idea of becoming a teacher. After she graduated from high school her parents sent her to a nearby liberal arts college which offered a general four-year course and which discouraged students from specializing for any particular job. During her college career, Miss Booth became especially interested in science and she majored in chemistry the last two years.

When Miss Booth returned to Maplewood after graduation, she still had no professional plans. She and Bill, who had two years of law school ahead of him, hoped to marry as soon as possible, but with school, the draft, and all, no one knew when that would be.

When Superintendent Benson suggested that Miss Booth could take a summer course in teacher education and thus earn a *temporary* permit to teach, it seemed like the best thing to do. Miss Booth will have two more summers of work before she can change her *temporary* certificate to a *permanent* one. At first she planned to teach only a year, but when she actually started she found to her surprise that she loved it. She found many of the children in her class eager to learn; and even though her work was often demanding, she found deep satisfaction in the love and trust so many of the children placed in her. Now she and Bill are planning an earlier marriage and she intends to continue teaching until he gets a good start in law practice. She thinks she may return to her new-found profession after the children they hope to have are in school.

Mr. Henderson

Mr. Henderson also graduated from a liberal arts college. During the first two years he took general courses and in the last two he specialized in sociology. Not knowing for certain what he wanted to do after college, he took the courses required for high school teachers in his state. He also had a chance at practice teaching under his college professors.

After graduating from college, Mr. Henderson was hired as a social studies teacher in a small high school. He soon found himself also teaching a class in geometry and one in biology, besides coaching the junior varsity basketball team, directing the school play, and advising the school paper staff. Being a popular person, he was elected an officer of the local civic club. When the local minister reminded him that the community expected teachers either to teach Sunday School or to sing in the church choir, he chose choir singing. The teaching salary at which he started was low—about \$1100 in 1940—so the school board arranged for him to drive one of the buses for an additional \$40 per month, which he welcomed.

At first Mr. Henderson enjoyed the work, although he found little time for the studying he would like to have done, and he felt completely unprepared for many of the duties assigned him. Gradually, he began to grow irritable and unhappy. He found himself losing his temper with students for no good reason, and when this happened more and more frequently, he decided that teaching was not for him.

About that time, Mr. Henderson served a term in the Navy where he gave a lot of thought to his career. He recalled the great pleasure of his early months of teaching and wondered what had gone wrong with him or the students. After the war, he took advantage of the G.I. Bill of Rights and moved to a large eastern university to study. Here he spent two years in post-graduate study, learning why people behave as they do and how to guide young people in their life plans. With this new understanding of people, he recovered his old zest for public school work. He has found that Maplewood, like many American communities, gives its professional educators a chance to work and to grow in the specialized jobs that deeply interest them.

Mr. Henderson plans to return to the university to earn a doctoral degree as a school psychologist. The Board of Education—often known as the school board—is encouraging him in his hopes by providing a leave of absence from his job and assuring him of a salary increase upon his return. He is able to look forward to many years of interesting work in which he can grow personally while providing valuable help to the people of Maplewood.

Mrs. Williams

It is said that Mrs. Williams, though loved by everyone, has spanked three generations of children from some of Maplewood's best families. In another five years or so, she will retire under the new state retirement law. Years ago, after finishing the last reader in the one-room district school which she had attended for eight years, she stayed on as teacher. She has grown right through the different ways of teaching and of educating teachers which America has tried. When she started teaching, she began to attend religiously the three-day "teachers' institutes" which the State Department of Education operated every summer. When a teacher-training school was opened in the neighboring town to prepare elementary school teachers, Mrs. Williams was among the first to knock on its doors. On being admitted, she took special teachers' courses in reading, penmanship, arithmetic, geography, history. She also had classes in the "modes of teaching," in the

The student knows that many teachers try to be available after class to help out on a difficult problem and to give advice.



"history and principles of education," on how to make lesson plans, about ways to use physical objects, such as blocks and beads, in the teaching of arithmetic, and in practice teaching. By the time she had finished her teacher training, she figured she was at least a year ahead of most high school graduates.

Mrs. Williams' teaching career was interrupted while her own children were small, but when they were well into school she wanted to return to teaching. She went back to the teacher-training school to "brush up a bit" and discovered that the school had become a state college. This time, before she could be licensed, she had to take college courses in science, literature, and social science. She found that new scientific courses in "human growth and development" had been added, and that educational research had discovered many new things about children and about how to teach them. By taking courses at night and in the summer, Mrs. Williams completed the three years of college which were then required of kindergarten teachers. She taught for several years until during the depression of 1929 the school board fired all married women to make more jobs for men with families to support.

Mrs. Williams is now a "retread" again. Teachers have become so hard to find that Dr. Benson and other members of the community have persuaded her to return. Fortunately, her teaching certificate is still valid, but there are so many exciting new ideas about kindergarten work that she reads constantly, takes night classes when she can, and is tempted to go back to summer school again. Since new elementary school teachers in Maplewood are graduates of four years of college, Mrs. Williams just can't tolerate the idea of these young girls being ahead of her. She is particularly challenged by Miss Johnson who came in from another state with all sorts of "fancy" new ideas.

Miss Johnson

Miss Johnson came to Maplewood from a neighboring state whose schools are experimenting with different ways of preparing teachers. There are several experiments under way. Some colleges are using four years to provide a basic foundation in college gen-



Schools offer many special services, such as helping deaf children to speak and to learn the three R's.

eral education, which is followed by a fifth year of "internship." During the internship, study about "how to teach," child development, and the purposes of education is interwoven with practical experience. The college from which Miss Johnson came, however, is different.

This college believes that professional instruction for teachers should be intermingled with the general college courses. Moreover, instead of having a whole series of different courses in specialized fields, Miss Johnson's college provided fewer courses, each of which covered great problem areas. Courses in most colleges meet for three one-hour periods each week, but Miss Johnson attended several "classes" which met for a whole day at a time—sometimes breaking into smaller groups for an hour or so, sometimes regrouping as a whole class.

These different experiments are based on different ideas about how best to teach. If you were to listen in on Miss Johnson's and

Mrs. Williams' after-school conversations, you would discover that in respect to certain problems there is vigorous disagreement. In good schools intelligent discussion and argument among the teachers is encouraged. It is believed that this is how to arrive at better methods of solving problems. However, though there is vigorous disagreement on some issues, there is also much agreement based on many years of experience and research. In education, as in other areas of human life, disagreement and argument are tools which help men to find ideas on which they can agree.

Mr. Rogers

One of the problems that Principal Rogers faces is that of finding time to know and enjoy individual students the way he always did as a classroom teacher. It seems that on some days he only sees students who are in trouble or teachers who are asking for equipment which the budget won't allow. Let us look at yesterday, for example.

It began with a case conference about Fred who is having trouble with the law. Mr. Rogers met with Mr. Henderson, the

A guidance counsellor determines a student's aptitudes and then advises him on a course of study.

Board of Education, City of New York



guidance counsellor, Mr. Sanford, Fred's homeroom teacher, Miss Carmine from the juvenile court, and Fred's father to decide what could be done to help Fred with his problems.

After the case conference, the wrestling coach came in to ask about the new mat which he had requested. Last week, Mr. Rogers had rechecked the budget with Dr. Benson and they had agreed that the old mat would have to last another year. The coach was unhappy, needless to say, and complained that the school board had bought new uniforms for the band, but had spent almost nothing this year for physical education equipment.

When the coach left, a committee of girls from the Pep Club came to ask that classes be dismissed for a special pep rally just before Friday's big game. Mr. Rogers remembered, just in time, that several teachers were giving examinations that week and would not appreciate any interruptions. He was certain one of the girls used the phrase "old bear" under her breath as the committee left his office.

And so it went all day: there was a meeting with the other principals concerning the change over to a junior high school system, an interview with the local editor about publicity for the coming parent-teacher meeting, a conference with Dr. Benson about a replacement for the English teacher who resigned, and a complaint from the janitor that the boys had plugged the wash basin in the lavatory and had run water all over the floor and into the halls.

Mr. Rogers' training for the principal's job included study in school law, school business administration, the problems of secondary schools, leadership of the teaching staff, guidance programs for secondary schools, and school-community relations. All of this was in addition to his earlier preparation as a teacher. Now he often jests, half in earnest, that he should have been trained as a plumber, carpenter, bookkeeper, purchasing agent, and electrician. The job of principal often seems to require all of this, in addition to skill in educational leadership.

Yet it is his work as an educational leader in the school and community that gives Mr. Rogers most satisfaction. From his position he watches with pleasure as class after class of Maplewood High School graduates, whose courses he helped plan and whose education he supervised, move into responsible positions in the

community. His work brings him constantly into contact with people from all walks of life. In his own words, "There is never a dull moment." Since it is his job to keep in mind the whole picture of high school activities, he is able to see that the little problems are but parts of a large enterprise in which students, teachers, and townspeople are cooperating with excellent results.

Principal Rogers is spared some of the problems faced in other school systems. In many smaller schools the principal is expected to teach classes for part of the day; in many larger systems, there are several assistant superintendents between the principal and the superintendent. In these larger systems, it becomes more difficult to keep ideas and problems moving from the students to the superintendents' office and to keep supplies and services moving back to the students who need them. In this chain the principal is always a crucial link. Like everyone else, the principal has certain days when things are so complicated he yearns to become a classroom teacher again; on other days, the principal's office seems to be one of the most rewarding places in the world.

Mrs. Reed

Mrs. Reed, the homemaking instructor, represents Americans outside of Maplewood in a special sense. Part of her salary, and the salary of the vocational agriculture teacher, Mr. Forsythe, is paid by the federal government in Washington, according to regulations set up by the state. Other members of the high school faculty are a bit envious of certain advantages these two receive by this arrangement. For example, in Maplewood and in many other communities they receive slightly higher salaries than most of the other teachers. Moreover, the contract which Maplewood has signed with the state makes it impossible to give these teachers as many students to teach as are sometimes assigned to other teachers.

On the other hand, there are certain additional responsibilities. These two teachers are expected systematically to visit the homes of their students and help with the "projects" being carried out. Moreover, they usually find it necessary to work during part of the summer vacation, and they have very extensive

reports to fill out for the state supervisor who visits them. Some schools do not participate in the federal program. Such schools believe that a program of homemaking and of vocational agriculture can be more effectively maintained under the regular school system.

The way the vocational agriculture and homemaking work is carried out in Maplewood is a good example of the way people in Washington, D. C., in the state capital, and in the local school district cooperate to serve America's youth in local communities.

Mr. Sanford

While Mr. Sanford was still thinking about Jean Swenson's hopes to find employment in Chicago, another small, but time-consuming, problem intruded. Miss Booth, the science teacher, came rushing in to report that the film projector she was scheduled to use had been taken by another teacher. She wondered, since he is audio-visual coordinator for the building, if Mr. Sanford couldn't help. Mr. Sanford's first response was to regret the summer he attended a two-week "workshop" on the use of films, radio, and television in the classroom. Ever since that summer he had been assigned, as a part-time duty, the task of organizing the use of such things in the high school. This part-time job always

A school superintendent receives a citizen group.



seemed to conflict with his main job of teaching business arithmetic.

On more careful thought, however, Mr. Sanford recalled that most of the teachers had certain special extra duties along with their classroom teaching. Miss Booth, for example, is on a committee to revise the course of study in the high school. This committee is led by an English teacher who has had some training as a curriculum director. About half of the teachers function as homeroom teachers, which means that they take special responsibility as advisers and counsellors to twenty or thirty students. Mr. Pavchek, the high school art teacher, is also art consultant for the elementary schools.

The school district has appointed a number of full-time people to perform such special services as guidance, remedial reading, audio-visual coordination, and health protection. Nevertheless, a great share of such services is provided through the regular assignment of classroom teachers. This is so, even in the largest schools. In the smaller schools the classroom teachers provide nearly all of the special services. They try by reading, by taking correspondence courses and night and summer classes, to qualify as well as possible for these extra duties.

Dr. Benson

Dr. Benson is fairly new to Maplewood. When he was first appointed as superintendent of schools a few years ago, one of his first acts was to sit down with the budget to see just how big a business the Maplewood school system was. He was not surprised, although many of the town's businessmen would have been, to discover that he was head of one of the two or three biggest enterprises in the city.

He discovered that the schools of Maplewood had spent around a million dollars the previous year. This was in addition to what was spent for the construction and maintenance of school buildings. He discovered that the payroll contained the names of over two hundred people, teachers, specialists, janitors, bus drivers, mechanics, cafeteria workers, and secretaries. The items purchased and used ran all the way from stamps to bus engines. To

manage this business, Dr. Benson has been trained in school finance, in school law, in the planning, construction, and maintenance of school buildings, in policies for hiring and managing school district employees, and in the ways of working with the school board—his board of directors.

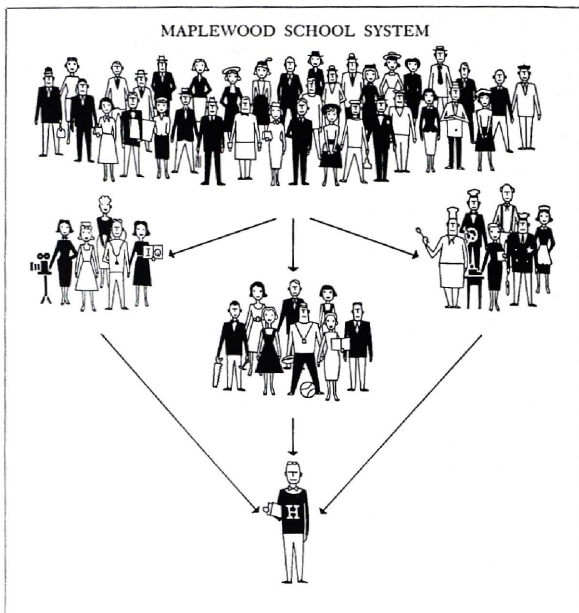
Yes, it is a big business, and Dr. Benson has had training and experience in that business. But he tries never to forget that it is more than a business. The profits sought by this enterprise are not dollars earned by each day's work. The profits are always found in a wholesome change in one of Maplewood's 3,500 public school students. To help him remember this Dr. Benson has the years he spent as a teacher, the years of study about the nature of the learning process, the constant pressure from parents and teachers, and the reports of his own children.

The school board, too, recognizes the difference between school business and other business. Each of its members represents a group of patrons with conflicting demands, some of which will be examined later. In many commercial businesses the thing produced has value to the board of directors only in terms of the profit to be made on the sale. In the Maplewood school district, the product—well-educated young people—is also the profit.

DR. BENSON'S CHART. To remind himself of the fact that everything in the Maplewood school system exists first of all to serve individual students, Dr. Benson has drawn a chart for his office wall.

In the foreground is a child representing the 3,500 students in Maplewood's schools. Behind this figure of a child stand some teachers representing the 150 in the school district. Each of these offers certain specialized services in addition to their basic skills as classroom teachers. Beyond them is a group of full-time specialists: the four guidance experts, the music and art advisers, the reading specialist, the librarian, the two school nurses, the part-time doctor and dentist, the curriculum coordinator, and the school business manager.

We have noted several things about these teachers and education specialists: (1) Although they are the products of a number of different systems of preparation, each has had a long and expensive post-high school education which included (a) a broad basic study of such general fields of knowledge as science, the



social sciences, languages and literature, and the fine arts; (b) an investigation of such problems as how learning takes place, how people develop through life, what the task of the school should be, and how to perform assigned tasks; and (c) added knowledge about the subjects they teach. (2) There are differences of opinion, even among teachers, about how best to accomplish certain educational goals. Nevertheless, there are many points of view as well as many findings from school experimentation on which most leaders are agreed.

At the side of the teachers on Dr. Benson's chart there stands a cluster of people representing the 8 secretaries, the 20 school bus

drivers and mechanics, the 17 cafeteria workers, and the 10-man custodian staff. These are the people who see that school business runs smoothly and that the students' hours at school, en route to school, and returning home are safe, pleasant, and comfortable.

The number of these adults would have to be increased or decreased to serve school districts larger or smaller than Maplewood. Those pictured on Dr. Benson's chart stand for all such teachers and other trained adults employed to carry on public education throughout America. In the United States there were some 1,065,803 public elementary and high school teachers in 1954. These include 690,109 teachers in the elementary schools and 375,694 who instruct high school classes. The number of non-teaching adults who are employed by the public schools also runs into the hundreds of thousands.

Our schools have recently seen tremendous increases in student enrollment. Unfortunately the supply of new teachers, especially on the elementary school level, has not kept pace. In 1954, for example, it was estimated by the National Education Association—a national organization representing American teachers—that we could effectively use about 173,000 new teachers in 1955. Yet, our colleges and universities were preparing only 95,000 and more than half would not go into teaching.

Even though we partly meet the shortage by encouraging former teachers, like Mrs. Williams, to return, and by giving emergency permits to college graduates like Miss Booth who have not yet completed their professional preparation, a very severe shortage continues. In the fall of 1954 over 80,000 teachers were inadequately prepared, according to the standards set by the states in which they work.

All of these full-time adults are brought together to help the students. But they too have a claim on the school. As we have seen, they are people with all sorts of hopes, aspirations, and problems. They are generally people full of optimism and faith in the future which inspires them to work with young people. They are as a rule people dedicated to service, but they serve in the belief that their own lives will also be rewarding. Each year thousands of such adults find a rich life working in the public schools. Unfortunately, however, each year other thousands who once found joy in the public schools turn to other vocations. All too often,

they do so because communities fail to provide the minimum conditions under which they can carry on their work. Teacher salaries do not keep pace with costs of living. School buildings and equipment are allowed to deteriorate. Classes are allowed to grow in size to the point where teachers can no longer cope with them, and the price is not only dissatisfied teachers but also, inevitably, poorly educated young people. Dr. Benson's chart also includes figures representing a vastly larger group behind those who actually work in the schools. This group is the citizen body: the parents, the civic clubs, the business and labor organizations, and other people in the city, state, and nation. This group is also dedicated to serving the youth in the schools, but it too has aspirations of its own. It too has rewards to gain from the school program. In the following chapter, we will look at the way this group organizes and makes itself heard about school problems.



*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217-219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. As indicated on Dr. Benson's chart, many kinds of specially trained adults are needed for a public school system to do its work well. These include teachers, administrators, special professional persons, and maintenance workers. Make a list of the different kinds of adults who work in your school. What kinds of jobs do you discover that are not mentioned in Chapter Two?
2. Interview several of the adults who work in your school. Try to get information on the following questions:
 - (a) In what kinds of community did they grow up?
 - (b) What kinds of special preparation did they need for their jobs?
 - (c) What do they think is their most important contribution to your school?
 - (d) What do they think are the most important problems facing your school? Facing the public school system of your community?



CHAPTER THREE

Who Is Interested in Our Public Schools?

ONE of the things that makes public schools public is that they are controlled by the citizens whose children they serve. In Maplewood, as in communities throughout the United States, this means that many different citizens and citizen groups take a lively interest in public education. Some do so in an "official" capacity; some do so in an "unofficial" capacity. Often, they make conflicting proposals and demands to Dr. Benson and other public school authorities. Each group thinks its proposals will benefit Maplewood, Maplewood's schools, Maplewood's school children, and the nation. In Chapter One we looked at the many different kinds of young people one finds in any average American public school system. In Chapter Two we saw the many different kinds of skilled adults who serve these young people in the public schools. Now, we will look at the variety of adult community groups which in a typical community will show interest in public school policy and seek to influence it in one way or another. Here is how they worked in nine situations in the month of March—eight in Maplewood and one in the state capitol.

Maplewood's Board of Education

Maplewood's Board of Education meets on the first Tuesday of each month in the principal's conference room at Maplewood High School. There are five members, each elected for a five-year

term. Every year an election is held to fill different places on the board. The board is the official, legal body of citizens entrusted with the control, support, and maintenance of Maplewood's public school system.

At its March meeting, the board considered the school budget for the coming year. All of the board's regular monthly sessions are open to the public; and because of the importance of the budget, some forty persons were at this meeting in addition to the board members and the clerical staff. Among the forty were representatives of the following groups: the Maplewood Tax League, an organization dedicated to tax reduction and economy in public services; the Maplewood School Improvement Association, a citizens committee on schools formed in 1949 after the battle over the new junior high school; the Maplewood Teachers' Association, and the Parent-Teacher Associations of Maplewood High School and the Washington School; also Dr. Benson, superintendent of schools, and Mr. Rogers, high school principal.

Soon after the meeting opened, a representative of the Tax League was recognized by Mr. Hughes, president of the board. This man, a local lawyer named Jackson, spoke rather sharply against a number of proposals in the budget. He attacked, for example, the proposed appropriation to provide a \$200 annual cost-of-living salary increase for every teacher in the system. He argued that Maplewood's salary scale was already above the average for other communities throughout the state. He attacked also the proposed appropriation for two new pianos in the South Side Elementary School. His reason was that too much money was already being spent on "extras" in the school program and not enough attention was being given to the "fundamentals." Finally, he opposed the new plan of Dr. Benson that Maplewood's teachers return from summer recess four days early to attend a series of conferences to plan school policy and program for the coming year. Mr. Jackson argued that there was plenty of time to meet during the ordinary school year, and that the extra four days' salary for all the teachers would cost the taxpayers more than the four days were worth.

When Mr. Jackson finished, Mr. Hughes asked Dr. Benson if he had any reply to these remarks. Dr. Benson spoke briefly in response to the three points which had been made. He discussed

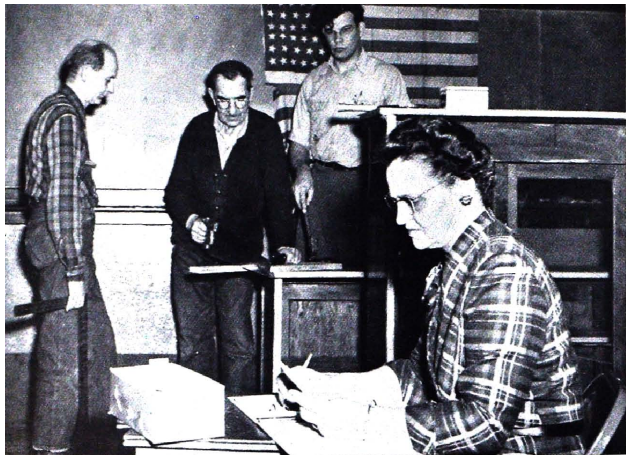
the necessity of increased salaries if Maplewood was to attract desirable teachers and also retain the best teachers now on the staff. He pointed to the kind of offers that some of the younger but experienced teachers were getting from nearby cities, and said that a modest increase might well make the difference between their staying and going. Moreover, he pointed to the rising cost of living, and to increases which had been granted to factory employees, tradesmen, and other working people in Maplewood. Dr. Benson also said, concerning the pianos, that an ability to appreciate music and the arts was fundamental in the life of any educated man or woman, and that purchase of these pianos to replace the battered ones of the South Side Elementary School would provide richer opportunities for some of the community's poorer children. Finally, he outlined the advantages to the school system as a whole from a few days of intensive planning at the beginning of each school year—advantages that would more than justify the cost in terms of teacher enthusiasm and better education.

After Dr. Benson had finished, Mr. Hughes recognized Mr. Gerard of the School Improvement Association, who supported Dr. Benson's remarks. Then Mr. Stone of the Maplewood Teachers' Association was recognized; he supported the salary increases. Finally, Mr. Hughes recognized Mrs. Casella, president of the Washington School Parent-Teacher Association, who spoke in favor of the two new pianos for the South Side School.

Inasmuch as it was past midnight when Mrs. Casella had concluded her remarks, Mr. Hughes proposed that the meeting be continued on the following Tuesday. The board members accepted his proposal.

The State Government

On Thursday of the same week in which Maplewood's Board of Education first considered the annual budget, the Committee on Educational Welfare of the state senate convened in the state capitol, a hundred and twenty miles from Maplewood. Members of the committee were gathered to consider a highly controversial bill which would permit "released time" religious instruction in



Preparing for the fall term: members of the school board make repairs while a teacher puts her records in order.

school districts throughout the state. By the provisions of the bill, any local board of education in the state could pass a resolution permitting public school students whose parents so desired to leave school at 2:00 P.M. instead of 3:00 P.M. on Wednesday afternoons to attend religious instruction in the faith of their choice.

The legislators knew they were dealing with a "hot" issue. It was a bill which might well affect Maplewood and many other communities throughout the state. A number of religious groups from different parts of the state were solidly behind the measure. They argued that it would provide a means of giving to children the religious teaching they should have without bringing sectarian instruction into the public schools. In addition, they pointed to a 1952 decision of the United States Supreme Court upholding the legality of a similar plan in New York State. Other groups, however, opposed the bill. They argued that it was an unwise violation of our American tradition of the separation of church and state and that it would use the compulsory attendance requirements of the state to "do the work of the churches." Some religious groups were among those supporting this second position.

The senate committee weighed the issue carefully. They heard one witness argue that the law was *permissive*, rather than *compulsory*; that is, it would *allow* rather than *compel* parents and local districts to act. Another witness, however, argued that even permissive legislation would run contrary to the historic principle of separation of church and state. Moreover, they said, the law, while permissive, would nevertheless encourage communities to act through the power of suggestion.

After two hours of hearings, a motion was made to table the bill in order that legal advice might be obtained from the State Commissioner of Education and from the State Attorney General. As the senators left the conference room, they refused comment to the press until they could give more thought to the "released time" proposal. They knew that on a highly controversial matter such as this, hastily made comments might well endanger their political futures.

A Parent-Teacher Association

You will remember that when the Maplewood Board of Education met on the first Tuesday of March, a representative of the Parent-Teacher Association of Maplewood High School had been present. This representative, Mrs. Kahn, had come with a resolution which had been passed the evening before after a lengthy meeting of the P.T.A. in the auditorium of Maplewood High. Although time did not permit her to present her resolution to the board, she was determined to bring it up at the meeting scheduled for the following week. For Mrs. Kahn and the P.T.A., this resolution meant a great deal.

The story of Mrs. Kahn's resolution began in January, when three members of the senior class had been killed in a tragic automobile accident at a traffic circle twenty miles from Maplewood. One of the three had been Mrs. Kahn's older son, George, a seventeen-year-old college preparatory student at the high school. The accident had been the third since the opening of the school year; and this time a number of parents were determined to do something about it. They raised the question at the regular February meeting of the P.T.A., and found that there was much

interest in the matter. Many opinions were expressed, varying all the way from one which proposed that no student in the high school be allowed to own an automobile, to another which proposed that drivers under eighteen be prohibited from driving in Maplewood after dark. The group ended its February meeting by appointing a committee to study the matter and directing this committee to bring in a recommendation at the March meeting.

The March meeting was held on the first Monday of the month. The main business was a speech by Willard G. Thomas, a consultant on driver education to the State Department of Education. Mr. Thomas told how other communities had met the problem by offering driver education courses in the high school to juniors and seniors who elected them, and by stressing safety throughout the instruction. Mr. Thomas maintained that this approach was far better than some of the more drastic proposals, because sooner or later, the young men and women were going to drive anyway, and therefore careful instruction was the only good, long-range approach. Mr. Thomas' speech was followed by a recommendation from the committee that the P.T.A. pass a resolution requesting the Board of Education to vote the funds necessary to begin driver education at Maplewood High School as soon as possible. After much discussion as to whether driver education was really the answer, the P.T.A. passed the resolution.

This was the resolution which Mrs. Kahn had waited patiently to present. She hoped that her George would be the last of these tragic teen-age traffic deaths in Maplewood.

A Veterans' Group

Every Saturday evening, the lights in Maplewood's American Legion Hall burn until at least midnight—and often later. Saturday evening is the time when many members of Maplewood's largest veterans' organization come up to the hall—sometimes with their wives—for cards, dancing, or just plain socializing. The Saturday night of the first week in March was no exception. The hall was crowded with Maplewooders relaxing with their neighbors from the week's work and cares.

Tom Halliday and Dick Fisher were there—as they were many

of their children. Would Tom's son have to fight in a terrible war, as they have been forced to do, to preserve their freedom? Would Dick's baby have to live through bombs, and air raids, and the like? Their voices were low and serious as they talked about these questions. America must remain free, they agreed; and freedom demanded strength and sacrifice. No sacrifice was too great.

Then Tom said that freedom demanded understanding. He remembered with a laugh how he and Dick had fought savagely to hold and win ground in places they had never heard of—in fact, in places whose names they couldn't even pronounce. Were the children of today being better prepared to understand "what it was all about" than they had been? Tom wondered, especially since his son would enter Maplewood's public schools next year. More than this, would his son know "what he was for" and "what he was against" if he had to go out and fight? Would he know this "ism" from that "ism" well enough to tell them apart?

Tom and Dick both agreed that the schools certainly ought to do that job; but how could they tell if schools were doing it? Dick had heard a member of the Legion's Post talk about "radical" teaching in the schools. Both agreed that they certainly didn't want that. "You know," said Dick, "you ought to try for a place on the Post Americanism Committee next year. They actually look into these things and put the pressure on to have them done properly. Why don't you do that, Tom? It would be one way of seeing what our kids are getting. And I'd push your candidacy with the Commander."

"You know," Tom replied, "that's a darn good idea! Let's work on it!"

A Teachers' Association

Two days after Tom and Dick had talked at American Legion Hall, a small group of two men and two women met in the conference room of the junior high school principal's office. Together, they made up the Committee on Salaries of the Maplewood Teachers' Association. One of the men and one of the women were elementary school teachers; the second woman was a junior high school teacher; and the second man was Mr. Stone, a mathematics

teacher at Maplewood High and general secretary of the association. It was he who had represented the association at the March Board of Education meeting.

The Committee on Salaries had worked hard throughout the year. Out of their work had come the proposal at the board meeting the previous Tuesday for a general \$200 annual cost-of-living increase for all Maplewood teachers. The association had expected sharp opposition from the Maplewood Tax League, and had sought to enlist support for their cause from parents, labor groups, businessmen's groups, community service groups, and veterans' groups. They knew that on the next evening the answer might come. Would the board vote for the budget as Dr. Benson had proposed it, or would the board vote to retain salaries at present levels?

Meanwhile, the committee was considering another issue, looking ahead to budget-making for the following year. The issue was whether or not Maplewood should shift to a single salary schedule for both elementary and secondary school teachers. At the present time in Maplewood, beginning secondary school teachers receive \$300 more per year than beginning elementary teachers. After fifteen years of service, the gap grows to \$750 per year. For a number of years, now, an influential group in the Teachers' Association has been arguing that this salary difference is unjust, that the responsibilities of elementary school teachers are quite as important and quite as pressing as those of secondary school teachers, and that a single salary scale should apply to all teachers in the community based on competence, education, and experience.

Opposed to this group in the association is a small but highly influential group of teachers at the high school who argue that secondary school instruction demands more preparation, more education, and more time than that of the lower grades. This group also says that high school teachers supervise more out-of-class activities than elementary teachers, and that the work of the high school is more influential in the total education of children than that of the elementary school.

The issue had caused such controversy in the December meeting of the association that the president asked the Committee on Salaries to study the matter as soon as the board's spring budget hearings had been completed. The committee would then make

recommendations back to the association, which would, if they were adopted, report them at the appropriate time to the superintendent and the Board of Education.

It was to this task that the Committee on Salaries turned as it awaited news the next day on the proposed cost-of-living increase.

A Businessmen's Association

On the first and third Thursdays of each month, members of the Maplewood Chamber of Commerce lunch together in the large dining room of the Hotel Baldwin. In planning for the mid-March meeting, the luncheon committee had asked President Larsen to take about fifteen minutes to bring the membership up to date on recent proposals and activities of the executive committee. President Larsen discussed three new activities. One of these was a proposal for Maplewood's public school program.

Mr. Larsen's first remarks dealt with plans for Maplewood Day. The businessmen and merchants who make up the Chamber had long been in search of some means for helping business during the summer months. One member of the executive committee had discovered quite by accident, through a friend who was a professor of history at the State University, that Maplewood had been founded during the month of July. Founders Day, as he called it, was in his opinion an excellent publicity item around which the stores of Maplewood could organize sales and other commercial activities. Out of this had come plans for a gala "Maplewood Day" celebration each July.

President Larsen's second point dealt with a proposed state-wide sales tax which had been introduced into the legislature. He urged the merchants to write to their representatives and resist this tax because he was sure customers would resent it.

It was then that President Larsen presented another new idea. Some of the members of the executive committee had felt rather strongly that not enough was being done in the public schools to show the children the advantages of America's free enterprise system. Indeed, one of these men had argued that loyalty to this system was being undermined by the "socialistic ideas" of some teachers. In order to turn school children's attention to this vital

matter, the committee was proposing that three essay contests be run in Maplewood's public schools—one for elementary school children, one for junior high school students, and one for senior high school students. The topic would be: "How Has the Free Enterprise System Contributed to the Advancement of America's Freedom?" The prize for each winner would be a trip to Chicago and a \$100 savings bond.

The first discussion with Superintendent Benson, Mr. Larsen reported, had not been too satisfactory. Dr. Benson was entirely in favor of the free enterprise system; and when the committee had called on him, he had taken pains to show the many ways in which Maplewood's public schools tried to build favorable attitudes toward free enterprise in Maplewood's children. Yet he was in general opposed to essay contests because he thought that they interrupted the regular work of the school program.

Mr. Larsen urged the members to use their influence to put the essay contest across; and he promised he would keep them posted.

A Labor Council

One reason why Dr. Benson strongly questioned the value of essay contests soon became clear after a glance at his appointment book for the week in which Mr. Larsen's committee had called. This committee had come on Friday at 11:00 A.M. On Wednesday at 2:00 P.M. a similar delegation from the Maplewood Labor Council—made up of delegates from seven local labor unions—had also called. By coincidence, the labor committee had also proposed an essay contest.

Maplewood's Labor Council meets on the first Thursday of each month. Many issues had been discussed at the March meeting, including ways of publicizing in Maplewood labor's contribution to American life. Several different plans had been discussed; and none could muster much support until John Powitz, president of the local teamsters' union, suggested an essay contest in the high school. "Many groups have used that approach," argued Mr. Powitz, "why shouldn't we?" The group liked the suggestion a great deal, and it was agreed that Mr. Powitz and a committee of two would visit Superintendent Benson and explore the matter

with him. At the same time, representatives on the council would consider the matter with their respective unions.

When Mr. Powitz and his committee called on Dr. Benson during the second week in March, they proposed an essay contest on the topic: "Labor's Contribution to American Progress Through Its Backing of Social Welfare Legislation." Prizes including a \$200 savings bond to the winner and two wrist watches to the runners-up were mentioned. Dr. Benson pointed to the many ways in which Maplewood's public schools treated labor's contribution to American life; but he also indicated that in general he was opposed to essay contests because he thought that they interrupted the regular work of the school.

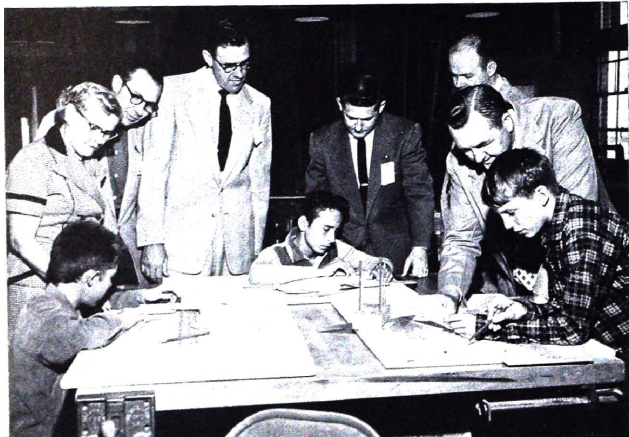
Mr. Powitz and his colleagues left a little disturbed and decided to urge the members of the labor council to use their influence to put the essay contest across.

A Women's Club

Members of the Maplewood Women's Club spent a good deal of time during the early part of March preparing their individual views for their long-awaited monthly meeting on March 22. The

Members of a local Chamber of Commerce visit a schoolroom.

Chamber of Commerce, Tucson, Arizona



topic of the meeting was: "Are Today's Public Schools Teaching the Fundamentals Well?" The two speakers were Mrs. Mildred Parker Bryce, writer and associate editor of a large national magazine, and Dr. Joyce Kinder of the State University's College of Education. Mrs. Bryce was to argue the negative, while Dr. Kinder was to take the affirmative. The members of the Women's Club were themselves so divided on this controversial issue that the meeting promised to be a very lively one.

When March 22 finally arrived, the meeting fulfilled their every hope. Mrs. Bryce argued (1) that "modern, progressive education had taken the three R's out of the schools"; (2) that "the fundamentals had given way to many 'fads and frills' in the school program"; (3) that "modern teachers were mollicoddling children and were not really equipped to teach the fundamentals"; and (4) that "parents had a responsibility to see to it that the three R's were well taught."

Dr. Kinder responded by saying (1) that "she shared Mrs. Bryce's interest in having the three R's taught well"; (2) that "tests demonstrated that children in today's schools were learning the fundamentals better than ever before"; (3) that "in addition to the three R's, today's children learned many other fundamentals such as art, music, and human relations"; (4) that "modern teachers were more and more getting the extensive professional training needed to teach this broader group of fundamentals and to take account of differences in individual children while teaching them"; and (5) that "parents were 100 per cent behind this newer idea of education."

Enthusiastic debate followed with comments from the audience endorsing and opposing both points of view. Before the meeting ended, a motion was made and passed authorizing the president of the club to appoint a committee to see if Maplewood's public schools were giving enough time and attention to developing the fundamental skills at all levels.

A Family

Mr. and Mrs. Kroll usually have dinner at 6:00 P.M. right after Mr. Kroll gets home from work. This evening, however, dinner

was late, and Mrs. Kroll was troubled. To begin with, the roast, which should have been rare, was now getting to be well-done; and Mr. Kroll liked his roast rare. But it was more than a matter of the roast. This was the third time in two weeks that Florence, their daughter, had been late to dinner.

Florence, a student at Maplewood High, was vice-president of the drama club and was shouldering many responsibilities in connection with the school play scheduled for the second week in April. She was in charge of ticket sales. She was responsible for getting the scenery ready. And she was helping to make the costumes. All of this was very important to Florence, who hoped some day to become a teacher of dramatic arts.

For Mrs. Kroll, it was a different matter. She felt that the drama club was taking entirely too much of Florence's time. She felt that these many responsibilities were keeping Florence from her homework and her studies. Even more, she constantly complained that the drama club was "wearing Florence out." In her mind, Florence didn't look well; she had been thin and pale all year.

Like many a father of a teen-age girl, Mr. Kroll was less concerned. Anything that made his "little Flossie" happy was all right with him. Besides, he thought that the drama club was a good thing. It taught about the real world far better than books, Mr. Kroll was fond of remarking. Nevertheless, his wife's concern was beginning to worry him. "You know," he said looking up from his newspaper, "I think we ought to have a serious talk with Mr. Rogers. After all, we do want the best for Floss, and maybe she shouldn't be doing so much."



FROM the picture given by these brief glances at a few gatherings in Maplewood, it may look as if March was "School Month" in Maplewood and that all Maplewooders were giving their special attention to school problems and school matters. Nothing could be further from the truth. The education of its young people is one of the most important *continuing* concerns of any community; and this is as true of Maplewood as of any other city.

For at least two reasons, however, education has today become more important than ever in modern America: first, because life in modern America is a very complicated affair (it is the life of a rapidly changing technological-industrial society); and second, because modern America seeks to be democratic, and democratic societies place tremendous responsibilities on the shoulders of individual citizens—responsibilities for which citizens must be prepared.

Why does an industrial society place great demands on education? To begin with, the technological side of life demands great skill from the average citizen. Driving an automobile, using electrical appliances and the telephone, and arranging long trips take a great deal of knowledge and practical "know-how." We may think that it doesn't demand too much, mostly because we are in contact with technical things from our earliest childhood. Although the school is not the only source from which we find out about them, it is an important place where we learn to deal with them. Moreover, when a community wants to *make sure* that certain necessary technical knowledge and skills are taught, the community asks the schools to do so.

For example, Americans learn to drive in different ways; some learn from relatives, others from friends, and still others from special driving schools. But after a few tragic accidents, when Maplewood's P.T.A. wanted to make sure that every person who desired to drive would have an opportunity to learn to do so, and to learn efficiently, safely, and correctly, they asked the public school to assume the responsibility. And because the public school was public—that is, open to all and controlled by the community—the P.T.A. felt thoroughly justified in making this request.

Just as the technological side of life in an industrial society leads to certain educational demands, so does the very complicated social side of life in such a society. For example, an industrial society demands a much greater degree of specialization than simpler agricultural societies. For this reason, people become more dependent on one another. Thus, while nineteenth-century rural American families often built their own houses, produced their own food, and made their own clothing, few twentieth-century Americans do all of these things for themselves. Because of this interdependence in the twentieth century, there is a far

greater degree of organization in society. We each do our share of the total work, and a complicated economy enables us to get what other people produce in return for what we produce. A good example is the very complex system which brings clean, fresh milk into a city from farms, sometimes a hundred miles away. The man who works in a factory producing the shoes which the farmer will buy is thus enabled to buy fresh milk for his family.

To live in such a society, many new specialized social skills of buying, selling, organizing, and working together are demanded. The schools must help to make sure that these social skills are provided to those who will have to live and work in the society.

As if it weren't difficult enough to live in an industrial society, Americans want to live *democratically* in that society. This means that Americans want each individual to have an intelligent say in the great political, economic, and social decisions which affect him. To do so, we must have individuals who can get the facts and make up their minds on important issues. People are not just born knowing how to do these things. *These skills have to be learned.* And Americans look to their schools to provide both the knowledge and the skills necessary to their accomplishment.

Most Americans who pay the taxes to support public schools would probably agree that schools should help young people learn to live in our industrial society, and learn to do so in democratic ways. But when the matter comes up of just how this can best be done, people begin to disagree. This is to be expected, however, since on all really important problems, Americans disagree to greater or less extent on what is true and what is good. To the extent that public schools are public, such disagreements will inevitably affect public school policy.

Nothing illustrates this better than the continued interest of groups of citizens in Maplewood regarding what the schools are doing and how well they are doing it. This interest is very much like public interest in other great local, state, and national problems. It is the natural concern of the people for what is happening to *their* schools.

Consider for a moment the variety of issues which came up in the few illustrative situations discussed earlier in this chapter: (1) the matter of teachers' salaries; (2) the issue of what religious education, if any, belongs in public schools; (3) the need for

driver education; (4) the issue of what is a proper education for citizenship; (5) the problem of what values children should learn about business and labor; (6) the question of what studies are the fundamentals and whether modern public schools are teaching them well; and (7) the issue of the amount of out-of-class activities a student should take on. These and many other issues of school policy are everyday matters in any average American community. They are the concern of the state legislature and the school board, which are the official agencies of public control; and they are the concern of the teachers. Even more than this, however, they are the concern of parents, citizens, parent groups, and citizen groups. These individuals and groups take differing positions on many of these questions; and each tries to make his position prevail. Out of the discussion of these positions emerges public school policy.

Why is it that adult groups show this concern with their schools? It is because they strongly believe that what happens in public schools will have great influence on the lives of the community's young people. Schooling will make them different individuals than they would be without schooling. Moreover, if schooling really influences the lives of individuals, it will ultimately influence the course and character of community life and of national life. For what is a community or a nation apart from the individuals who compose it? Little wonder, then, that American parents and citizens are very much concerned with American public schools, with what they do, how they do it, and how well they do it. Americans know that the strength and health of their nation depends a great deal on how well the job of public education is really being done.



*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217-219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. Make a survey of the organized citizens' groups to which your classmates' parents and your own belong. Which of these groups have displayed (a) great interest in public education; (b) some interest in public education; (c) no interest in public education? Are there many organized citizens' groups in your community concerned with public education? What do you think this means?

2. Choose two or three of the organized citizens' groups in your community which have displayed real interest in public education. Have representatives of your class interview the leaders of these groups to get information on the following questions:

- (a) What do they think are the most important contributions of the public schools in your community?
- (b) What do they think are the most serious problems of the public schools in your community?
- (c) What do they think are the best ways in which their groups can help solve these problems?
- (d) What part do they think professional workers in the schools should play in helping to solve these problems?

3. How well qualified are the unofficial groups discussed in this chapter to participate in making school policy? Where do you think they can go to become better informed?

PART TWO



National Life Insurance Co., Montpelier, Vermont



Part Two



HOW OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAME TO BE

How did public schools come to be? Why were they founded? What kind of Americans founded them? What did they hope the schools would accomplish? Answers to these questions are important. They tell us how much a part of American life the public schools have been—how truly they have embodied the hopes, the dreams, and the ideals of four generations of American citizens.

THE Maplewood public school system is just one of thousands of local public school systems throughout the United States. Each of these local systems has special characteristics of its own: the architecture of its school buildings, perhaps the organization of its kindergarten, or maybe the way music is taught in the senior high school. It can be special at any one of a thousand points. This is as it should be; for the American people have always prided themselves in their *locally* controlled system of public education. The American people feel close to their schools; and like the Maplewooders—individually and in groups—mentioned in the previous chapter, they want to keep their hands on the pulse of school affairs and keep school affairs serving them.

It is important to realize, however, that while there are differences from community to community, there is a great deal of similarity in public school systems throughout the nation. This similarity is even clearer to visitors who come to the United States

from other parts of the world than it is to Americans themselves; for Americans take for granted many of these most important points of similarity. Consider, for example, the public board of education. Its size varies from community to community and from state to state. In some places, it is elected; in others it is appointed. To be sure, these differences are significant. Nevertheless, what Americans sometimes forget is that the controlling board of education is part of public school systems from Maine to California. Visitors from nations where schools are controlled by the central government, or by one or more churches, are quick to notice the universality of the public board of education in the United States. It is things like this that enable people to describe an *American* public school system. True, there is no such thing as a single federal American school system. But there are thousands of Maplewoods, thousands of local systems which, in their many and important similarities, add up to the American public school system.

In Part Two we will show why, in communities like Maplewood, a public school system exists which brings together the efforts of the students, teachers, and community groups mentioned earlier in the book.



CHAPTER FOUR

Education in the Colonial Period (1600–1779)

THE first settlers who came to the New World came for different reasons. Some came to escape religious persecution, some to escape political tyranny. Some came in search of wealth, some to flee the debtor's jail. Some came to seek adventure, others, to find peace. Whatever the reason, however, each one brought with him the ways of thinking, believing, and doing which he had learned in the Old World. The English Puritan who came to Massachusetts Bay Colony behaved and believed as an English Puritan in the New World. In like manner, the Dutch Protestant who came to New Amsterdam brought with him the world of Dutch Protestantism. So it was also with the English Quaker in Pennsylvania, the English Episcopalian in Virginia, the Spanish Catholic in Florida and the Southwest, and the French Catholic in the Mississippi Valley. All brought with them the values, attitudes, and habits of the world they had left behind.

It is not at all surprising, therefore, that when these first immigrants founded settlements, their settlements looked a great deal like European communities of the time. The way they governed themselves, the way they made their living, the way they organized their communities—all had a European flavor. Schools, colleges, early universities and other means of education were also much like the institutions which the colonists had known in Europe. To understand the character of the first schools in the New World, then, you must realize that they were really European-type schools transplanted in a new setting.

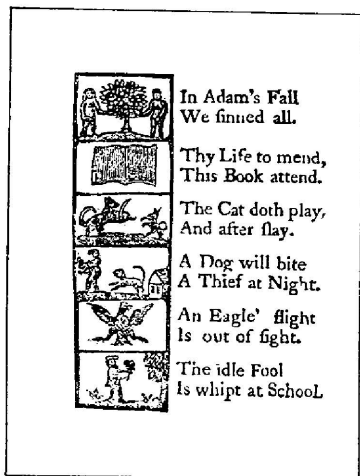
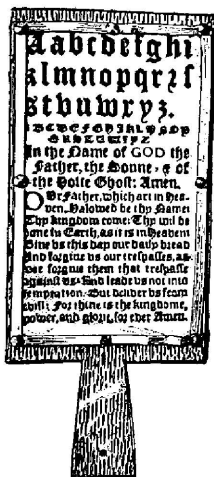
You should also note that different groups predominated in different colonies: the Puritans in Massachusetts Bay, the Quakers in Pennsylvania, and the Anglicans in Virginia. While all of these groups established European-type schools in the New World, they did so in somewhat different ways—each group reflecting in their schools the ideas, values, and attitudes which *they* believed most important. Thus, while there were similarities in education throughout the colonies, there were major differences, too; you must know about both to understand colonial education.

Colonial Elementary Schools

Colonial elementary schools, like all colonial schools, were very small. An elementary school with more than twenty or thirty children was a large one. Most schools were one-room schools, with a single teacher presiding over a group of students ranging in age from toddlers of three or four to young men and women in their teens. School terms were short. In some sections, school was in session for less than a month each year.

Elementary classes met in all sorts of surroundings: in the kitchens of the women who taught them, in churches, in the workshops of tradesmen. Where there was a special school building, it was usually a very simple affair—too cold in the winter and too hot in the summer. Schoolhouses were frame or log buildings, usually of one or two rooms. Many had no floor other than the ground on which the building rested. Although, as a rule, a small stove stood in the center of the room, it scarcely heated the building. There were often no windows. There were never any blackboards. School furniture consisted of a few simple benches, sometimes accompanied by a few simple tables—often no more than planks built along the wall. Books were scarce. So were writing materials. And there was absolutely none of the teaching aids like slide projectors, laboratory equipment, and the like, which are today considered part of the modern school.

The purpose of these elementary schools was to teach children to accept the dominant religion; and the whole school program reflected this purpose. Studies were usually restricted to one or two books. The Bible was widely used; so was a special kind of prayer book called a Psalter. Many schools began instruction with



(Left) The Hornbook was not really a book at all, but a piece of paper on which were printed the alphabet and the Lord's Prayer. It was covered with a thin piece of horn for protection, and fastened to a board with a handle. (Right) A page from the *New England Primer* which shows how the alphabet and morals were taught simultaneously.

a Hornbook, which was not really a book at all but rather a flat piece of wood bearing the letters of the alphabet and the Lord's Prayer. Perhaps the most representative of the books studied, however, was the *New England Primer*. This was a little book specially designed to teach children to read. It was widely used in colonial schools in and outside of New England; and literally thousands of boys and girls in the colonial period knew the *Primer* as their only textbook in elementary school. The very special thing about the *New England Primer* is that *while the boys and girls were learning to read from it, they were also learning the elements of religion*. In other words, the materials of the book were largely of a religious nature. There was a catechism—questions and answers on matters of religious doctrine. There was “an alphabet of

lessons for youth." There were prayers to be recited. There were many bits of Biblical information. And in several places in at least one edition, there was a rhyme to stimulate study.

He who ne'er learns his A B C
Forever will a blockhead be;
But he who to his book's inclined
Will soon a golden treasure find.

Discipline was harsh in these schools, and physical punishment was common. As a matter of fact, one of the little passages which the students had to learn from the *Primer* was: "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of the child; but the rod of correction shall drive it from him." Memorizing was a widely used technique of teaching; and little boys and girls were often forced to memorize many things which meant absolutely nothing to them.

As a rule, pupils were taught one by one. The teacher, holding the "rod of correction" in one hand and the book in the other, would invite one of the children up to the desk and begin the lesson. If the student did well, there was a word of praise and a new assignment. If the student did poorly, there were harsh words and, more often than not, a blow across the knuckles or on the seat of the pants. One by one, the students would approach the teacher and recite their lessons. Those who were not reciting were expected to work at their individual assignments and do so quietly. Now and then the teacher would leave the desk to administer a few well-placed blows and thereby seek to restore discipline.

Although most of the teaching was done in this way—it had to be because of the tremendous difference in the ages of the students—there was some work in which all participated together, such as prayers and the catechism. Often, however, children simply memorized these things by saying them over and over with the other children, completely missing both the meaning and beauty of whatever they were doing.

Colonial Secondary Schools and Colleges

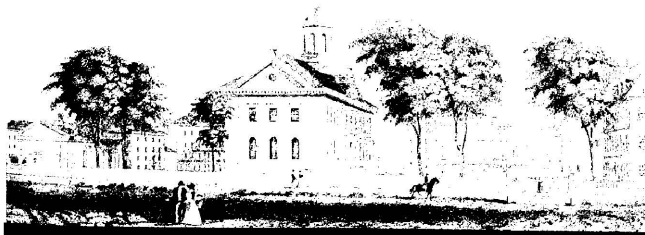
Schools were not organized during the colonial period in a "ladder system" as they are today. There was no standard progression

through a certain number of years of elementary school, followed by secondary school, and then college. In most places, one went to elementary school *or* to secondary school—elementary if the rudiments only were desired, secondary if college entrance was the goal.

Colonial secondary schools—called Latin Grammar Schools because Latin was their most important subject—existed for one main purpose: to prepare young men for entrance into college. Small, crudely built, and often uncomfortable, they were not too different from elementary schools. The teaching was on the same kind of individual basis, with much memorizing and drill. The students were almost always boys, and the teachers were almost always men. Secondary school teachers were better prepared than elementary school teachers. Then, too, the students were perhaps slightly older, although there was considerable overlapping in age between elementary and secondary school students. Often, however, this overlapping only meant that the discipline was even harsher, and teaching methods even more rigid.

What did the boys in the grammar schools study? To find out, one has only to study the entrance requirements for college. Generally, since Latin and Greek were languages used by educated people throughout the Western world, students were required to

This early view of Harvard College shows the buildings which formed the nucleus for the present-day university.



read moderately difficult Latin at sight, to speak Latin in prose and poetry, and to recite some elementary Greek vocabulary and grammar. To prepare for college, a boy had to master such skills. These things, therefore, were the business of the secondary school. Every effort was made to get the students to read, speak, and understand Latin—and some Greek—as soon as possible. For ten-, eleven-, twelve-, and thirteen-year-old boys, it was a wearing and tiresome process which demanded concentration, intense effort, and—when one considers the disciplinary measures—a rugged constitution.

The college curriculum was a continuation of that of the secondary schools. As a rule, the boys lived at the college they attended for the duration of the three-year course. There were no such things as “electives.” Within each class, all the students studied the same books and subjects at the same time. The basic subjects were languages, mathematics, philosophy, and religion—all of which were taught from required textbooks. Much attention was also given to debating according to formal rules of rhetoric and logic. A little botany in the summer and a little history in the winter completed the program. Attendance at church services was required; and virtually all leisure time was carefully supervised. Needless to say, active boys could take just so much of this close regulation before the expected fights and brawls broke out. Then, heavy fines and public whippings were the penalties.

In the classroom, instructors read the prescribed books aloud and commented on them. The students memorized important passages and recited them back. For written exercises, the students outlined portions of important works, and sometimes wrote their own commentaries. All too often, little room was left for creative or imaginative work. Yet, after three years of this—later, it became four—the Bachelor of Arts degree was awarded and the student was thought of as an educated man.

Differences in How People

Managed and Paid for Schools

During the colonial period both elementary and secondary schools were managed and paid for in different ways and by

different groups. For example, according to a law passed in 1647, Massachusetts towns which had increased in population to fifty or more families, had to maintain an elementary school. Those of a hundred or more families had to maintain both an elementary and a secondary school. In almost every case, schools were paid for out of taxes. Thus, the early schools of Massachusetts were both publicly supported and publicly controlled.

In the middle and southern states, however, where the Episcopalian religion predominated, schooling remained largely in the hands of private or church agencies and was supported by private or church funds. True, the governments of these states often tried to encourage schools with subsidies, but unlike the schools in Massachusetts Bay Colony, they remained largely private institutions, privately supported and controlled.

These differences were of the greatest importance. For, later, when the American people decided to establish public schools throughout the United States, they found that the job was easier where habits of public support and control were deep in the life of the people, as they were in Massachusetts, than it was where the private school had been the dominant educational institution, as in the middle and southern states.

The New Educational Ideas of Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson

During the second half of the eighteenth century, as the colonial period was drawing to a close, a number of prominent Americans began to think about education and ways to improve it. Among these were Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. The educational ideas of both men were destined to have a tremendous effect on the development of schools in America.

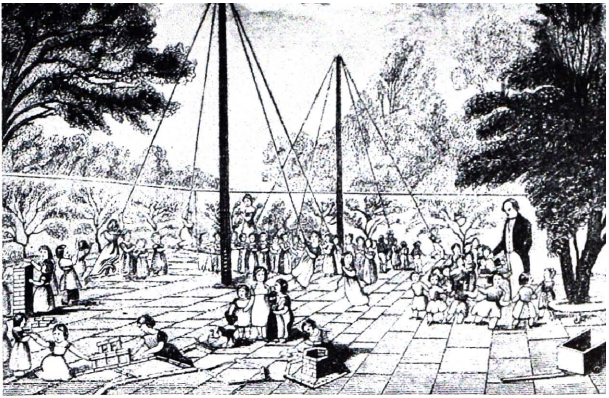
Franklin's ideas on education are best set forth in a pamphlet he wrote in 1749 entitled *Some Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*. The pamphlet led eventually to the establishment of a school which later became the University of Pennsylvania. What Franklin proposed was a new kind of secondary school—an *academy*—which would prepare young people not for college only, but rather for life in the business and so-

cial world. In other words, Franklin thought secondary education should be useful and practical, that it should prepare young people to take their places in society. Specifically, he proposed that English, instead of Latin and Greek, be the language studied. He proposed also that the school program be broadened to include subjects like history, natural science, and practical work in agriculture. This was quite different from the rather narrow and specialized programs of the Latin Grammar Schools. To sum up, Franklin set forth the idea that education should have practical use in preparing young people for their adult responsibilities.

Jefferson's ideas on education, which resembled Franklin's on some points, had a somewhat different emphasis. Although he wrote on education in many of his letters and books, he probably best revealed his views in a bill he drew up for the Virginia legislature in 1779. This bill was called the *Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge*. Even though the *Bill* was not passed, and never became law, it does tell us what Jefferson thought about education. Basically, he believed that education could be a powerful foundation for a free society in at least two ways: *first*, by providing intelligent citizens able to judge important issues which faced them and able to recognize tyranny and fight it; and *second*, by providing enlightened leaders who could best rule in the interest of the people.

Put in another way, Jefferson saw schools as agencies for educating citizens. His *Bill* proposed that every free child in Virginia should have the privilege of three years of free elementary schooling in reading, writing, arithmetic, and history. It also proposed that each year the brightest graduates of the elementary schools should be granted scholarships to secondary schools, and the brightest graduates of the secondary schools should be granted scholarships to William and Mary College, there to receive the kind of education which Jefferson thought would make them wise leaders.

These were indeed new ideas. When Franklin and Jefferson first stated them, only a few citizens paid attention to them. Soon after they had been stated, the Constitution was ratified and the new nation began its life in earnest. During these early years of our national life, as the American republic took shape, political, economic, social, and religious conditions changed rapidly. No longer



Barnard's School Architecture, A. S. Barnes & Co., 1848

In this playground designed for a primary school more than one hundred years ago, we see many activities still enjoyed by children today.

did America resemble a group of European communities picked up, carried across the ocean, and transplanted. A new society with characteristics all its own was coming into being. More and more citizens, stirred by these things, began to make proposals like Franklin's and Jefferson's. Eventually, these ideas led to educational changes that produced the great state public school systems we know today. In this way, the ideas of Franklin and Jefferson that were so revolutionary in their day actually played an important part in the development of our contemporary schools. Many of these ideas are in fact taken for granted today.



COLONIAL education, then, largely resembled the education that had gone on in Europe before the colonists left for the New World. It was dominated by several ideas: *first*, that most people don't really need schooling, and if they do, it should involve only a bare minimum of reading and writing (arithmetic began to come in toward the end of the eighteenth century); *second*, that for most of those who do have

schooling, the school program should lean heavily on training in established religious belief; and *third*, that for an even more select few, a good liberal education in certain basic subjects like languages, mathematics, philosophy, and religion is highly important. In some places, like New England, schools were more plentiful than in others; but in no place did as many as 10 per cent of the children attend. In some places there was public support and control of education; in other places, schools were privately paid for and managed. While new ideas began to be heard at the middle of the eighteenth century, colonial America could not be called school-conscious. It took a revolution in educational thought as well as a Revolutionary War to change this picture.



*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217-219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. a. Assume that you are a teacher in a colonial elementary school, grammar school, or college. Prepare a diary which records the most important events of one week of teaching.

b. Assume that you are a student in a colonial elementary school, grammar school, or college. Prepare a diary which records the most important events of one week of school attendance. Look at Alice M. Earle's *Child Life in Colonial Days*, Chapters III-VII, X, and XIV.

2. Find out what you can about Benjamin Franklin. [Franklin's *Autobiography* would be a good place to begin.] What things about Franklin's life and thought help you to understand his proposals for a new kind of secondary school?

3. Read the *Declaration of Independence* which Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1776. What things about the *Declaration* help you to understand why Jefferson proposed his *Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge* in 1779?



CHAPTER FIVE



The Development of Our Public Schools (1779-1860)

FRANKLIN advanced the idea of an education for practical affairs, one which would help a man in his life as a citizen and businessman. Jefferson proposed an education for freedom, one which would prepare intelligent citizens and wise leaders for the Republic. While neither idea had much effect immediately, both received more and more attention as important social, political, and economic changes occurred in the years following 1789. These changes finally started the educational revolution which took place in early nineteenth-century America: the development of a free, ladder-type, common school system, today called the American public school.

Demands for a

New American Education

What were some of these changes in American life which gave rise to sweeping changes in education? Four seem important to understand: the participation of larger numbers of people in voting and officeholding; the growth of commerce and industry; the sharp rise in immigration, especially after 1840; and the development of social reform movements during and after the 1830's.

The first of these was probably the most important. It has been estimated, for example, that because of religious and economic restrictions, only one free white male in seven was eligible to vote



Harper's Weekly, December 14, 1872

Members of a local school board conduct an examination to determine how well the students are doing in a public elementary school.

at the time when George Washington first took office. This situation changed very quickly. Frontier states joined the Union with constitutional provision for universal suffrage. Constitutional conventions in the older states broke down religious and economic barriers to voting, and by 1840 America had moved far along toward universal white male suffrage.

Closely associated with this development were changes in the conception of who should hold public office. Gradually the idea grew that any citizen was eligible for positions of public trust. This was illustrated in Andrew Jackson's "spoils system" of rewards for political loyalty and friendship. To a growing number of citizens, one thing was certain: unless both the voters and their leaders were educated to their responsibilities, a republic could not long endure.

The growth of commerce and industry after the Revolution had at least two important effects on educational thought. First, as commercial and industrial tasks became more complicated, the demand for skilled workers rose. More and more, businessmen realized that employees who could read, write, and do arithmetic were not only preferable but necessary in offices and factories.

Second, and perhaps more important, a number of thinkers argued that the new commerce and industry would bring tremendous differences in wealth and social class to the American people. Moreover, they believed that if these differences became too great, they would eat away at the foundations of American political equality. How could this "eating away" be prevented? Many thought that universal education, *giving equal opportunity* to every child, was the only answer. Some, particularly Robert Dale Owen, who was a leader in the New York labor movement during the 1830's, actually argued that only if this education were given to everyone in the same school with the same books, courses, and even the same food and clothing, would real equal opportunity prevail. His ideas were never put into practice, but the idea of children from different social classes going to the same school and enjoying equal educational opportunity did receive increasing attention.

The concern expressed by many Americans over the sharp rise in immigration after 1840 must be seen against the growing nationalism of the period. When men such as Benjamin Franklin or Thomas Jefferson spoke the words "my country" in revolutionary times, people sometimes had difficulty in knowing whether they were talking about the United States, or Pennsylvania, or Virginia, or England. By 1830, Americans had gone a long way toward eliminating internal conflicts and awakening loyalty toward their new national state. Indeed, so strong was this loyalty by 1840, that immigrants, who had been welcomed before with open arms, were now challenged as to whether they had the necessary skills and loyalties for citizenship. Here many saw a two-sided educational task: first, that of educating the immigrants to assume their civic responsibilities as well as to enjoy their rights and freedoms; and second, that of educating Americans to appreciate the contributions of the newcomers to the vitality of American life.

Finally, there was the rise of a healthy spirit of social reform in early nineteenth-century America. This spirit drew on the idea that if man applied his reason to his social problems, tremendous social improvements were possible. It drew also on the Christian zeal for the welfare of human beings. And it drew finally on the growing American faith in the common man. Bringing these three traditions together, this spirit of reform penetrated into many

aspects of American life: prison reform, temperance, abolition of slavery, women's rights, pacifism, and care of the insane. Needless to say, education was one such area, and in every state of the Union, enthusiastic men and women banded together to improve existing schools and to build new ones.

The Public School Leaders

Demands for free schools came from political leaders, labor leaders, business leaders—indeed, from every quarter of society. Yet, had there not arisen a group of dedicated educational leaders in every part of the nation, the idea of free universal education might have remained only a dream, as it has to this day in many parts of the world. These leaders, each working closely with the citizens of his own state, began to fashion the demands for free schools into a new American ideal. To be sure, there was no such thing as one great national convention at which a single program of action was decided upon. Rather, as these leaders spoke, wrote, and met with citizens of their own states, their ideas became clearer. They discussed these ideas with leaders and citizens of other states. And out of it all came a number of very important agreements.

Who were these leaders? What kind of men were they? Their names are well known in the annals of American history. Horace Mann (1796–1859) and James G. Carter (1795–1849) in Massachusetts, Henry Barnard (1811–1900) in Connecticut, Calvin Wiley (1819–1887) in North Carolina, Caleb Mills (1806–1879) in Indiana, Samuel Lewis (1799–1854) in Ohio, and John Swett (1830–1913) in California are among them.

They were as a rule average middle-class Americans who came from different vocations to work in behalf of schools. Many had themselves attended public schools; many had studied law and were practicing lawyers when they began their efforts toward reform. None was particularly rich; many rose through their own efforts. Interestingly, Mills, Lewis, and Swett, who worked in the Midwest and Far West, were born and brought up in New England, by far the most school-conscious region during the early national period.

One thing they all had in common: their enthusiasm for equal universal education. To this cause they literally dedicated "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor." They gave of themselves unselfishly and unceasingly. They lectured, they pamphleteered, they edited educational magazines, they organized campaigns against public indifference, and they lobbied for constructive school legislation. They traveled hundreds and even thousands of miles at a time when travel was expensive, time-consuming, difficult, and uncomfortable. They gave up promising careers for educational posts which paid little or nothing for the most demanding of services. They poured thousands of dollars of personal money into their endeavors.

For their efforts they had heartening successes and heart-rending failures, comforting praise and sharp criticism. Horace Mann, a deeply religious man who is now acknowledged to be the most distinguished school administrator of his time, was savagely attacked in the Boston press as Godless, atheistic, and irreligious. Later, he was even threatened with personal violence. James G. Carter, today acknowledged as the father of American teacher education, in 1827 saw his proposal for a public teacher-training school defeated in the Massachusetts senate by one vote. Henry Barnard, later to become first United States Commissioner of Education, found after four years as secretary of the Connecticut Board of Education that both the board and his post had been abolished. These were obstacles that would have defeated less dedicated men. Yet they were hurdled and victories ultimately achieved.

Here, then, were some of the men who fought for our schools. All were valiant fighters in the struggle to win the right of free, public education as a birthright of every American child. Out of their efforts grew an idea which has since been central in the American heritage—the idea of a *common, or public, school*.

The Common School Ideal

As the ideal of the common school developed, it rather clearly followed the two aspects outlined in Jefferson's *Bill of 1779*: universal education for an intelligent, responsible electorate and

equal opportunity for the advanced education needed by an enlightened and humane leadership. While Americans gave their greatest attention to the first aspect before the 1860's, both were clearly present in the overall common school idea.

The heart of education for the whole citizenry might best be expressed this way: the school would have to take on certain important tasks which could no longer be left to chance education by family, church, and community. The education of a republic's future citizens was simply too important to leave to luck. The school which Americans saw taking on these responsibilities was a new kind of school—one very different from the traditional European school. The new American school was to be a *common* school, not one for the common people, as in Europe, but common in a new sense of *common to all the people*. "The common School," wrote a prominent New Jersey clergyman in 1838, "is common, not as inferior, not as a school for poor men's children, but as the light and air are common." The common school was to be for rich and poor alike. Not only was it to be free, but of high quality—the equal of any privately established institution. Clearly, if it were not, it would soon be labeled a school for paupers and renounced by the free citizens of a free republic.

It is important to realize how strongly positive was this concept of "common schooling" in the minds of these nineteenth-century Americans. Assuming that association of different kinds of children would inevitably inspire mutual respect and friendship, they hoped that the common school would not only be *open* to all but *used* by all. The children of all nationalities, religions, creeds, and economic levels would then have an opportunity to mix together in the same schoolroom. ". . . *let the common school be made fit to educate all, and let all send to it,*" wrote Orville Taylor, a leader in New York's public school movement. Taylor went on to argue that after warm friendship in childhood, different groups in the community would forever have common memories, faiths, and respect on which to build friendly working relationships.

What would the common schools teach? Generally, educational leaders thought that the common school should teach those subjects which would prepare young people to be good citizens. More specifically, these fundamentals embraced three areas of instruction: (1) training in reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling for

everyday use; (2) moral education so that knowledge would be put to proper use; and (3) education for patriotism and loyal citizenship. While there was some argument over which studies would best advance patriotism and loyalty, it was generally agreed that history and geography would accomplish this purpose. When the problem of a proper moral education was raised, however, bitter controversies arose.

Most people in the nineteenth century believed that morality could only be taught through the tenets of a particular sectarian religion. Yet for at least two reasons, sectarian religious instruction could not be given in common schools. First, children of different religions were present, and to teach the beliefs of any one would offend others. Second, separation of church and state had been provided for by the First Amendment to the federal Constitution, and by laws and constitutional provisions in each of the states. To use public funds for institutions where sectarian reli-

For many people a basic education was not always as easy to obtain as it is today. At the end of the last century, children who had been at work all day in factories would often sacrifice dinner to attend night schools where they learned to read and write.

Harper's Magazine, August, 1873; New York Historical Society



gious instruction was given would violate this principle of separation. The problem was an important one, however, because it was clear that the American people wanted moral education given in their schools.

In answer to this problem, educational leaders made two proposals. First, they would take from various different creeds the common elements on which all agreed and teach these in school. More extensive instruction in particular religious beliefs would be left to the homes, churches, and synagogues of the students. Second, some great ethical principles of the Judeo-Christian religious tradition would be taught in non-theological contexts. Virtues like honesty or neighborliness would be taught without introducing sectarian religious doctrines. In this way, the moral foundation of the curriculum could be preserved while rights of individual conscience were at the same time honored.

Here, then, were the goals of the common school. How would they be secured? Generally, educational leaders saw the answer in a common—or public—effort of the whole community. By and large, this meant public support and public control. In proposing this, however, educators knew that they would be running against long traditions to the contrary. For centuries, except in a few places like Massachusetts, schooling had been thought of as a private function, purchased by those who could afford it for their children or given on a charity basis to the poor. Now, it was argued that schooling was no longer a private luxury; it was necessary to the health of society. Therefore, it should be paid for as any other public necessity—with public funds. Moreover, it should be controlled by representatives of the community which supported it. Then and only then would the people have the chance to keep their common schools serving the best interests of society, democratically determined.

These were the broad outlines of the education of the whole people. How would the second great dimension of the common school ideal—equality of opportunity for advanced education—operate along with the first? Educational leaders who gave the matter their attention thought that equality of educational opportunity would come through two kinds of institutions: state universities and free public high schools. Since it is necessary to understand the character of the state university before the character

20. Billy saw that he looked very sad, and asked him what was the matter.

21. The poor old man said he was very hungry. He had had nothing to eat for a long time, and he could not work, as he was old and blind.



22. Then Billy, without saying a word, brought the rest of the cake. He said, "Here, old man, is some cake for you," and put it into the old man's hat.

23. The fiddler thanked him, and Billy was happier than if he had eaten ten cakes.

EXERCISES.—Will you tell us all about Harry's cake? Peter's? Billy's? Which of the boys do you like best?

Courtesy of American Book Company

A page from the McGuffey Readers, a textbook used widely in nineteenth-century public elementary schools.

of the high school becomes clear, we will deal first with the state university idea.

Basically, the state university idea rested on three assumptions. First, the people will greatly benefit from a constant flow of leaders prepared by a university responsible to and controlled by the people. Second, opportunity to attend the state university should be based on talent and initiative rather than wealth and birth. Third, to secure maximum benefit to society and true equality of opportunity for individuals, a wide range of studies should be offered in the university—the point being that if opportunity for advanced education was open to all but only a very few subjects were offered, there would really be very little opportunity.

The state university idea first developed in the southern and then in the midwestern states. Large federal land grants for education to the new western states were an important factor in this as well as the resistance of well-established private colleges in New England which greatly hindered the movement in that region. For instance, while a state like Massachusetts led in the establishment of free, public elementary schools, there was no strong movement to found a public university in that state during this period. Most of the leaders thought that the established private colleges could do the job of higher education in a satisfactory way.

Once the idea of the state university is clear, the distinctive character of the free public high school as it began to be conceived during this period can be understood. Essentially, what the high school tried to do was to bring together into one school two different functions of secondary education which have always been separated almost everywhere else in the world. The first of these functions was that of the Latin Grammar School—preparation for college. This in itself would have to be greatly broadened to take account of the idea that the state university would offer a variety of educational opportunities and provide leaders in business, commerce, agriculture, and the professions. The second function the secondary school would have to fulfill was that of the academies which had grown up in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in response to proposals like Franklin's—giving practical schooling to prepare young people for life as citizens, businessmen, and merchants. This type of education, given largely in pri-

vate academies where tuition was charged, was *terminal* rather than college preparatory education—terminal meaning that it was the final phase of an individual's formal schooling.

Now the heart of the high school idea was that both opportunities would be offered to young people who had the ability and initiative to profit from them. Students who had completed the work of the common elementary school and who wished to proceed further might then have the opportunity to go on either to schooling which would help them directly in the practical affairs of living or to schooling which would equip them to enter college and higher studies. Ideally, both courses would be free; and opportunity to take either would be based on desire and ability rather than on wealth or family.

What this conception of the high school does is once and for all establish a ladder system of education whereby an individual can start from the lowest rung and proceed as far as his ability allows. Thus was true equality of opportunity worked out in theory.

As has been said, far more attention was given before 1860 to securing universal education than to the establishment of wide opportunities for advanced education. Yet, both were clearly in the picture—so much so that before this time, the words *common schools* were being widely used in at least two ways. One referred to the *common schools* as elementary schools, open to all, ideally used by all, and supported and controlled by the public. The other referred to the *common school system*, by which was meant not only common elementary schools, but also free public high schools and, often, the state university. The two usages persist today, when often we hear a young person say: "I am finishing *public school* and am going on to *high school* in September." The student may well be going on to a *public high school*; yet, we use *public school* today sometimes to mean elementary school, and sometimes to mean any school supported by, controlled by, and open to the public.

By 1860, then, many Americans were talking about a common—or public—school system, one which would embrace children of all classes, religions, creeds, and national backgrounds at the elementary level, and offer equal opportunity for secondary and advanced study in a variety of fields. In this ideal lay the seeds of much that was distinctive in the American way of life.

*The Struggle to Establish**Public Schools*

The struggle of the American people to win for themselves the advantages of free public education is one of the great pageants of American history. Many young Americans who today enjoy the advantages of public schooling are completely unaware of the long, painful, and bitter battles that went into the winning of these advantages. As in any great struggle, the labors and hopes of thousands of men and women were involved; leaders like Horace Mann were only the generals of an army enrolling countless ordinary citizens. These were the men and women who supported the free school movement with their hard-earned dollars. They spent long nights in cold, improvised offices mailing out pamphlets, seeking financial support, and doing the thousand and one odd jobs demanded in any such great public effort. They offered their own homes for small gatherings of their neighbors; and they gave freely of their time in organizing the mass meetings necessary to publicize their cause. Without them, the battle would most certainly have been lost; for the public school idea as it originated in the years before 1860 could not have succeeded unless the people wanted it.

The opposition in the struggle came in many and various forms, and it was often well organized. There were, for example, those people who thought it a completely fantastic idea that everyone should go to school. "Children," wrote a correspondent to a North Carolina newspaper in 1829, "should pass their days in the cotton patch, or at the plow, or in the cornfield, instead of being mewed up in a school house, where they are learning nothing. . . . I hope you do not conceive it at all necessary," he continued, "that *everybody* should be able to read, write, and cipher." Some people argued that if everyone went to school, nobody would want to work any more, and society would be shaken to its very roots with extreme ideas. Others maintained that it was "highway robbery" to tax one man so that another man's child might be educated.

Some people argued that it might be all right to educate everyone, but that if the job were done in common schools where no sectarian religion could be taught, then a race of atheists would

be produced. In 1845, for example, the Presbyterian Synod of New Jersey expressed alarm that the "race of irreligious and infidel youth, such as may be expected to issue from public schools, deteriorating more and more, with revolving years will not be fit to sustain our free institutions." Presbyterians, of course, were by no means the only religious group to resist common schools on these grounds; other denominations loudly voiced the same fears. Nevertheless, people of many faiths were on both sides of the battle. Finally, there was resistance from certain immigrant groups who desired to have the language and customs of their European homelands perpetuated, through schooling, in the New World. Obviously, such a purpose could not be pursued in a common school attended by children from a variety of backgrounds. Here, then, was the opposition that had to be convinced or defeated before the struggle could be won.

The battle went on at the polls, in legislatures, and at state constitutional conventions. (Education had been left to the states by the Tenth Amendment to the federal Constitution, the one which left to the people all powers not specifically delegated to the federal government.) Inasmuch as different groups, issues, and ideas predominated in the several states, the battle came out in different ways. Often, states directly adjacent to one another differed tremendously in their educational progress. During the 1840's, for example, public elementary schools were widely preva-

These cartoons of the early 1900's might easily describe today's problems in education.



lent in North Carolina. South Carolina, on the other hand, lagged far behind. New York had a thriving public school system; New Jersey had none to speak of. All too often, the difference lay in whether or not the friends of the public school could arouse citizens to fight for school reform.

Sometimes, victories were won—that is, laws were passed setting up state-wide systems of free public schooling—in one year. But the next year brought disheartening defeats, and school laws were repealed. Other times, laws were put on the books, but local districts simply refused to obey them. It was a long uphill climb for those Americans who saw the need for universal public education.

In spite of differences from state to state, however, and in spite of the slow, uneven character of educational progress, by the year 1860 a design began to emerge. The direction of the movement was clear; and it was very much in the direction of the common school. The battle was being won. In most states, legislation permitting local districts to pay for public schools with tax money had been passed. In some, this taxation was compulsory. By 1860, according to census statistics, about five and a half million young Americans were enrolled in schools the nation over, and the majority of these were in public schools. In almost every state, agencies of state and local public control had been developed, so that American public schools were really controlled by public boards of citizens. These schools were what the leaders had proposed: they were attended by many different kinds of students; they taught the three R's and social and citizenship education; they were becoming increasingly non-sectarian; and they were controlled by the community they served.

Thus there was great progress on the elementary common school level. What of the other parts of the common school system: the free public high school and the state university? Here too, there were great struggles, but progress was made. While the real expansion of the American high school and state university came in the years after the War Between the States, the foundation of that expansion had clearly been laid before 1860.

The first public high school in the United States was established by the city of Boston in 1821. The school board there hoped it

would provide at no cost to Boston's children the kind of practical secondary education which the private academies were sponsoring for those who could afford to pay. Very quickly, the idea spread to other cities and towns in and out of Massachusetts. Moreover, since it was often impossible to establish two separate schools, one to offer terminal secondary education and one to offer college preparatory education, very early the cities began to establish high schools which offered both. By 1860, there were several hundred public high schools throughout the United States—concentrated in New England and the Middle West, to be sure, but present in all regions.

The state university, too, made progress. It goes without saying that all the arguments used to oppose common schools were also used to oppose state universities. Other arguments, however, were added. Some citizens argued that poor people never went to universities, so that any public money spent on universities would just be a present to the wealthy. Others argued that public universities could not possibly teach objectively because they would too easily fall under the sway of politicians. In spite of all obstacles, however, the number of state universities swelled, many in the midwestern states being aided by large federal land grants. By 1860, twenty of the thirty-three states then in the Union had founded state universities, and in many of these states, the university had been recognized as crowning the state's common school system, completing the ladder of educational opportunity to its highest rung.

Private Schools

What happened to the private schools during these years in which public education expanded so rapidly? Generally, private education seemed to flourish, but different things happened at different levels.

At the elementary level, many individual private schools continued their work and new ones were founded. Nevertheless, as the number of public schools grew, most religious denominations gave up the idea of maintaining full-time church day schools for

their children and turned their attention to developing first-rate Sunday Schools. The two notable exceptions were the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church, both of which continued to build and expand their parochial school systems. Believing that sectarian religious training must be the heart of all education, leaders of these denominations did not feel that common public schools could properly educate their children.

At the secondary level, a large number of private academies continued to serve certain special purposes which public schools could not; for example, the preparation of military leaders, or clergymen, or young ladies polished in the social graces. In addition, a number of independent schools continued to offer general secondary education, particularly in preparation for college.

At the college level, private educational activity far outstripped public educational activity. For example, over one hundred and fifty permanent colleges were founded by religious groups in the years before 1860. These colleges were seen by their founders as places where students might receive an education founded on religious doctrine and where future clergymen might be prepared for their duties. Many of these colleges later tended to become non-denominational, and today carry on their work as great non-sectarian universities serving students of all religious faiths and creeds.



By 1860, then, the public school had become a recognized part of American life. Already, visitors from Europe were beginning to take special interest in the positive influence of widespread popular education; and, as early as 1835, the distinguished French author, Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote that "the instruction of the people powerfully contributes to the support of the democratic republic." Yet, while the first battles had been won, many remained to be fought. The early victories were perhaps even more noteworthy for what they promised than for what they had accomplished; and it remained for the next generations of Americans to extend and improve the educational system which had been so well begun.



*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217-219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. Write a newspaper account about the establishment of the first public school in your community.
2. Find out what you can about the early development of public education in your state. Include the beginnings of public elementary, secondary, and higher education. Who were the men who led in the founding of public schools?
3. Conduct a debate concerning the principle of tax support for education such as might have taken place in your state legislature during the early days of the public school movement.
4. Find out what you can about one of the men who led in the founding of America's public schools. (See pp. 74-75.)
5. The founders of the common school hoped it would unite the children of many different kinds of people. Find out what different kinds of people attended the early common schools of your community. In your particular community, do you think the public schools have helped these people to understand and appreciate one another?



CHAPTER SIX



Extending and Improving Our Public Schools (1860–Present)

By 1860 the American people had decided to support a public school system stretching in a continuous ladder from the elementary school through the university. True, the idea was not accepted in every state with equal enthusiasm. In many states, few if any public schools had been built. Yet, probably at least half the nation's children between the ages of six and fifteen were already receiving some public schooling.

After 1860 great changes began to take place in young agricultural America—changes which were destined to create vast new demands on the public school system. The growth of technology and industry not only revolutionized ways of producing, buying, selling, and transporting goods; it also changed every aspect of American life. The invention of the automobile, for example, “put the nation on wheels”; it enabled Americans to get from place to place more easily and more rapidly than ever before. But it did more than this. It created new businesses like service stations and new occupations like truck driving. It created traffic courts, drive-in theaters, and motels. And it created millions of new jobs for American workers.

Closely connected with the rise of industry was the concentration of people in large cities—metropolitan centers where life was far more complex and impersonal than it had ever been in small rural neighborhoods. People now bought their food instead of growing it. They dealt daily with hundreds of men and women

Grip And Bear It



By Ulfrey

"Who says I don't take an interest in his education? . . . don't I complain about taxes, find fault with the system, criticize the teachers? . . ."

Courtesy of George Lichty and the Chicago Sun-Times Syndicate



"I'm in the fourth grade, third shift, second layer."

From The Herblock Book (Beacon Press)

whom they had never seen before and might never see again. They used complicated networks of transportation to take them to jobs located five, ten, twenty, or even fifty miles from home. And they faced vast new community problems like sewage disposal, police and fire protection, and public health service.

As political power shifted from local to state governments, and from state governments to federal authorities, new problems of citizen participation in politics also emerged. More and more citizens voluntarily organized to promote one cause or another, and labor unions, merchant and trade associations, veterans' organizations, fraternal clubs, and political leagues increased in number and power. As both the domestic and foreign affairs of the United States became more complicated, a host of new activities demanded citizen attention; and Mr. Average American was asked to keep abreast of issues running all the way from old-age insurance to administration of the Panama Canal.

Inevitably, such sweeping changes had important effects on education. Schools were asked to do more things for more people

than ever before in history. And what the American people found was that the ideal of public education developed in earlier decades provided an excellent model for the accomplishment of these tasks. Thus have the public schools been improved and extended to the point where they are today one of the largest single enterprises in which the American people engage.

Generally, the American people encouraged public education in at least three ways. *First*, they extended opportunity through numbers. This meant a continuing effort to include children of all classes, races, religions, and ethnic backgrounds in the common school as well as the continuing effort to provide equal opportunity for secondary and higher education to all on the basis of initiative and ability. *Second*, the American people extended educational opportunity by enriching the school program. Realizing that there is no true opportunity unless there is some opportunity for choice, they introduced into the school new programs of study which would improve talents and abilities of many different sorts. In this way young people who formerly would not have thought of secondary or higher education as "worth-while" now began to realize there was something for them in public education. *Third*, the American people extended educational opportunity by improving the quality of teaching. By using the research findings of the teaching profession, they found that many a student "failure" was a failure on the part of the teacher and the school rather than on the part of the student. By employing new techniques, schools vastly improved the efficiency of instruction, thereby gaining more educational returns per dollar and per hour spent. In these three ways, the American people tried to realize the true ideal of the common school. In doing so, they secured tremendous advantages for themselves and their children.

Extending Opportunity

Through Numbers

One of the first questions that came up after the War Between the States was the education of Negro Americans. For years, members of the Negro race had been denied the chance to be educated. Now, the Emancipation Proclamation as well as the

Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the federal Constitution had conferred citizenship upon the Negro. Was he not entitled to the rights of a common school education?

As one might expect, different states solved the problem in different ways. In some, Negro children were accorded full rights, and attended the nearest public school with members of other races. In other states—particularly those where slavery had existed—separate public school systems were established for Negro children. While these schools undoubtedly gave them educational advantages far better than those available before, and while they were legally supposed to be equal in quality to the white schools (they rarely were, however), the existence of this dual system violated the ideal of a common school really open to all citizens on an equal basis. This shortcoming was finally recognized in law when the United States Supreme Court in 1954 declared unconstitutional the principle of educational segregation on the basis of race.

The question of educating Negro children simply highlighted the general problem of what groups the common school would include. In some sections of the nation, the question revolved around Chinese- or Japanese-Americans. In others, it involved Americans of Mexican ancestry. In addition, there were many questions regarding whether or not deaf, dumb, blind, or crippled children would attend common schools. In a way, all these issues really centered in the problem of how common the common schools were to be.

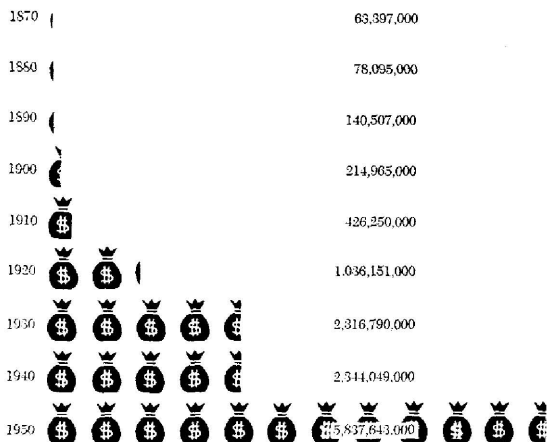
As the arguments over these questions waxed violent and as solutions began to emerge, common school enrollments continued to rise. By 1875, every state in the Union had established a public school system, and public schooling had become predominant. In addition, many states began to pass laws making school attendance compulsory for children of certain ages. Massachusetts started it in 1852 by passing the first modern compulsory attendance law in the United States. State after state followed suit, deciding that not only was education beneficial for citizens-to-be, but absolutely necessary.

By 1918, when Mississippi passed a compulsory attendance law, the practice had become national. The compulsory attendance laws did not compel students to attend only *public* schools.

What they did require was attendance at a school certified by the state authorities. But since public schools greatly outnumbered all others, their enrollments were tremendously expanded by the legislation. There were 12,520,000 children in public elementary schools in 1890, 19,378,000 by 1920, and 19,404,000 by 1950. In view of the high birth rate of the 1940's, Americans can expect the rise in the public elementary school population to continue during the 1950's, with the number of students coming close to 30,000,000 by the end of the decade.

As the movement toward nation-wide elementary education gained headway, so did the movement to extend opportunity for further education. High schools became more numerous after the War Between the States as local district after local district appropriated the funds for secondary instruction. When angry taxpayers went to court to argue that school boards had no right to extend the scope of public education in this way, the courts ruled

TOTAL EXPENDITURES ON PUBLIC EDUCATION



Each symbol represents \$500,000,000.

against them. In one of the most noted of these opinions, the famous Kalamazoo Decision of the Michigan Supreme Court (1874), the court ruled that there was no limit to the scope or level of studies that a local school board might provide for the children of its district.

With the principle of the Kalamazoo Decision gaining acceptance in the courts of other states, the way was cleared for districts throughout the nation to provide high school opportunities for growing numbers of young Americans. As a result, beginning in 1890, the high school population doubled every ten years. Moreover, as the principle of compulsory education took root, some states began to include in the minimum schooling requirement some high school training for all children. By the end of World War I, American high schools enrolled more children than all the rest of the secondary schools in the world put together; and American educators were optimistically talking about a goal which would have been unheard of twenty-five years before: secondary education for *all* American young people.

This goal was not an unrealistic one. Attendance at high schools increased during the 1920's; and during the Great Depression of the 1930's, with no place to go and employment terribly hard to find, thousands of young Americans remained in high school in an effort to improve their skills and therefore make it possible to get jobs. Although the *number* of all school enrollments fell during the early 1940's (reflecting the lowered birth rate of the depression years), actually a higher *percentage* of American youth attended secondary school. By 1950, public high school enrollments were approaching 6,000,000, with the expectation of tremendous increases in the decade to come.

Higher education was also affected. As secondary school opportunities increased, young people found themselves able to get the studies needed for college entrance. And as more and more jobs went to "college-trained men," young men and women eagerly sought the opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills. Because of this, enrollments at the college level continued to show the same upward trend as enrollments at other levels. By 1920, 600,000 young men and women were enrolled in America's colleges and universities; by 1940 the figure had risen to 1,500,000. When, after World War II, Congress included

educational benefits for veterans in the G.I. Bill of Rights, college enrollments jumped again; and by 1950, 2,500,000 Americans were in colleges and universities. Moreover, some educators are predicting that if certain enrollment trends continue, the figure will reach 3,000,000 by 1960. While the enrollment of 1950 was about evenly divided between public and private institutions, there are many indications that the public colleges and universities will carry the principal load of increased attendance in the years to come.

In these ways, the original idea of universal education came more and more to be realized as America "grew up." By 1950, almost all American children were attending elementary school, with 87 per cent of these in public elementary schools. The other 13 per cent went to private schools, whose right to carry on their work under general state supervision had been guaranteed by a decision of the United States Supreme Court in 1925. In 1950, too, around 85 per cent of America's teen-age youth were attending high school, and over 90 per cent of these were in public high schools. As a matter of fact, so close were educators to realizing their dreams of having all American youth in high schools that some were already beginning to talk about twelve years of schooling for every American child, with opportunities for further education in college open to all on the basis of talent and ability. Indeed, the demand for higher education increased so sharply that in 1947 President Truman appointed a commission to study ways in which American colleges and universities might rise to the task. Statesmen and educators alike realized that only when all those who were capable of profiting from higher education could obtain it, would the American people be making fullest use of their own powers.

Extending Opportunity by

Enriching the School Program

One thing is certain: the millions of young Americans who flocked in increasing numbers to American public schools would not have done so had these schools not offered something valuable and worth-while. One may argue that the young Americans had

no choice; compulsory attendance laws backed by truant officers forced them to attend. Nevertheless, the argument fails to take account of two facts: *first*, the unmistakable fact that millions of young Americans continued in school long after their minimum, compulsory attendance period had expired; and *second*, the fact that American parents would never have voted support for these schools and would never have favored compulsory attendance had they not been convinced that the benefits of schooling to the young were more than worth the effort.

Probably the outstanding characteristic of the school program during the years after 1860 was its continued expansion at all levels. At the elementary level, science, music, drawing, physical training, cooking, and sewing were added to the reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, geography, and history of the older schools. What this broadly expanded program did was to give children the opportunity to improve many more of their abilities than they could have done in schools before 1860. After the turn of the century, teachers were influenced by new ideas from European educators, like Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart, and by the Americans, Dewey and Parker. Elementary school teachers talked about developing the "whole child"—by which they meant that activities and studies in the arts and in bodily health were perhaps quite as important to the lives of normal healthy people as activities in reading and writing.

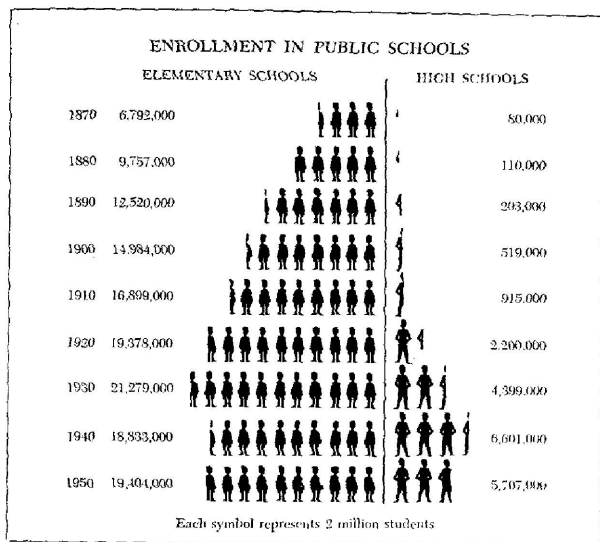
At the secondary school level, the expansion of the school program was even more pronounced. Perhaps of greatest importance was the introduction of vocational subjects into the schools. Benjamin Franklin's advice that secondary schools should prepare young people for life was taken quite seriously; and hundreds of courses seeking to prepare students for trade, industrial, commercial, and agricultural positions were added to the high school curriculum. For girls, there was work in homemaking, cooking, and domestic science, for this, too, was in the very best sense preparation for life.

Other subject areas added to the secondary school program reflected the growing influence of science and technology in American life. For both college preparatory and terminal students, instruction in the natural sciences was thought to be important. For the terminal students who would complete their education on

graduating from high school, an understanding of science would be of great aid in facing the complicated industrial world of the twentieth century. For those who would enter college, high school courses in natural science would be a key to new and vastly useful areas of knowledge. Much the same point could also be made about the new social sciences which came into the high school program: the civics and government, which later combined with history and geography to form the social studies. Then, too, modern foreign languages were added to the secondary school curriculum along with the English, Latin, and Greek which had been present since the earliest days. Finally, attention to the arts and physical education continued at the secondary level the effort to educate "the whole person."

When young people entered these expanding high schools, they could, with guidance, choose the program of studies best suited to their abilities and interests. To be sure, some studies like English, American history, or physical education were valuable for all. Nevertheless, all high school students did not have to learn the same things. Some young people took the vocational or trade courses; others took the commercial courses. Some, although they were terminal students, took more general work in a variety of fields—seeking a well-rounded education which they hoped would prepare them for whatever they eventually did. Others, preparing for college, took more of the social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, and languages—thereby anticipating some or all of these emphases in their college program. What continued to characterize the American high school, however, was that although some specialized vocational, or industrial, or commercial schools were established, most high schools remained *comprehensive* high schools—schools in which a student could pursue any one of many courses, and schools in which students pursuing many different courses and goals attended together.

Higher education followed much the same pattern. There was a vast expansion in the fields of natural sciences, social sciences, and training for the professions. Many institutions which had formerly been narrow and limited colleges now expanded into great universities embracing schools of law, medicine, theology, business, education, engineering, pharmacy, and library service. Graduate facilities for research in many fields helped bring about



enormous increases in knowledge. Indeed, many institutions where formerly professors had taught and students had simply memorized what they taught, now became centers where students and faculty investigated new fields of knowledge together.

Sometimes teachers in controversial areas like economics, politics, or sociology came up with conclusions which were not in agreement with the conclusions of certain powerful men or groups in the community. Then pressure was often brought to keep the teachers from publishing their findings, or even to have them discharged from their posts. This was the case with some professors who urged the free coinage of silver during the 1890's, or with other professors who were sympathetic to the Central Powers when the United States was a neutral between 1914 and 1917. When other citizen groups fought to preserve the rights of professors to teach and publish controversial findings, sharp conflicts

ensued, and the whole question of academic freedom—the freedom to teach and to inquire—was brought into the open.

As in the high school, students were more and more allowed to elect their courses. Unlike the college of colonial America, where it was assumed that all students could be put in touch with most of the world's important knowledge, the colleges of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century America increasingly assumed that no student could ever hope to learn everything about everything. Rather, students would be given a good deal of freedom to pick and choose according to their ability and interest after they had been generally introduced to the major fields of human knowledge.

Extending Opportunity by

Improving the Quality of Teaching

No school is better than its teachers; and no school program can rise above the quality of its teachers. Therefore, a third way in which American public schools extended opportunity after 1860 was by improving the quality of teaching at all levels.

Colonial teachers had varied widely in their competence and preparation. Some were graduates of Harvard or one of the other colonial colleges. Others were completely incompetent to deal with young people. In fact, histories of the teaching profession point out that all too often the teacher's job in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries went to men or women who were unfit to do anything else and who needed work to keep alive.

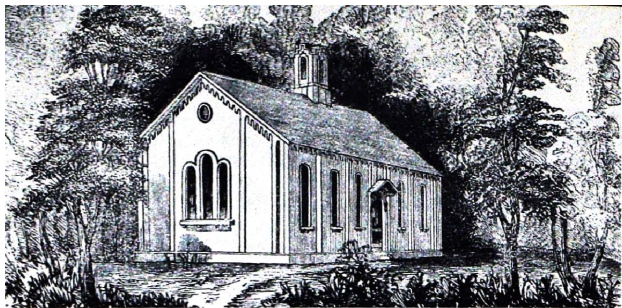
When Americans in the 1830's and 1840's developed the ideal of the common school, they well realized that schools could not possibly succeed without competent teachers. Too much depended on the success of public education to entrust it to the hands of untrained adults. Therefore, very early in the history of our public schools, there were demands for teachers who were specially trained for their work. Not only must they know subject matter such as history, arithmetic, or physics; they must also understand children, how they differ, and how they learn; and they must also acquire the skills for teaching children of differing abilities. In other words, if the American people were to build a

common school system which would ideally serve children of all kinds, they would have to prepare teachers who could teach these many different children so that each one would benefit in his own way from that teaching.

In order to provide this critically important knowledge about children, about society, and about the learning process, in addition to knowledge about subject matter, a variety of institutions came into being: normal schools (teacher-training schools), teachers' colleges, schools and colleges of education, and departments of education in colleges and universities. As professors of education began to carry on their research into ways of preparing better teachers, they began to develop a body of knowledge about the educational process. The application of this knowledge in a growing number of schools by a growing number of well prepared teachers began vastly to improve the quality of American public education.

In the first place, the new research began to tell teachers about differences in the abilities and interests of children and how these differences affect learning. It began to tell also about how learning takes place, and the conditions under which it takes place most efficiently. Other research began to give information on how young people grow and develop into adults. More and more, teachers began to realize that learning does not go on in a social vacuum, and that the physical and emotional health of a child in many respects determines whether or not he will learn and how well he will learn. They began to find also that young people mature at different rates in different areas—that physically, a young man of thirteen might be as well developed as a young man of eighteen, but that emotionally, the same young man might act most often like a ten-year-old. Given these differences, teachers began to realize the importance of tailoring their teaching to the young people actually being taught instead of to some mistaken notion of what the young people *ought* to be like or *were* like twenty years before.

Finally, research in education began to grapple with the problem of designing school programs that would *specifically* and *directly* advance the values and loyalties of a democratic society. Formerly, unprepared teachers had taught children as if their teaching had nothing to do with the kind of society in which



Barnard's School Architecture, A. S. Barnes & Co. 1848

The nineteenth-century school was usually a small building which rarely had good light or ventilation.

those children were to live. They assumed that good school programs look good in any locality and at any time. Now, particularly as fascist and communist dictators have shown the world how certain kinds of schools can be used to support a totalitarian way of life, American educators realize more clearly than ever that the responsibilities of democratic citizenship demand very special kinds of learning which cannot be ignored.

In these and a thousand other ways, professional educators improved the quality of American schooling. In 1850, few if any teachers had professional education worthy of the name. The best professional education consisted only of a few "tricks of the trade." Now, a hundred years later, states throughout the nation are demanding of every teacher evidence of competence in general and professional subjects.



By 1955, public education systems, enormously expanded and improved since 1860, embraced over 30,000,000 children at the elementary and secondary level, while over a million men and women attended public colleges and universities of all kinds. Americans studied a vast number of subjects, ranging from Latin to science, from physics to hotel management, from mathematics to baseball. In the schoolroom of mid-twentieth century America, there was a vast number of aids to help the

teacher teach and to help the student learn—motion picture projectors, radios, tape recorders, television sets, scientific laboratory equipment, posters, graphs, books, and pamphlets. All had been specially designed to do a job which the American people had early in their career as a nation decided had to be done—the education of generation after generation of citizens for responsible participation in life as free men and women.



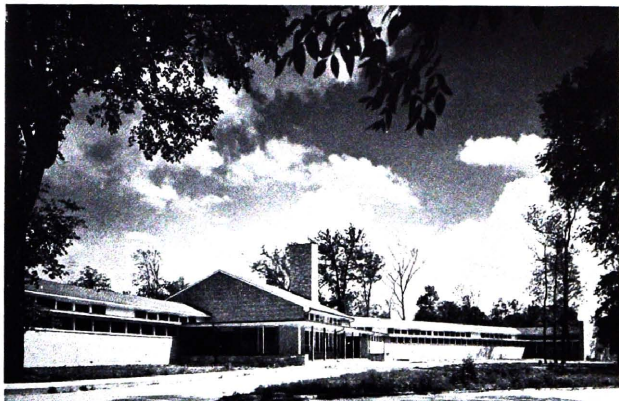
*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217–219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. Compare the earliest high school yearbook you can find with the most recent. What differences and similarities do you see in:
 - (a) the students in the graduating class?
 - (b) the size of the graduating class?

Large and airy buildings, with separate classrooms for every age level, are characteristic of today's educational institutions.

Perkins & Will, architects; Hedrich-Blessing Studio



- (c) the kinds of class activities and out-of-class activities?
- (d) the subjects covered in the school program?
- (e) the number of teachers on the faculty?
- (f) the kinds of teachers on the faculty?
- (g) the appearance of the school building and equipment?

2. Try to find out who was the first high school principal in your community. Compare his education with that of the man who is now principal of your high school. What differences do you think are important?

3. Obtain the earliest elementary school or high school textbook you can find. Compare it with a present-day text in the same subject. What similarities and differences do you find (a) in what the book discusses; (b) in the questions asked of students and the activities suggested to them; and (c) in the illustrations? What conclusions do you draw?

4. Prepare a magazine article dealing with the ways in which your state or local community has expanded educational opportunity during the past half century.

PART THREE



Photo by Bob Hartwig, Flint, Michigan



Part Three



WHAT OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE TRYING TO DO

The problem of what should be taught in our public schools is not an easy one to solve. There are different ways of deciding what are the most important things to learn in school, and there are different ways of learning. How do our school activities fit into the picture? Why are they organized as they are? Why do teachers conduct their classes as they do? Why do we manage our schools on a local basis instead of having a national system as do some other countries? These questions are all involved in understanding what our schools are trying to do.

We have already said a great deal about what our public schools are trying to do. We saw that the schools involve not only the activities, but also the dreams and aspirations of three kinds of people. All of these people—students, professional educators, and other citizens—have certain things in mind which they believe the schools should do.

We discovered that our public schools were established and organized to give our people the kinds of skills and attitudes they considered most desirable. During each period of our history the American people expanded their schools to provide new and different educational opportunities.

In discussing what the schools ought to do, people have drawn up many lists of educational goals. In 1918, for example, the Na-

tional Education Association's Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education listed seven objectives towards which the school should aim. These *Seven Cardinal Principles* were health, command of the fundamental processes of learning, worthy home membership, vocational efficiency, civic participation, worthy use of leisure time, and ethical character.

In 1938, the Educational Policies Commission, which represents two of our major organized groups of educators, the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators, restudied the problem and suggested four sets of goals which they described under the headings of self-realization, human relationships, economic efficiency, and civic responsibility. Under each of these headings they listed a number of things which they considered the marks of an educated person.

Such lists provide some rather vague and general guides for organizing our school activities. They do not, however, carry us very far in answering specific questions about which of the many school activities should be stressed. Moreover, such lists of goals are largely meaningless until we give attention to ways of reaching them.

What are our schools really trying to do? To answer that question we must first look for clues to help us decide the most important things to teach. In order to understand the reasons behind the course of study in our schools, we must investigate the problem of how people learn. Finally, to appreciate the full scope of the problem, we must understand how our communities organize, supervise, and pay for their schools.



CHAPTER SEVEN



Deciding What Our Public Schools Should Do

MANY decisions about what our schools ought to do are made by the democratic processes of argument, persuasion, and voting. Our schools are organized to make it as easy as possible for everyone to have his say in making these decisions.

But the best of such decisions are made on the basis of principles that have been tried and tested. If we look carefully at each other's ideas about what the schools should do, we discover certain similarities. These similarities exist partly because as Americans we share a common historical tradition and life. Moreover, as human beings we are much alike, grow to some extent in the same manner, and have some of the same needs and abilities.

In this common experience we can find four principles which help us to understand what the school is trying to do and to judge what it ought to do. First, at each stage of life there are certain things which must be learned at that special time so we can continue to grow healthily. Second, there are many different kinds of learning, all of which are important. Third, the conditions of living together in our times make it necessary to develop certain skills and attitudes in all of our people. Finally, the school must stress that learning which it alone can best provide, and depend on such groups as the family and the church to do other teaching. Each of these principles suggests certain specific things which the school must do.

What We Need to Learn at

Different Stages of Life

Do you recall little Jimmy Levine, the Maplewood kindergarten student? When Jimmy started to school the shock of leaving home was hard to take. As a tiny baby Jimmy could not feel the difference between himself and the rest of the world. He didn't know the difference between his own toe and the nose of his teddy bear—he bit them both in the same way. Jimmy and the world—one and everything—seemed warm and cozy and safe. If things weren't right, a sound came out of Jimmy and things were made right. Gradually he learned that Jimmy was "baby" and everything else something different. He discovered that the sound came out of "baby" when he wanted it to, and that the "fixer" was "mommy" or "daddy." Yet everything around was still familiar and friendly and safe. When Jimmy went somewhere new, part of the safeness, mommy or daddy, was always close by.

By the time he was five, Jimmy well knew the difference between himself and others. It was time to learn to be happy in a world peopled by strangers as well as friends. If he didn't learn this, and if he didn't learn to be comfortable when his mother and father were absent, he would miss a lot of the most important and pleasant experiences of life. Many of these experiences demand that the child have confidence and ability to do things for himself and to work with people outside of his own family.

To have a good life Jimmy must, between the ages of four and seven, make this painful break with home. He must also learn to *feel* right in doing so. This has to happen in some form. It can best happen if someone who understands his feelings is around to help. Besides learning this, you remember that Jimmy also started in the kindergarten to get ready to use more words and books. These and other tools of learning will be essential as he grows older.

Now let us think again of Dorothy Kelly. You remember that Dorothy was having a hard time with her reading and other school work. Because of this she was becoming unpopular with her classmates and friends. If this condition had not been taken care of at the right time at least two unfortunate things might have resulted.

In the first place, Dorothy's ability to succeed as a student and, therefore, to learn the things which the later years of education offer would have been limited. In the second place, her social success, her popularity with other children, would have suffered. This seems tragic at any age. Her ability to learn as well as her happiness were at stake; so was her health. In fact, as you recall, taking care of her health problem was the only way the other threatening results could be avoided.

This had to be done at a particular time and at a particular stage of Dorothy's development. The reading problem, for example, did not become serious until her classmates began to move ahead. At that point, if remedial work had been delayed, the difficulty of correcting problems would have greatly increased.

Jack Brown and Jean Swenson are older, as you recall. Both have reached the age when they begin to think about making a living. Finding satisfactory employment, and being prepared for it, have become highly important to them. Similarly, Bob Hopkins and Mary Smith are beginning to wonder about their life work, but both of them have thought about careers which demand further schooling. Even to prepare for college, in which they will eventually learn the skills needed for their professions, Bob and Mary need to build up tools for the kind of studying and learning they will do in college.

While Jack and Jean need to learn *directly* the skills they will use on the job, Bob and Mary must learn *preliminary skills to use later as tools in learning* actual job skills. All of these high school students have reached the age where adult employment is possible. All have become interested in things which their parents will not be able to provide much longer. This forces them to face the *problem* of vocational choice. They may, as Bob hopes to do, put off the actual choice for some years so they can more fully explore their vocational interests, but simply because they are adolescents they must *face up to* the problem.

In addition, Bob, Jean, Mary, and Jack are also working out new kinds of relationships with each other. As they have moved into physical adulthood, they have encountered new adult feelings about sex and new adult responsibilities. This need to work out a new set of relationships with each other, with their parents, and with the adult world as a whole has become critical because

of the age they have attained. Their friends, the dances, the ball games, the parties, the part-time jobs, group work in classes, and dozens of other activities provide the stage on which the new relationships are learned. The important idea is that the new relationships must be learned at this particular time.

Then there is Mrs. Brooks. Mrs. Brooks, you remember, is one of the women taking night classes in cooking. Such instruction did not seem very important to her in her high school days. Now, since she has become a housekeeper, wife, and mother, she realizes its importance.

We started this chapter with the case of Jimmy, aged five, and have looked at some of the problems of Dorothy Kelly, a fourth-grade student, the four high school students, and Mrs. Brooks, the young adult. What pattern or system of desires can you see in each of these seven cases?

Did you notice that at each age a different kind of problem, demanding a different kind of education appeared? At age five, the need was to learn to be more independent of home and more at ease with social groups. Jimmy also needed to get ready for training in certain skills like reading and writing.

Around the age of ten, Dorothy Kelly's inability to succeed in reading and certain other school work was becoming a problem. By the time the adolescent years come around the problems of vocational choice, of automobile driving, of boy-girl relationships, and of taking over adult responsibilities become important. To the young married adult still another set of problems comes to the fore.

Thus we see that there are certain things which must be learned at particular stages as one grows up in America. In other societies, or in different regions or groups within our own society, these things may vary. Yet a careful study of the stages through which a boy or a girl develops into a man or a woman helps us to discover and to judge various educational goals. Here we have one guiding principle: *at each age attention must first be given to those things which can most effectively be learned at that particular stage of development.* The exact time at which the various needs emerge varies from person to person and from social group to social group; yet for any person they must be met as they emerge.

The Many Different

Kinds of Learning

If we examine once more the experiences of the students discussed in this chapter, we discover a second principle which will help us to organize our thinking about educational goals.

The things which one must learn at different times seem to be of different types. First we saw certain needs having to do with the way one feels about himself and others. For example, Jimmy needed to acquire a feeling of being safe and comfortable away from his family. Dorothy needed to get over feeling that the children disliked her because she was "stupid." Then she had to recover from her fear that the hearing aid would make her seem "ugly." Mary Smith and Jack Brown had to work out a way of being friendly, even though each found some things he disliked about the other. Bob Hopkins was mixed up because he wanted, on the one hand, to please his parents by being a doctor and, on the other hand, to satisfy his own vocational desires. Here, then, is one kind of learning.

A second kind of learning has to do with certain practical skills. Jack Brown wants to learn to repair cars; Jean Swensen wants to learn to type; and Mrs. Brooks wants to learn to cook. Obviously these skills, and the other types we are here discussing, involve *knowing* certain factual material as well as *doing* something well.

The third kind of learning also involves knowledge and skills, but for a different purpose. These skills are *tools* which can be used for learning other things. For example, Jimmy Levine is learning to pick different items out of a picture. Eventually this skill will help him to recognize different words in reading. But reading is a tool which can be used, in turn, to learn about science, about other people, about religion, or about any other branch of human knowledge. The arithmetic which he will begin to study in the years to come is also one of the tools for learning, although it too has direct practical use. However, some of the tools which people need for effective learning and thinking are more complicated.

An example of these more complicated tools for learning and



Civil Aeronautics Administration

It is necessary to learn certain things in order to master those more difficult. Elementary students learn basic information about geography.

thinking can be seen if we examine the hopes of Mary Smith to be a scientist. Let us assume that she hopes eventually to do cancer research. This research involves the use of microscopes, dissecting instruments, and other laboratory equipment. Yet it also demands, if Mary hopes to go very far, knowledge about different kinds of body cells, a part of the science which we call anatomy. Anatomy itself is very complicated. Its many divisions cannot be studied, remembered, and used unless its facts are arranged in an effective order. Therefore, before she can learn anatomy well, Mary must learn how to arrange and classify different kinds of facts about living things. This, broadly speaking, is the subject of biology.

Thus we see that before Mary can do effective cancer research she must study anatomy, and before she can effectively study anatomy, she must have mastered the general thought-tools of the biologist. Actually, there are many additional links in the chain of thought-tools leading to efficient scientific study, but these are enough to illustrate the point. Such thought-tools must be mas-

tered before one can learn what is needed to practice engineering, law, medicine, and other vocations. This is one of the reasons why college education is required of those who want to enter such professions.

These thought-tools, which are systematic ways of learning and of solving problems, include such things as laboratory techniques and other scientific methods, mathematics, the method of historical thought, the laws of grammar, guides for logical thinking, skills in finding and judging library information, and many others. In these times every vocation, including the common one of good citizenship, demands some ability to use many of these thought-tools. Incidentally, on the higher levels such tools are often called "disciplines," as they enable us to organize, classify, expand, and correct our knowledge.

In thinking about what people need to know in order to move effectively from one phase in life to the next, we have seen that they need at least three kinds of learning: (1) they must make

As they climb into the higher grades, students apply basic information about geography to discussions of world problems and politics.

Philadelphia Suburban School Study Council; photo by Robert L. Mooney



new and more effective social and emotional adjustments; (2) they must learn certain immediately practical skills; and (3) they must learn to use certain thought-tools which are needed for further learning and for work habits at a more advanced level.

This analysis simply makes clear a second principle for influencing educational goals: namely, *the school must provide for different kinds of learning, some of which are directly useful, and some of which are valuable as instruments or tools for further learning.*

In discussing this principle we have pointed to several things which must be learned by all people. All must come to know themselves and to feel right with the world. All must learn certain directly useful skills involved in basic living, such as being able to understand the language and to do elementary arithmetic. Moreover, everyone must learn to use some of the thought-tools on which further learning depends. The citizen facing a political problem, or trying to make up his mind about housing, must have some skills, too, in gathering information.

However, since our goals in life vary, some directly useful skills and some thought-tools are especially important to certain of us but not to others. The school program must be broad enough to give each what he needs.

In practice these three kinds of learning are all involved at the same time. This can be seen in the case of Dorothy Kelly whose physical problem hindered her ability to develop skills (both directly useful ones and thought-tools for further learning). This lack of ability then created emotional problems growing out of an unsatisfactory relationship with her classmates. These different kinds of needs all operate together within any particular person. If one is neglected, all may suffer; if one is improved, it usually leads to improvement in all.

What We Need to

Learn to Live Together

But, as we have seen, schools are maintained by groups who want certain kinds of behavior not only from themselves but from their neighbors. There are *social* goals as well as *personal* goals of

education. Let us take one of Maplewood's high school students to see what this means. It doesn't really matter which; let's use Jack Brown for example.

If he has his way Jack will, in a few years, have a service station of his own. He will spend his days operating it and doing odd bits of automotive repair. He will have a home on the east side where he and his wife will occasionally entertain their friends at pinochle parties. Probably Jack will belong to the bowling league which meets each week. He may or may not go to church, and, if left to himself, will have little interest in politics or in labor-management problems, except when a strike prevents his getting the supplies he needs.

But Jack's future neighbors, customers, and friends will not, and cannot, leave him to himself. We have already seen some of them in action in Chapter Three. We know that the president of the taxpayers' organization hopes Jack will be the kind of person who will support that organization in its efforts to reduce the spending of money on schools, roads, police protection, and city government. The president of the P.T.A., on the other hand, hopes that Jack and his wife will vigorously support civic improvements. The president of the local minister's council thinks Jack should be educated to become a good church-goer and to support the church in its building program and other activities. The Chamber of Commerce hopes that Jack will support them in their political efforts to obtain laws improving business conditions. They know, also, that there will be cases of disagreement between business and labor, or between business and the consumers. In such cases they believe that Jack should be prepared to understand their point of view. On the other hand, as you recall, the Labor Council hopes that Jack will be sympathetic to unions in their fight for benefits. Mrs. Kahn, from the P.T.A., is anxious that Jack learn to be a careful and skillful driver, while Tom Halliday and Dick Fisher hope that he will actively support and defend their version of "the American way of life."

Jack wants the school to do certain things *for* him so he can live the kind of life he wants to live. His neighbors, on the other hand, expect the school to do certain things *to* him so that he will be the kind of a community member with whom they can live peacefully and work effectively. They have a right to expect these things be-

cause Jack's behavior affects their lives in many ways. If he and others like him vote intelligently, the whole community profits. If he is lawless, the whole community is threatened and must pay the cost of policing his actions. If he fails to support his family, the community will have to do so. And if he publicly violates the ethics of the community, there will be less chance for good faith and mutual respect among its members.

How can the people of Maplewood determine which of the social goals are most important? The desires of the various groups provide clues, but more than these clues are needed if our long-range educational planning is to be effective. There needs to be a careful study of the problems which America faces, and education must be operated in terms of these problems.

Some of these problems are more important than others. Perhaps none is so important as that of freedom. Americans have always believed that the individual is endowed with certain inalienable rights. They have, therefore, insisted that each must respect the dignity and freedom of every other. Each expects his neighbor to be educated concerning the responsibility to protect freedom for all.

Frequently threats to freedom come from other nations, and the individual depends on this nation being strong enough and wise enough to protect itself against such threats. Each has the right to expect that others will be educated to play their part in these efforts. Such an education includes a thorough understanding of the world in which we live.

At present time, for example, Americans see international communism as one of the most serious threats to their freedom. Not too long ago, it was fascism and nazism which menaced the democratic nations of the world. In deciding how to meet these threats, we must have citizens who thoroughly understand their nature, citizens who know the differences between totalitarian and democratic ways of life.

The defense of liberty from outside threats, as well as from those within, demands a reasonable unity of purpose among our people. Such unity is possible only among groups which understand and respect each other. Arguments and quarrels among our largest and most powerful groups are most dangerous. Therefore, the nature of these groups and their competing hopes must be

carefully studied and understood by all. For this reason the Chamber of Commerce and the Labor Council, which represent groups powerful enough so that unrestrained fighting between them would destroy our society, are wise in wanting their points of view to be widely understood by everyone.

Other conflicts which might destroy our society can easily arise if we permit groups to develop which insist on settling arguments by lies, subversion, smears, and force, instead of by the free exchange of ideas and by honest persuasion. There can be no compromise on this principle if freedom is to be preserved. Every citizen must be educated to rely on democratic processes himself. He must also be given the skills needed to see through the lies of the subversives.

Needless to say, recent history has made it quite clear that the anti-freedom forces wear many faces: sometimes they call themselves the "friends of labor"; sometimes, the "friends of business"; sometimes, the "100 per cent Americans" or the "friends of the people"; sometimes, they are "anti-fascist," or "anti-communists." Our citizens have to be educated to see behind the mask of fine sounding words.

There are still other sources of possible conflict between groups which our citizens must learn to keep within reasonable bounds. There is at present, for example, not too much open conflict between churches. Yet history makes it clear that there is danger from this source unless church members have the proper respect for religious freedom and the democratic way. The same thing is true of inter-racial conflicts.

These are only a few of the problems which are critical to our society. There are many others: (a) the possibility of economic depression, (b) the problems of making our cities more livable, (c) the need to educate people who can live happily and assume responsibility in a world of rapid change and great technological advancement, and (d) the problems of new ways of using our time and powers.

The point is, however, to see here a *third principle* for deciding what the schools ought to do. *In deciding educational goals, a constant study must be made of the problems which face our society and in terms of which the individual must be educated.*

The kinds of learning required to meet these problems are the

same ones noted earlier; they include attitudes, knowledge, and skill in critical intelligent judgment. For example, Jack needs to *feel* friendly toward both business and labor; he must *know* the facts about the economic situation; he must have the skill to *judge intelligently* and *act effectively* in respect to the issues, and he must *recognize a personal responsibility* to do so.

The Things We Can Best

Learn in School

All living is education, and every human group or activity—the family, the club, the church, the job, the playground, the government, and the school—educates. Everyone recognizes that a person must somewhere learn an endless number of things. He must learn to walk, to dress in the approved custom, to laugh at the right time, to cry only when it is proper, to care for his health, to find recreation, to use tools, to tie a tie, to drive a car, to count, to cross a street, to wash before meals, to follow directions, to recognize friends, to think scientifically, to understand and respect the religious aspect of life, to raise his children, to vote wisely, to earn his living, to buy intelligently, and a thousand other things. No one pretends that all of these are equally important or that the school can assume responsibility for all of them. But this raises a question. How are we to decide which are primarily the responsibility of the schools and which should better be left to the church, the home, or other agencies?

The best guide in answering this question is to study the way the American people go about the business of efficient group living and of giving each individual a chance to get the things he wants out of life.

Such a study reveals that groups of people, small and large, share certain basic human needs, and that different groups have different social instruments or agencies for meeting these needs. The social scientists sometimes call such social instruments “institutions,” but they use the word a little differently than do most of us. To them an “institution” is a whole series of ways of thinking and acting, individually and in groups, by which a people meet a common and essential human need.

Thus, for example, the religious "institution" in America includes not only formal church congregations and buildings. It also includes the kinds of problems we think of as "religious," the ideas involved, the rituals, the books, and the way we think of religion as being related to the family and other social groups.

If we look at the total range of basic human needs, it is apparent that there are also (a) family institutions, for bringing children into the world and rearing them; (b) economic institutions, for organizing, producing, and distributing goods and services; (c) political institutions, for regulating governmental power and deciding common policy; (d) health institutions; (e) educational institutions; and (f) recreational institutions.

Americans, in working out their hopes for the future, often modify their institutions to achieve desirable goals. If it becomes apparent that certain groups cannot make an adequate living we adjust our economic institutions. We may, for example, organize a labor union or provide supports for farm prices. On other occasions we may change our family customs, our religious habits, or our political ideas.

An intelligent society gives thought to the way it uses its social instruments—its institutions. Such a group of people uses each institution so that it will provide the greatest service and yet work smoothly with other institutions. This involves thinking carefully about the kinds of jobs each institution can best do, and about the important jobs which will be neglected unless they are cared for by a particular one. It is necessary for those directing an institution to look first to the essential jobs which it alone can do.

The point can be illustrated by recalling an embarrassing experience which Joe Randolph had last fall. Joe was playing center on the junior high football team in a crucial game with one of the neighboring schools. His team was fighting a bitter 6-6 battle and found itself backed to the goal in the fourth quarter. The only hope was to kick out of danger.

Joe was, of course, young and inexperienced. In fact this was his first game in competition with another school. As he lined up to center the ball, his mind was on several things. He was expected to delay the opposing guard long enough so that the kick would not be blocked, and then to charge downfield to make the tackle if possible. These were both important jobs, although if

Joe failed at them there were others on the team who would probably do the blocking and tackling.

However, Joe was giving these two jobs all of his attention; so much so that his mind strayed from his most important job—that of passing the ball back to the kicker. His throw was bad, and the ball went over the head of the kicker into the end zone where it was downed, costing Maplewood the game. Joe had failed at the one task which no one else could do.

The lesson for social institutions should be clear. A people can and should expect many things of a particular social agency such as the school, but it must never lose sight of the central tasks which only that agency can accomplish. Whatever extra jobs are taken on must not prevent the institution from accomplishing its major purposes.

Of course, as we will see in the next chapter, the school cannot do any of its work well if that work is not closely related to the rest of the pupil's life and activities. When schoolwork is unrelated to the entire life of students, they do not learn very much that they can remember and use.

This does not mean, however, that the school has identically the same task as does the home, the church, the job, the Boy Scout troop, or the public health service. All of these agencies must work together, and all exist to improve the life of our people. Yet each has its own special responsibilities. In deciding what the school, the agency equipped especially for educating, should do, we ought then to look first to those crucial jobs which it alone can do well.

Those responsible for school programs, parents and teachers, have often used different words to describe the major tasks of the school. Sometimes there are very serious disagreements about which tasks are most important, and people often disagree about *how* they are to be accomplished. Nevertheless, people have always agreed that one vital job of the school has to do with passing on *accurate organized knowledge* from the more experienced to the less experienced members of the human race.

In all of life we pick up bits of knowledge. Some of it is accurate; some of it is simply rumor or half-truth. Some knowledge is very useful in meeting life's problems; some has no real value. If

the knowledge we gain is to be remembered and used to enrich living, it has to be organized, related, and checked for accuracy. Most social agencies do not give systematic attention to organizing knowledge as one of their major duties.

The family, for example, is concerned with knowledge in so far as such knowledge is needed by each member in meeting his responsibilities. Both the family and the church are concerned that the child gain knowledge of the specific beliefs and rituals of the religious group to which the family belongs.

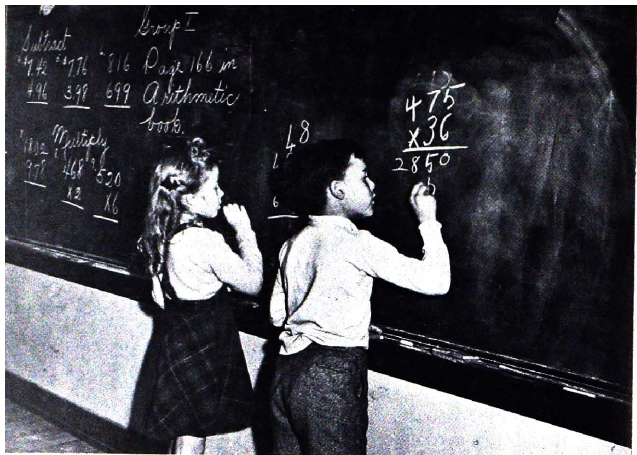
Yet neither of these, nor any other social institution except the school, considers itself directly responsible for organizing and checking the accuracy of the many things we learn from hundreds of sources. Nor do they try to relate each part of this knowledge to the rest. Whatever else it does, the school must, therefore, be concerned first with a wide range of accurate, well-organized information.

But information, in order to be used intelligently, has to be evaluated. At times, some people have acted as if simply memorizing odd facts were the most important thing in the world. However, our greatest educators at all times have insisted, in one way or another, that the ability to think, to discover new ideas, and to decide how to use information constructively is the really important thing.

Now the exercise of good judgment—the ability to think—is very hard to acquire. Some of us seem to be born with greater ability than others, or else we develop it very early in life. Nevertheless, schools have always been operated by those who believe that ways exist for training each of us to think more effectively. Among educators the differences have usually arisen about ways to do this job, not about its importance.

Many years ago it was generally thought that the ideal way was to have students memorize rules of “formal logic.” These are rules of systematic thinking and debate. It was hoped that once students had memorized the rules and learned to pick out certain common *fallacies* (mistakes in thinking), good judgment would automatically result.

Later it was widely assumed that if students learned to solve problems in very difficult subjects, they would automatically be-



Pasadena (Calif.) City Schools

Elementary school education provides directly useful learning and also lays the foundation for more complex studies.

come good thinkers about every subject. Today many people still hold these older opinions. However, the evidence gathered by psychologists and others indicates that these methods, as they were formerly applied, are not the most successful.

Although opinions have changed about *how* to improve thought, the important thing to remember is that the school has long been *the* social institution which was expected to give major attention to the task in one way or another. It is the only agency whose major social business is the training of thought. Other institutions such as the home are of course concerned, but their primary attention is given to other jobs.

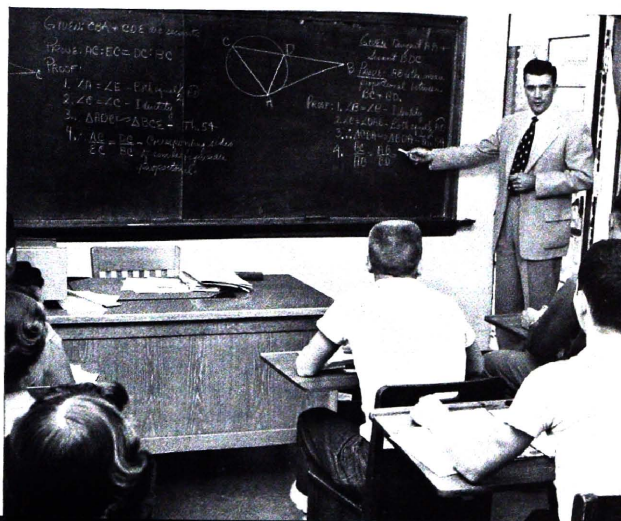
To transmit knowledge which has been organized and checked for accuracy, and to train students in the ability to think and act intelligently are, then, the two central concerns of the school. It is on these grounds that the school must make its stand for a place among our essential social institutions. Yet there are other social tasks which, though not the primary responsibility of the school, cannot be so well done without the school's help. These are responsibilities shared by several institutions, and extreme

care must be taken that the agencies work efficiently together without trespassing on each other's territories.

For example, most Americans would agree that one cannot know the facts of American life without studying something about religion as it enters into our history, our literature, and our present habits. Most of us would probably say that one must have something like a religious attitude toward the values we hold dear, and that the cultivation of ethical values is a responsibility of the school.

Our churches, synagogues, and homes are also deeply concerned with character and values. In this their function overlaps that of the schools. These other agencies want their members to accept certain definite beliefs about the meaning of life, the nature of God, and the rules for living which, according to their understanding, are expected by their God. The responsibility for teaching people to believe such doctrines has always been that of the home and the church. According to our federal and state con-

Technical and mathematical education in the high school depend on thought-tools learned in the elementary school.



stitutions, a public agency such as the public school cannot be used to teach as *the* truth the doctrines of any particular religious group.

The separation of church and state was provided in our constitutions to protect the freedom of Americans to worship as they please. The schools were prevented from teaching the beliefs of any particular religious group for the same reason. While both church and school are concerned with character and deeply held values, it is especially important that the school avoid conflicting with the rights of any religious groups. It is also important that no group expect the public schools to favor its particular religious beliefs.

There is a second social responsibility which the school shares with other agencies. Here, again, extreme care must be taken to assure cooperation without any one agency assuming the other's job. This is the responsibility of insuring good citizenship which is of concern to the school, the home, the church or synagogue, the courts, and other agencies.

The school's major responsibility toward citizenship has already been indicated. This is to see that students acquire the knowledge, skill, and desire to act intelligently in respect to public problems. Moreover, the school can work effectively only with students who are good citizens, and good citizens will not result without the constant effort of the school. Nevertheless, neither school people nor other citizens should assume that the school is the only institution responsible for insuring habits of good citizenship. All social institutions share in this task.

It is clear, then, that the school has a kind of task for which it *shares* responsibility with other agencies. Examples of this kind of task are (1) the building of sound character dedicated to deep moral values, and (2) citizenship training. You can add other examples from your own thoughts.

When we look at our people's needs and try to assign responsibilities for meeting them among our social institutions, we see yet a third kind of task in which the school is often involved. This type does not technically belong to the school at all, but it can often be better handled in the school because so many of the community's young people are together there.

For example, Maplewood maintains a public health service

and is well supplied with doctors, dentists, nurses, and other specialists for the care of the people's health. To provide health service is not primarily the concern of its schools. Their direct responsibilities in this respect are to improve health by providing information, by training for effective thinking in respect to health problems, and by reminding the home and the medical authorities whenever a student's ill-health is preventing good school work.

Yet Maplewood is highly conscious of the need for preventive medicine, and this involves regular examinations of all the children and occasional immunization programs. Since all of the children are in school, it is the community's most convenient and efficient place to conduct these activities. Moreover, individual sickness often appears first in the school, and for this reason the Maplewood school district provides school nurses and a part-time school physician. Good health is so important that every social institution including the school must give it serious attention.

Nevertheless, maintaining the community's health is not the distinctive responsibility of the school. When health services are brought into the school because it is convenient to do so two cautions are needed: (1) that these services do not lead the school to neglect its primary concerns, and (2) that the school does not duplicate or infringe on activities better taken care of outside of school.

This kind of activity, then, is one for which the school provides the most efficient location, even though it is not solely or even mostly responsible. Other examples of non-educational activities which are carried on by the Maplewood school district include cafeteria services, transportation, and the provision of rooms for community activities of a non-school nature.

This discussion of social institutions was introduced to help us find a *fourth principle* for deciding what the schools ought to do. The principle suggested is: *that we should intelligently distribute the social jobs to be done among the agencies available for doing them.* Having done so in respect to education, we have maintained that the school must place emphasis (1) on those jobs, such as transmitting knowledge and training students to think, that the school alone can do well, (2) on those jobs in which the school must cooperate if they are to be done well, and (3) on those tasks

which, though not really the responsibility of the school, can best be done at a place where the young people are gathered. In respect to the second and third group the school must be extremely careful (a) not to assume responsibilities that properly belong to another agency, and (b) not to permit the less important services to stand in the way of the major ones.



In spelling out the goals of our public schools it becomes apparent that they are many, and that different people place differing amounts of emphasis on each. Consequently we need to find some principles by which to rank competing goals.

As we looked at the educational hopes of some of our Maplewood students, and at the problems of our society, we found four such principles:

- I. *At each age special attention must be given to those things which can only, or can most effectively, be learned at that stage. While these vary from person to person and from group to group, they are related to the growing-up process, so that if the key time is missed, there may never again be such a good opportunity.*
- II. *The schools must provide opportunity for many different kinds of learning, some of which are directly useful, and some of which are valuable as equipment for further needed learning.*
- III. *In determining educational goals, a constant study must be made of the underlying problems faced by our society. The individual must be educated in terms of these.*
- IV. *We should continually weigh the social work to be done against the institutions available for doing it. Such a weighing suggests that the school should stress: first, those jobs which it alone can do well; second, those tasks which can*

be well done only if the school shares a responsible attitude toward them; and last, those activities which, though not mainly its responsibility, can be more effectively done in the school. These last activities must not be allowed to interfere with the school's major business.

Even though we use the greatest possible care in deciding what the schools should try to do, the task is enormous. If it is to be well done, everyone concerned—students, teachers, and other citizens—must bear great responsibility. These principles can help us to direct our efforts more effectively.

If these principles help us to decide what the schools ought to be doing, they also suggest ways of deciding how well the work is being done. We have seen that the teaching of factual knowledge is one of the important functions of the school, and it is right that we test by asking students how much they remember. The traditional kind of test is important for this kind of learning.

But since the school is concerned with other kinds of learning and has other functions, we cannot measure its effectiveness solely by the number of facts the students have memorized. We also need to watch the students as they move through and beyond the school. We have to consider the way they respond to problems, the way they feel about themselves and others, the way they work with each other, and the way in which they understand their traditions. The final test of the school is in the many ways it enriches the lives of people and their communities.



*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217–219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

I. Consider your own high school experience during the past year. What answers would you give to the following questions:

- (a) What things have you learned which teenagers need to know to get along in our society?
 - (b) How have you changed (1) as a result of your participation in the social activities of the school? (2) as a result of your physical education program? (3) as a result of the written work you have prepared? (4) as a result of classroom instruction? (5) as a result of your educational activities outside the school?
 - (c) Considering the things you should have learned, where has the school fallen short? Where have you fallen short?
2. With the help of your teacher, arrange a visit to an elementary school. Observe a class in session for at least one hour. Based on your own observations as well as on any conversation you may have with the teachers and children there, try to answer the following questions:
- (a) What was the teacher trying to accomplish with the children?
 - (b) Is what the teacher was trying to accomplish important for children of that age in your community?
 - (c) Were the children trying to learn something which would best be learned in school? At home? In the park? At a church or synagogue? Over radio or television?



CHAPTER EIGHT



How Do We Learn?

For thousands of years men have tried to explain the marvelous fact of human learning. In hundreds of ways they have tried to understand how the infant, at birth the most helpless of creatures, in a few short years is able to influence and control other living things and a sizeable share of non-living matter.

The process by which a human being develops deliberate control over himself, influence over other human beings, and mastery over non-living matter is the process of learning. This learning, the extension of man's deliberate intelligent control of his own self, of ideas, and of things, is the primary goal of education. *Learning is the business of the school; it is a business in which everyone has a stake.*

How is the school trying to reach its goals? To answer that question we must look at the problem of how learning takes place. Certain psychologists have made a special study of the problem, and your classroom teachers have been instructed concerning their findings. Teachers are expected, in so far as they are able, to regulate all of their teaching in accordance with these findings. Therefore, most of the things which are deliberately attempted by the school are based on some psychological conclusions.

However, even among those who know most about learning there are some strong disagreements. Frankly, no one pretends to know all the answers. There are several groups of psychologists, each with its own carefully considered point of view. Each group

says, "Let us act *as if* learning occurs in this way and see if, by so acting, we can speed up the learning process."

These "as-if" plans are called "theories of learning," and there are several "theories." Each theory opposes the others in some ways; yet, each has taught us some very useful principles. By acting on these principles, we have discovered that we can help people to learn more readily and to use their learning more effectively. These theories differ mostly when they try to explain *why* acting in a certain way produces effective learning. However, they agree to a surprising extent when they tell us *how* we should act if we want to learn best.

Many changes in school practice are based on the same kind of tested scientific principles that underlies changes in automotive design. These principles were developed partly by observing the daily experiences of people like yourselves. They have been further tested by controlled scientific experiments.

There are a few principles, about which the psychologists generally agree, on which certain misunderstood school practices are based. In order to describe these principles in non-technical language, it is necessary, perhaps, to simplify them: that is, there is much more to the idea than can be suggested here.

Five of these principles are particularly important. As you read about them, continue to think of what happens to you in your own learning. See if you can discover in your own experiences illustrations of the ideas involved. These are the five:

1. Learning takes place as a "whole person" reacts to a "total situation."
2. A particular kind of learning is gained efficiently only when the student is physically, mentally, and emotionally prepared for that particular experience.
3. Learning is closely related to what one really wants to do; this relationship is called by teachers and psychologists the problem of "motivation."
4. Much important learning comes indirectly to one who is not trying to learn that particular thing but is, instead, engaged in some other activity for its own sake. The technical terms for this are "incidental learning," or "concomitant learning."
5. Special care must be taken to create the conditions under

which something learned in one situation can later be recalled and used in a situation which is different.

*The Whole Person and
the Total Situation*

Do you recall Jack Brown's experience with "Old Ironsides?" The common sense picture of that situation would be that it had two parts: the mind of Jack Brown and the words of "Old Ironsides." In some schools, in ages past, people would have assumed that learning simply involved Jack's forcing his mind to memorize the words. Nothing could sound simpler. Yet the poem was not learned, and we ought to ask why. Part of the answer is that there were many more than two parts in that picture.

To begin with, Jack's "mind" was not a quiet tool lying idly in wait for him to put it to work. It was an active thing involved with dozens of other problems: the words of the latest juke-box disc, the new motorcycle he saw as he entered the building, the job listed in last night's want-ad section, the problem of whether he could afford a date for Friday night.

Besides, it wasn't just a "mind" which filled his consciousness. It was also a half-hidden feeling of guilt about wanting to leave school as he did. It was a gnawing fear that even if he learned the poem his mind would go blank when he stood before the class to recite. It was resentment, which again he tried to hide from himself and others, that other students received the "breaks" which were denied him. Finally, there was the pain from the left ankle which he had sprained in last night's basketball game.

All these parts of Jack's mind ran together. His thoughts and his fears, his resentments and pains were all united. They produced a vague feeling that was more than all its parts combined. Even Jack himself could not know why he felt as he did about "Old Ironsides." His feelings about the poem were all mixed up with his feelings about many other things, and with habits of thinking which were developed years ago.

Meanwhile, outside of Jack there was much more than the words of the poem. There was the expression on the face of the teacher. She looked at Jack as if she knew he would not really try

to learn. There was the sound of an airplane droning overhead. There was the corner of a comic book peeping out from underneath his notebook. There was an odor: a curious blend of fresh outdoor air, of automobile exhaust, of schoolhouse odors, and of the perfumed make-up on the girls who sat around him. In front of him was a fellow from the Maple Street crowd which he thoroughly disliked; on the left was a frightening, giggling, irritating, and thoroughly attractive girl whom he would like to date; and behind him, constantly whispering sarcastic remarks about the teacher, was a fellow from his own crowd.

Each of these things, and many more, had much to do with what Jack was learning. All of Jack, not just his mind, was responding to everything around him. This whole Jack-in-a-situation determined what was learned.

When people believe that only the student's mind and the subject matter have anything to do with learning, the school routine is limited to giving assignments and punishing the student if he fails in them. We now know, however, that to insure the greatest learning the school must take many other factors into consideration. If the school is really going to help Jack learn, it must take account of many things. It must consider his outside interests, his personal problems, his physical health, his attitudes toward classmates and other associates, his natural tendencies to learn some kinds of things and to find other things difficult, the way the community beyond the school walls comes to his attention, the kind of furniture and decoration provided by the school, his personal attitudes toward the teacher and other adult authorities, and his earlier experiences in school and out.

The evidence is pretty clear that Jack will not learn what the community hopes he will unless these factors are considered. This means that a highly individualized study must be made of Jack himself—his abilities, interests, habits, and personality. To do this the school uses psychological tests, guidance counsellors, health services, and other means. It also works very closely with the home and with other agencies in which its students spend their time.

The purpose of knowing the student well is to enable the school to tailor its program to his particular abilities. To provide a program suited to each individual student, however, the school must



Madison (Wis.) Public Schools

A child must be physically and mentally ready to learn what his teacher is trying to teach him.

have a great variety of books and other materials, it must provide a broad and varied course of study, it must use many different teaching methods, and it must carefully group students so that each is placed in the best possible situation for learning. Finally, to take account of the whole student, many schools maintain extensive recreational programs designed to improve the morale and spirit of the student body.

Some of these services are at times considered "fads and frills." Actually they are an essential part of the school program and are

directly related to the central task of the school, which is that of improving the amount and quality of learning. Although sometimes misused, they are based on sound psychological principles.

The Idea of Readiness

Let us now look at the idea of *readiness*, which is another of the more important things to understand about learning. You can easily understand what readiness means in respect to such things as learning to read, but it is just as important where any other kind of learning is concerned. Simply stated, the fact is that a person must have reached a certain stage of physical, emotional, mental, and social development before he can efficiently learn certain facts or skills. Moreover, once a high stage of readiness is reached, the failure to use the proper moment may, in some cases, mean the loss of the best possible opportunity.

The case of Jimmy Levine, our Maplewood kindergartener, will help us to see what is involved. You remember that Jimmy's teacher is giving him lots of opportunities to pick out certain details from a large picture. To the adult or high school senior it may seem a bit silly to have children playing a game of picking out the "cow" or the "shoe," or naming the colors in a picture book. What such adults easily forget, however, is that the ability to recognize details is learned late in infancy and is an important tool in teaching children how to read.

The process of reading demands the ability to tell letters and words apart, and the child only gradually develops this ability. He cannot begin to learn to read until it is partly developed. Jimmy's teacher in her work with books is helping him get ready to read. This task demands time and depends on many other factors.

For one thing, readiness to read depends very much on the simple matter of physical growth. While some children are physically ready to read at an early age, others grow more slowly. A considerable time is required, for example, before the eyes are sufficiently developed and well enough coordinated to follow a printed line and bring the words into focus.

Many other skills demand physical readiness. For example,

handwriting demands a degree of muscular coordination which many children lack in their early school years. The problem here is much like that involved in shooting a basket; that is, one has to learn to coordinate his hand with his eye. When children are driven too hard to write before this coordination is reasonably well developed, they not only learn to write poorly but they also begin to dislike writing.

Thus, readiness for reading and writing, and for many other skills involved in the arts and physical education, demands a certain degree of physical maturity. This process of physical growth, which varies widely from student to student, cannot be hurried. If the parents or school grow impatient and demand accomplishments for which the child is not ready, they can only succeed in making him detest school and lose confidence in himself. This is no excuse, of course, for waiting too long.

However, readiness, for reading as for other subjects, is more than just a matter of physical growth. There is also a matter of intellectual or "mental" readiness, which involves a number of things. To return to Jimmy, for example, we might notice that at first he can only learn to read words which he already knows for speaking purposes. Later on, he will develop "word attack" skills, and skills at using the dictionary, which will help him to figure out the meaning of new words. But for now he must start with the words he knows how to speak; and gaining a speaking vocabulary, therefore, is part of the job of getting ready for reading.

There is a third side to readiness, although it cannot really be separated from "physical" and "mental" readiness any more than these two can actually be separated from each other. The third aspect involves the development of certain interests. Usually a person cannot learn until he has developed interests or desires which will lead him into and carry him through the learning situation. Jimmy will not learn to read until, for one reason or another, he really wants to do so. The family and the school can do a great deal to encourage the development of such interests, but there are certain limits which are fixed by Jimmy's own personal way of growing. Beyond these limits he cannot be pushed.

Finally, there is a matter which we shall call "social" readiness. By this we mean simply that until a student is reasonably at home

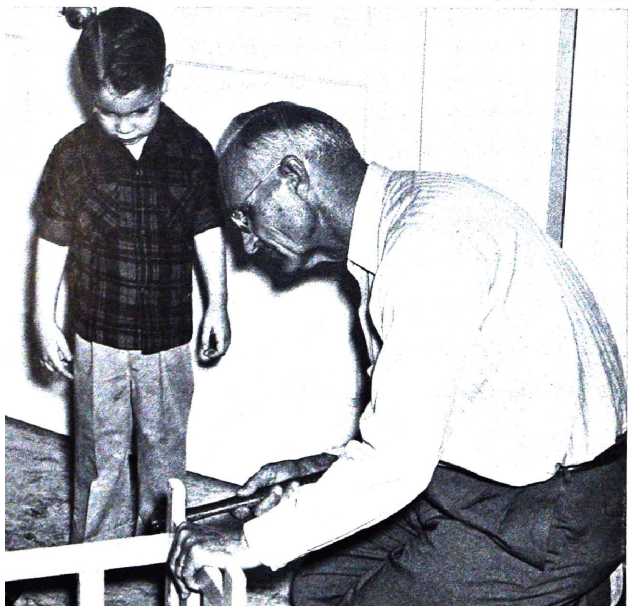
in a situation he does not learn well the things which the teacher is trying to teach. The student who is too unsure of himself, who feels that he doesn't "belong," will, to be sure, learn something. But he is likely to learn something quite different from that intended by the teacher or the community.

In respect to Jimmy all this means that he can learn to read well only when he is ready in many ways: when his eyes, ears, and muscles are well enough developed, when his mind has matured enough to handle the tasks, when he has gained the right emotional attitude and interests, and when he is sufficiently at ease in school. He will best learn when he is *ready*.

A number of experiments have been carried on to test the

We learn in many situations and from many people.

Austin (Tex.) Public Schools



readiness principle. They have shown, for example, that one can start learning to read rather late and still quickly overtake early starters who began reading instruction before they were ready. In a school district blessed with competent teachers and a good guidance program, parents can expect the teachers to introduce their children to reading as soon as they are ready. It is perfectly natural for some children to reach this stage earlier or later than others. A later start does not mean that the child will remain behind in reading.

So far we have talked about readiness for reading and writing. All of these ideas apply just as much to all kinds of learning. Thus one must also be ready to learn calculus which is an advanced form of mathematics. Calculus requires a rather mature mind which is capable of handling abstract ideas and has previously been trained in the lower branches of mathematics. While the specific qualities of readiness vary from subject to subject and from person to person, the readiness factor operates in all learning.

One or two more ideas about readiness need to be stressed. In the first place, different people grow at different rates and therefore become ready for particular kinds of learning at different ages. This is apparent where physical growth is concerned. Everyone knows students who were among the shortest in their class at age thirteen but who, by the time they reached their senior year, were among the tallest. It is a recognized fact that physical growth occurs at different rates and times for different people. What we must remember too, is that there is this same irregularity in respect to emotional and intellectual growth and to the development of interests.

In the second place, within the same person different kinds of growth occur at differing rates. A child may, for example, be completely ready to read so far as physical growth is concerned and yet remain emotionally too immature. On the other hand, some children are intellectually and emotionally ready before they have the needed eye coordination. Here, again, we see why a very careful study of each individual pupil, and an instructional program tailored to his abilities and rate of growth, have become so important to modern education.

The Problem of Interest and Motivation

One part of becoming ready to learn a thing, as we saw with Jimmy, is to develop the proper kinds of interests. The problem of interest and learning is of such importance that it needs further examination. The essential fact, accepted by almost all psychologists, is that what one learns depends very largely on the things which he considers important. For illustration, we might well look again at some of our Maplewooders.

The high school literature teacher is occasionally amazed to hear Jack Brown, who can't remember a single line of poetry, discuss automobiles. When the new models come out, Jack quickly memorizes dozens of details about each of them. He knows the top speed, the type of engine, the turning radius, the horsepower, the kind of drive, the price, and many other facts.

Joe Randolph's mother experiences the same thing with him. Joe has occasional trouble with geography which, to him, is nothing but a lot of dull facts which no one could possibly remember. He can't begin to recall what the farm crops of Ohio are, but he easily reels out facts about the batting, fielding, and pitching record of every regular player on the Cleveland Indians baseball club. And while he would find it hard to locate a single major league city on a map, he knows the location, seating capacity, and distance to the left field fence of every major league ball park.

At first glance, it seems strange that students who learn some facts so easily find the mastery of others such a struggle. Joe and Jack are both reasonably intelligent people. Their ability to learn factual material is demonstrated by the easy way they learn the things in which they are interested. The difference between their understanding of automobiles and poetry, or of baseball and geography, can only be explained by their different attitudes toward the subject. If the information is recognized as important to them, it comes easily; if it is not, it scarcely comes at all.

Knowing these facts about learning should tell Jack's literature teacher and Joe's geography teacher some very important things.

Jack's literature teacher, for example, knows that there are things of beauty and of profound meaning in what she has to teach. She knows that the values of good literature are lasting, while Jack's present interests may or may not pass in time. But she knows she cannot force Jack to appreciate these values; he, himself, must learn their importance. Teaching this appreciation—giving Jack many opportunities to see for himself, as best he can, values and meaning in good literature—is this teacher's real job. Once it begins to get done, Jack will learn literature more easily.

Much the same point can be made with respect to Joe and geography. Joe, himself, must begin to sense the importance of geography; under the guidance of his teacher, he must begin to realize that he cannot understand life in his own nation or in any other without knowing about the land and resources which support life. Until then, Joe's learning in geography will continue to proceed inefficiently. This suggests that a very significant part of the education young people receive in school actually involves their learning to see the importance of many things which before they thought unimportant.

Another thing good teachers have discovered is that when students help plan some of their own activities, they begin to feel personally responsible for part of what goes on in school. Given the opportunity, and under thoughtful teacher guidance, students will often set truly important objectives for themselves. If one thinks deeply about what he needs to get along in our society, he often discovers very good reasons for learning most of the things offered in our public schools.

Jack Brown learns a tremendous amount about automobiles just by discussing them with his crowd. He enjoys the discussion which, being pleasant in itself, simply rewards him for learning factual details. No one offers him a grade or credit for learning. Among his friends he cannot cheat, for there is no way to participate intelligently without knowing the facts. If he put off learning, he would simply not fit in as well.

On the other hand, Jack doesn't see the advantage of certain school subjects. He studies mostly because he is compelled to attend school and because he will be punished if he brings home a bad report. He does not feel rewarded by the knowledge itself,

only by the grade report. If he could get the grades he wants any other way, he would see no need for trying to learn "Old Ironsides" or any other assigned lesson.

The most effective rewards, for learning purposes, are deeply wanted ones which cannot possibly be achieved without learning the things concerned. This is the reason that good teachers on every level try to give students a growing sense of the meaning and significance of what is going on in school. It is also the reason why they often begin their work with problems the students really consider important and use materials which the students will find interesting in themselves.

The psychologists would agree that people learn much more readily when they are working to achieve a reward than when they are simply trying to avoid punishment. Moreover, the psychologists usually agree that if the fear of punishment forces the learner to "go to pieces" emotionally, good learning is apt to cease. All of us have had experiences when we were so frightened of what might happen to us, or so irritated at someone who threatened us with punishment, that we found it impossible to give careful thought to the situation.

Furthermore, with respect to punishment, you are more likely to learn when punishment follows naturally from the failure to learn. Punishments which are imposed from the outside are less effective. If the *only* danger in ignoring a stop sign were the threat of being arrested, many people would disobey the law except when the police were around. It is the knowledge that wrecks would inevitably result, unless we had regulations about entering an intersection, that often keeps people on the side of the law.

If the punishment doesn't follow naturally and unavoidably from the failure to learn, then students often find ways to escape both the learning and the punishment. There are many ways of escaping the punishment. Occasionally, for example, teachers and parents attempt to force learning by scolding. Sometimes it works. All of us, however, know of students and children who can avoid the scoldings they deserve by "apple-polishing." By contrast, if a student fails to learn the rules of health and consequently catches pneumonia, no amount of "apple-polishing" will enable him to escape the consequences of his ignorance.

We all learn best, then, when we are engaged in activities which we personally consider important. They need not seem "fun" or pleasant, but they must seem significant. This principle has been applied to modern education.

However, some confusion has resulted from new practices based on this principle. Many parents and, unfortunately some teachers, have taken them to mean that the students do only what they please and that all of school work is "soft" play. We must not, however, reject a tested principle in our efforts to prevent its misuse.

So far, in discussing the problem of motivation, we have made it clear that students learn best when they aim at things which they consider important. But there are some other things we ought to know about good educational aims. For one thing, if a student is encouraged by his parents and teachers to set too high a goal, only failure, discouragement, and a loss of interest in school can result. On the other hand, if the goal is set too low, boredom, dislike of school, and the failure to develop talents will be the consequence.

There are many ways in which parents and teachers often set goals which are too high for students, or encourage the students to do so. Last week, for example, Dorothy Kelly's fourth grade class made this mistake. They were discussing, quite properly it would seem, the latest diplomatic crisis between the United States and Soviet Russia. In their concern, and their enthusiasm, they decided to conduct a project on "how to insure permanent peace between these two countries."

Unless the teacher is very careful in this situation, one of two things will result from the attempt to solve such a problem. It may be that the students will recognize how little they can do or even understand about the problem. In this case their high hopes and interests will be destroyed. On the other hand, the students may falsely assume that such problems are easily solved with little real knowledge of facts. In this case whatever is learned will be very dangerous. Students having learned such things either discover their error later and lose their confidence in thinking about big problems, or they continue to jump to conclusions without good evidence. So far as learning is concerned, a good problem is one which the students can solve, though not too easily, if they gather the facts they are capable of learning and understanding.



Decatur (Ill.) Public Schools

The best learning combines general principles with lifelike situations.

But what about educational aims that are too low? These are just as dangerous. The American people have always prided themselves on attempting the impossible, and many of our greatest achievements have resulted from such attempts. We have always been willing to risk failure and frustration many times in the hope of some day "hitting the jackpot." The psychologist would say that the average person learns nothing unless he is faced with a problem difficult enough to demand new learning. Zest for living does come from overcoming challenging situations. It is important though to add the old maxim that "nothing succeeds like success," which we take to mean that one who has successfully met a minor difficulty is given new confidence with which to face the more difficult ones.

The Idea of Indirect Learning

If the amount to be learned depends on the student's feeling that what he studies is personally important to him, we have a

problem. We have already seen that Maplewood expects its students to learn some things which they are not particularly interested in. Besides, when we spoke of readiness, we suggested that certain intellectual skills can be used only indirectly on things which the student considers worth-while, and yet must be mastered before their full value can be seen. If the immature student works only at things which interest him, how can the school make sure that he masters the things which teachers and parents, because of their age and experience, know in fact to be most important? Part of the answer is found in the principle of *indirect learning* which we will look at in terms of the experiences of our Maplewooders.

Let us look at the situation which occurred in Dorothy Kelly's fourth-grade class one week. Dorothy's teacher knows that later on in life it will be important for Dorothy to be able to work the percentage problems involved in figuring out income taxes, insurance policies, and other financial arrangements. She also knows that some members of Dorothy's group will go into advanced mathematics, which demands that they understand thoroughly the rules of arithmetic. Yet these ten-year-olds are not the least bit interested in income taxes, insurance, or higher mathematics. They did, however, become interested in operating a store in the classroom.

As the fourth-graders set up their store they decided that each should own a share, for which each paid fifty cents. Having collected this money, they used it to purchase items to be resold in the store. They needed a way to figure out a fair and profitable selling cost. The teacher pointed out that businessmen always figure a certain percentage of profit, which they add to the cost in deciding the sale price. She showed them a way to figure out this percentage.

Before long the students, whose main interest and effort were in the management of the store, were busily at work. Yet, without planning directly to do so, they were learning some of the most important techniques of arithmetic. They learned easily because they needed the skill to carry on a project in which they were interested. So far as they were concerned, the store was the important thing. To the teacher, the adults of Maplewood, and in later years the students themselves, the thing of lasting impor-

tance was the indirect learning of arithmetic. What is incidental learning to the students is the main objective of the teacher.

Let us look at another situation of the same kind which happened to Mr. Henderson during his college years. By the time he reached college Mr. Henderson began to wonder why some people in the South feel the way they do about northern "interference" in the problem of race relations. He knew that it had to do with the war between the North and the South, and he was at the time enrolled in a course in American history covering that period. He had no intention of being a specialist in history, so a course in the "rules of historical thinking" would not have interested him in the least.

Mr. Henderson's history teacher was also interested in the North-South problem, but he was even more interested in teaching people to think accurately about historical events. One of the rules of good historical thought is that you must carefully check the accuracy of reports which you read. This is important in judging something that happened years ago as well as something that happened only yesterday.

The teacher did not start by lecturing about rules and asking the students to memorize them. Instead, he asked the students to read several different accounts of the war and the period of Reconstruction, the years immediately after the War Between the States. Mr. Henderson read to solve *his* own problem, but he discovered that the reports differed widely and concluded that many of them must be highly inaccurate. Indirectly he thus learned the rule of good historical thought which was uppermost in the mind of the history teacher. He learned that in judging reported events one must be extremely careful to check the accuracy of the author's report and to make allowance for prejudice. In the long run this indirect learning has probably been far more important to Mr. Henderson and to the American community than have the particular facts learned directly. Being a good teacher, Mr. Henderson's professor made certain that the rule was truly learned and gave direct attention to its meaning in other situations.

Now, to understand how indirect learning occurs, let us look at three common elements in Dorothy Kelly's class and in Mr. Henderson's. First, in both cases they were busy working directly on a problem which they personally felt to be important. Second,



Philadelphia (Pa.) Public Schools

What skills and attitudes are being learned indirectly?

in each case they learned *indirectly* certain skills which in the long run will be far more important than the thing in which they were directly interested. Finally, although the teachers encouraged the students to work on their own problems, the material selected by the teacher was deliberately chosen to bring about the desired indirect learning. Good teachers at all levels frequently use the indirect method of getting at the skill desired.

You can think of other situations in which teachers use the indirect method. One example is the use of plays and festivals in addition to formal high school classes in speech and music. Another is the way primary school students are encouraged to write important letters which must contain correct spelling and be legibly written.

There is one more important thing about indirect or concomitant learning. It is that some things are learned in this way which neither the school nor the community considers desirable. One of the most interesting differences between the old-fashioned school and the modern one is that apparently fewer modern children dislike school. This suggests that somehow children in the older school, and some in the modern school, *learned* to dislike it.

Now of course no teacher ever tried to teach children to hate school. This hatred is indirectly learned. Many students who have sat through classes in literature, or history, or mathematics which were poorly taught have indirectly learned to detest these subjects. Not all dislike of school is the result of poor teaching; apparently a large share of it is learned outside the classroom.

There are, then, undesirable as well as desirable kinds of indirect learning. A student in a poorly taught art class learns bad art technique, a student in a class where other students are treated disrespectfully often learns to behave disrespectfully, and sometimes, strange as it may seem, a student may even learn to forget.

Few of us realize that forgetting is an active thing, that it doesn't just happen. Yet psychologists tell us that we deliberately forget certain things which remind us of an unpleasant situation. Although we are not aware of what is going on, our feelings play tricks on us and drive what we knew out of our memories. This is the thing that sometimes happens to Jack Brown when he stands in front of the class to recite. A student easily learns from a few humiliating experiences to forget many things he would otherwise remember. Of course such experiences do not explain all, or even most, forgetting, but the school must avoid them as far as possible.

Present Learning and

Future Use

One of the hottest arguments among educational psychologists has been whether or not, and how, things which are learned in a particular school experience can be carried over and used in later and different situations. On the one hand, there are some who say school learning is useful only in school-like situations, and that, therefore, the school must be made as nearly like non-school life as possible. On the other hand, there are some who insist that a person well trained in academic subjects will automatically be effective in any kind of life situation. Without pretending to go into the details of the argument, we will note simply a couple of ideas which are widely accepted.

It is worth-while for some students to attend school simply because they enjoy doing so and because it makes their present

life more pleasant. In an age when there are limited job opportunities for children and adolescents, it is good to associate together in a clean, stimulating place. Yet no one believes that schools are established mainly for this purpose. Even though attending school should be fun in itself, and though classes should be interesting and stimulating in themselves, the real hope is that what is learned in school will make an important difference to life outside of the school.

How to make sure that such a difference will result is a problem. For example, we often think that the most important thing about schooling is memorizing facts. Of course, facts are important. However, tests conducted on all age groups, those now in school as well as those who attended long ago, reveal that many of the specific facts are soon forgotten unless they are frequently used. Dates of history, the spelling of unused words, the memorized rules of arithmetic and grammar, are too often forgotten a few weeks after they are learned. You could discover this by yourself if you were to ask a group of adults to name in order the Presidents of the United States, to figure out the square root of a number, or to define the parts of speech. All these facts were things once learned by most adults as they went through the schools.

We now know that the way a fact is learned has much to do with how long it will be remembered. For example, most psychologists agree that we are most likely to remember things which stand out in clear focus without being mixed up too soon with a lot of other very similar facts. The original students in a class easily learn and remember the name of the new one because, being strange, he stands out clearly. On the other hand, to the new student, all the old ones sort of run in together, and it takes some time before each stands out clearly enough to be remembered. If he can meet them one at a time and have an opportunity to concentrate on the name of each before encountering the others, they are more easily remembered.

But while we must concentrate directly on the fact if we hope to remember it, we must also connect it in our minds with as much other knowledge as possible. The more a new idea is thought about in connection with other ideas, the more likely we are to remember it; and we are most likely to remember and be able to use knowledge in future situations which are most like those in

which we learn it. In other words, two kinds of tags can be hung on knowledge and used to pull it forth in the future when we need it: (1) it can be tied to other knowledge which we commonly use, and (2) it can be tied to the kind of situations in which we find ourselves outside of school.

Effective learning and remembering, then, makes it necessary that we approach new information from several angles and in terms of several different kinds of problems or areas of interest. For example, the basic facts of atomic energy can be learned as they relate to the general subjects of physics and chemistry. They can also be learned as part of the study of the way our society is organized to produce power, and of the question of governmental activity in that production. Finally, these same facts can be learned in relation to the history of World War II. The facts are most likely to be remembered and to be available for future use if they are learned in connection with *all three* of these situations, and as many more as can be discovered.

Unfortunately, much of our school learning is not too well tied together. Many teachers long thought that the best way to insure learning was to have the students drill on memorizing the facts to be learned. Most students, if they thought at all, tried simply to concentrate on the matter to be learned without thinking about what it had to do with other things in their lives or even in the schools. Even today because of the way they are taught, students often fail to think about the connection between one subject and the others. For example, when a Maplewood High School social studies teacher asked about the meaning of the words "genus" and "species," none of the students was at first able to answer. When one of them finally did, she added, "I knew that when you first asked, but I thought that answer belongs in biology instead of history."

Most psychologists would agree that a certain amount of drill and memorization is important to certain kinds of learning. They would also agree that it can be carried to the point where it simply dulls interest, fixes bad habits, and actually prevents further learning. They would all say that mere thoughtless repetition, without a deliberate attempt to make every trial performance better than the one before, is a waste of time. Finally, they would say that a student learns easier and faster, that he remem-

bers longer, and that he is better able to use his learning in different situations, if he understands the principles by which the answers are to be found than if he simply memorizes the answers.

To illustrate the last point, Dorothy Kelly could be taught the multiplication table strictly by memory. By drill and repetition she could surely learn the "twelves table" by heart. But there are at least three things wrong with this type of learning if it is used by itself. First, it is one of the slowest ways to learn. Second, items so memorized are most easily forgotten. Third, the principles to use in figuring out problems not included in the tables are not learned. Thus, when Dorothy faced such a problem as figuring out the price of fifteen items costing thirteen cents a piece she would have difficulty.

If the underlying principle is understood, then learning comes faster, is better remembered, and is useful in a whole group of

At each stage of life there are certain things which must be learned at that special time so we can continue to grow healthily.

Standard Oil Co. (N. J.)



situations instead of just the kind in which it was learned. The same thing can be illustrated in the incident we described before concerning Mr. Henderson's college history class. Had he only memorized a few facts about the Reconstruction period in the South, they would have had little value. Even to have learned that different writers report those particular events differently would not have made too much difference in his life. But if he not only came to understand the feelings and problems which developed in that time, but also learned to believe strongly that no reports of any important event can be taken as fact without careful checking, then he gained some knowledge which he can apply more generally.

Besides looking for the underlying principles which tie knowledge together, educators have discovered one other thing that helps to make school learning more easily remembered and usable. It is that school situations should be made as nearly like non-school situations as possible. Particularly with certain skills, what we learn at one time is most likely to be remembered and used again when we find ourselves in a similar situation. The simplest illustration of this might be arithmetic. You can learn to add, subtract, multiply, and divide without using any "story problems." But your knowledge is most likely to be useful in buying and selling if you learn these skills partly in figuring out ways of handling money. To be sure, school can never be exactly like the life outside it; but, with some kinds of learning, the greater the similarity, the better.



THUS we know five things which determine how well a student learns. First, good teaching requires the teacher to consider the whole student as he responds mentally, emotionally, and physically to everything important in his whole life, both in and out of school. Second, the best learning is possible only when the student is mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally mature enough for that particular experience. Third, almost everything depends on the student's attitude toward and interest in his work. Fourth, many of the most important

things are learned indirectly while we are concentrating on some task that seems important to us. In this indirect manner we develop many attitudes toward school which make further learning easy or difficult. Finally, what we learn is most likely to be remembered and used in non-school life if we concentrate on the underlying principles, if we make certain problems as lifelike as possible, if we focus for some time on the most important things to learn, and if we constantly relate one thing learned to others.

Our public schools try to keep these and many more ideas in mind, although they are not always successful. Because we do not know everything about how learning takes place, we continue to study the problem. When new information is gained through psychological and educational research, school practices change. Many of these changes are based on scientific evidence as dependable as that which is used in the improvement of automobiles. Other changes represent only the careful thought of trained educators who believe that such changes will *probably* improve results. These judgments are debatable. Teachers and psychologists, as well as parents and other school patrons, are constantly arguing about them and checking them by continued experimentation.

In trying to provide students with experiences which will insure the greatest learning, the schools organize their activities in many ways. We will examine some of these ways in the following chapter.



Some Things to Think About and Do

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217-219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. Consider your own high school experience during the past year. Try to think of one example of each of the following situations and the principle of learning which each situation illustrates:

- (a) A situation in which something which happened to you outside of school got in the way of your school learning.
- (b) A situation in which something which happened to you outside of school helped your school learning.
- (c) A situation in which something which you tried and failed to do two years ago has been easy to do this year.
- (d) A situation in which some things were especially easy for you to learn because you considered them important.
- (e) A situation in which some things were especially difficult for you to learn because you considered them unimportant.
- (f) A situation in which you learned something incidentally when you were really trying to accomplish something else.
- (g) A situation in which some things you had learned a year or two ago in *one* subject all at once helped you to understand another subject better.

2. With the help of your teacher, arrange a visit to an elementary school. Be sure to observe a class in session for at least *one hour*. Based on your observations as well as on any conversations you may have with the teachers and *children* there, show how the teacher took account of the five principles of learning discussed in *Chapter Eight*.

3. You read in the book that "the average person learns nothing unless he is faced with a problem difficult enough to demand new learning." What are the dangers to our country if we set our educational standards too low?



CHAPTER NINE



How Is the School

Instructional Program Organized?

ALTHOUGH it may not always be obvious, the instructional program of the school is related to the educational goals and the principles of learning which we have been considering. Don't make the mistake of thinking, however, that everything done in the schools is based on careful thought and reasons which everyone accepts. Many present school practices are simply based on habit, which controls social institutions as much as it does individual people. Other school practices are based on theories which some of us accept but with which others disagree. Custom and compromise enter into school activity just as they do in every other human activity.

Actually the present program in schools was built in much the same manner as were some of the old houses on Maple Avenue. One of these houses was first designed many years ago as a modest four-room home, just large enough for a struggling young lawyer and his bride. As they prospered and their family grew, new rooms were added, one at a time. The first bedrooms were made into a larger living room, and the original kitchen became in time a study.

Eventually the original owner moved, and new tenants, with new purposes, came in to take over the remodeling process. When private wells were replaced by a city water supply system, further improvements were possible. The study, which was once a kitchen, became a modern bathroom. This piecemeal process has

been under way for fifty years now, and the first tenants would hardly recognize the old place. Each individual change has been made for what seemed to be good reasons to the people making it, but there has been much compromise among those involved. Each time this old house has been remodeled the tenants have taken a new look at their way of living and have tried to fit the house, with its old foundations and walls, as well as they could to the new kind of life.

The school program at Maplewood has grown the same way. The older methods of schooling provide the foundation and create some of the most important divisions among the various kinds of educational activity. Some of these ways, which have stood the test of time, give much strength to the school program. Other old ways, which hang on even though we know now they are ineffective, simply make needed change difficult to bring about.

Every so often the teachers of Maplewood, in response to changing times and the wishes of the community they serve, reconsider the school program and try to make it fit the new conditions of American life. They are at present involved in such a new look, which is often called a "curriculum study." In Maplewood, as in other communities which take pride in their schools, a group of parents and other interested citizens is joining the professional educators in this study. When they finish their evaluation, the school program will look very different in some ways, as does the Maple Avenue home since its last remodeling. Yet, a closer look will make it clear that much of the old remains.

As they consider possible changes, the parents and teachers who are making the curriculum study will keep in mind the ideas we have discussed in earlier chapters: (1) the kinds of students that are in the school, and the way these students differ in problems, abilities, and hopes from year to year; (2) the kinds of groups which are interested in the schools and the things they properly expect from the schools; (3) the tradition of the public school; (4) the different kinds of things to be learned; and (5) the conditions under which various kinds of learning best take place.

Let us look at the school program of several of our Maplewood students to see how that program is related to these five factors.



Board of Education, City of New York

Many activities go on at the same time in the modern schoolroom. In this way, teachers can take account of the different interests, abilities, and educational needs of the children in their classes.

Jimmy Levine in the Kindergarten

Jimmy is in school only three hours a day. He is not physically ready for longer hours, nor is he emotionally prepared to be away from his home for a longer period. Much of his school time is spent just learning to feel comfortable and work easily with other students. This helps him gain greater emotional independence from his parents. It also starts him on the way toward trusting and respecting his neighbors. One important activity in which he participates is the "share and tell" period in which he tells his classmates about something exciting that happened to him or shows them something in which he is especially interested.

In Jimmy's case it is clear that the principle of readiness is being considered, and that he is being helped to learn new kinds of emotional attitudes toward himself, his parents, and his class-

mates. We also see attention being given to the traditional ideal of a common school in which all our people learn to like and respect each other.

Moreover, several other kinds of learning are being sought. Jimmy is learning some skills which will help in further learning as well as some which will be directly satisfying to him. The teacher is helping him develop the ability to pick out items in a picture and to love books. Both of these will help him learn to read. The teacher is also giving Jimmy an opportunity to develop artistic skills by letting him paint and mold, and sing and dance. Finally, by her choice of stories, songs, pictures and excursions, the teacher is introducing Jimmy to new facts about the world in which he lives.

For children of Jimmy's age the world is very confusing and a bit frightening. They cannot be comfortable unless the home and the school are very much alike. Because of this the school has carefully provided a homelike atmosphere. Light lunches are served, naps are arranged, the teacher is very friendly, and there is much time for play.

Yet the school is already beginning to emphasize two kinds of responsibilities for which the home is not so well suited. One is to prepare Jimmy for learning such skills as reading. The other is to provide a social group representing larger numbers of people of his own age but of different backgrounds.

In Jimmy's class special care is taken to give the children individual help and support. Every individual in his class is very different from every other one, but all are alike in being highly dependent on adult help. They are not prepared for very much group instruction. Yet at this age the goals of education are much the same for every child since these children have not begun to develop specialized vocational interests of any lasting nature.

*Dorothy Kelly in
the Intermediate Grades*

Differences in interests as well as in abilities have become greater among the children in Dorothy Kelly's class. The teacher constantly uses these different special interests to lead the stu-

dents into activities through which each more easily learns. Yet, though each individual carries on different activities, all the children of Dorothy's group continue to have the same general program. There is still no basic difference between the instruction given those preparing to be scientists, those planning on being farmers, and those with no particular vocational plans.

A day in this classroom would make clear the different kinds of learning which are being sought. In discussing class projects, Dorothy's teacher tries to build *attitudes* of respect for individuals and freedom of expression, and of loyalty to the group in its endeavors. In the social studies and science projects the children are gathering *factual knowledge* and learning *ways of gathering and organizing knowledge*. By writing letters and working out arithmetic problems they are learning definite *skills*. And as the children work actively together, each child learns to *live more effectively* with his own emotions and with other people by mastering strong feelings of jealousy, anger, and joy.

We have already discussed a number of principles of learning used by Dorothy's teacher. When the teacher encouraged the children in *their* desire to operate a classroom store she used interest to stimulate learning and to reward the students for their efforts. When the children, who were simply trying to set a fair price for their goods, incidentally learned to figure out percentage problems, the teacher was deliberately using indirect learning.

Finally, we noticed how Dorothy's hearing difficulty affected her whole life. It was involved in her class work, her personality, and the attitude of her friends. We saw that the Maplewood schools recognized the importance of understanding the whole child in order to insure the greatest possible desirable learning.

Because of the way Dorothy's whole life affects her learning, the school took action when difficulties arose. So that they would know what kind of action was needed, the school board had employed nurses and guidance workers. When it was discovered that the problem was a medical one, however, the school did not attempt to take over a job which properly belongs to the parents and the medical profession. The school cooperated with the health officials. It did so, not because its social responsibility is to provide medical service, but because Dorothy's health problem was pre-

venting the school from succeeding at its major job of teaching.

Thus the school provides a broad range of activities for Dorothy and her classmates. These activities run from periodic medical examinations to formal instruction in arithmetic. The activities of each student vary as broadly as do the interests and abilities of the students, but all activities are organized in terms of common educational goals. The goals and activities are selected on the basis of our understanding of the way learning takes place and of the things which Dorothy must know as a person and as a good citizen.

Joe Randolph in the

Junior High School

In many ways Joe Randolph and his classmates are at a fork in the road of life. In their earlier school years, differences among them were accepted as temporary and unimportant. Now these differences are becoming more noticeable, more lasting, and more significant. In the years ahead the lives of these students will increasingly tend to separate, and the students will form themselves into groups which have less and less in common with each other.

In the first place, differences in natural ability to learn and to think have begun to add up. The students who learn easily continue to have a natural advantage. Besides this, they now have the added advantage of possessing more knowledge which aids further learning. Not only do some students naturally read better, but these same students have read more than the others so that they now have a broader vocabulary. This helps them extend their lead over their less gifted classmates. The same kind of thing is true of every natural ability whether it be musical aptitude, speed and muscular coordination, or the ability to handle numbers. The range of talents possessed by the students in Joe's class gets wider and wider as the years of additional schooling are added.

Differences in interests among Joe's classmates have also become more sharply marked and more enduring. In the early school years no one remained deeply interested in any one thing for a long period. By now, however, Joe and each of his classmates have very strong individual preferences for certain kinds of school

activities, recreational activities, people, adult occupations, and conversation topics. Already, some are beginning to think seriously of college, others of getting some kind of a job as soon as they finish school.

Finally, differences in home background, educational opportunities, and home neighborhoods are beginning to seem more important. Each crowd is beginning to develop its own particular attitude toward school, toward society, and toward other crowds or groups.

If Maplewood were in any of many European countries, the students would now, if indeed not much earlier, be divided among different school systems. These divisions would be based on the social class to which each belongs, or on the occupation in which each is likely to find himself. Each student, or his parents or government, would already have chosen a technical school to prepare him for a laboring class vocation, or a college preparatory school to equip him for university life and for service in the professions or in positions of economic or political leadership.

It may be that students learn more in some ways if they are sent to special schools in which all the students have about the same amount of ability, share the same kinds of backgrounds, and are preparing for the same kinds of occupations. With such an arrangement, classes of students who learn rapidly could cover much more material, while the slower students could move at a more leisurely pace. The students who learn easily by reading could be put on a program depending on books, while those who must have a great deal of activity could be given an activity kind of a program.

We call the European kind of school system, in which students are divided at a rather early age into one group which will go into manual labor and a second group which will go into professional and managerial positions, a "two-track" system. Such a system may, as we have said, make it possible for students to learn more readily some of the things they need for their own occupations. Yet, from the beginning of our common school movement, America has rejected the idea of such a two-track system.

Americans have preferred a "single ladder" system, as we saw in Part Two. The main reason for this preference is that they consider it most important to do everything possible to increase the

sense of common respect, understanding, and loyalty among the many groups which make up our society. A second reason is that they believe the opportunity to change one's place in life and to better one's conditions must be kept open as long as possible. Joe Randolph provides a good example of the second reason in action.

As we noticed, Joe did not have good educational opportunities before coming to Maplewood. Under a two-track system, Joe would now be in a school program which would have made it impossible for him to choose his own vocation. He would already be too old to change into a different program.

In the Maplewood school system, Joe may, if he has the desire and talents, overcome the handicap of a poor start in school and prepare himself for whatever profession he chooses. Moreover, the kind of course he is taking makes it possible to change his vocational goals very late in school. He is, as you recall, now working very hard to make himself a good student in all his classes, because he hopes to go on to college.

The classroom is a place where children learn not only how to use equipment, but also how to work with others.

University of Pittsburgh (Pa.) Photographic Library



Maplewood wants its students to have a sense of mutual respect for each individual and an opportunity to go as far as they can in their chosen interests. To achieve these goals Maplewood puts all of its junior high school students into a common program, even though their interests and abilities vary tremendously. Having done so, Maplewood must find ways to vary the program in terms of these differences. There are several ways in which this is attempted in Joe's class.

In the first place, some choice of subjects is allowed the students in this group. This choice doesn't apply to every subject, but the individual can if he wishes elect certain kinds of shop instruction, out-of-class activities, homemaking, or music and art instruction, for example.

In the second place, the teachers of each subject provide for a wide range of activities so that each student can do those things which are most interesting, most challenging, and most instructive to him. There is some very easy reading material, some rather hard. There are individual projects which can be varied from student to student. Films, radio broadcasts, bulletin board displays, excursions of various kinds, charts and graphs, and many other sorts of teaching devices are used to make certain that each student learns the important ideas. Finally, whenever possible, the teacher uses the student's own interest as the starting point in each unit of instruction. Although all the students are eventually to learn many of the same things, each student approaches this learning from his own individual direction.

Joe and his classmates each have certain individual talents which cannot be fully developed in the regular school classes. Yet these very talents are often those which give the individual a position of respect among his classmates and enable him to make an important contribution to our social life. Some of them can only be developed properly when the student has time and opportunity to work long hours at a particular kind of activity.

For example, one of Joe's classmates may have an unusual in-born talent for music. Such a student can, to be sure, take the general courses in music and participate in band, glee club, and other group activities. However, the student with really great talent quickly outruns the group and reaches the point where he must concentrate on individual practice and public performance.

Another student may have a special interest and unusual ability in public speech and debate. While he can participate in some debates and give some speeches in the regular classes, such opportunities are too limited to develop his talents to the fullest. Others may find the regular class work inadequate to develop natural abilities in writing, in athletics, or in creative dancing.

To permit a fuller development of these special talents, most schools start in the junior high school years to emphasize what is sometimes called an "extra-curricular" activities program. (Many educators object to the name extra-curricular because it suggests that these activities are outside of and not an important part of the regular work of the school. They prefer the name out-of-class activities.) In the years ahead these activities will play an increasingly important part in all the interests of Joe and his classmates. Many of the adults in Maplewood would insist that their participation in athletics, student government, music festivals and concerts, dramatic presentations, school journalism, or debate was the most rewarding part of their whole school experience. These activities which are carried on outside of the formal classes provide an opportunity for a student to develop more fully his unusual natural talents. They also encourage a non-participating student to develop a more varied interest in the kinds of things which make up most of our recreational activities, and they help him to appreciate better performances in the fine arts.

Moreover, certain of the skills and attitudes needed in working effectively with people are most readily learned through such activities. Certain elements of cooperation, for example, are learned in athletic team play and, if the school and community really wish to do so, the inter-school athletic games can be a most effective way of teaching good sportsmanship. It should be noted, however, that in some communities where the emphasis is placed on winning at any cost, athletes really learn to cheat and to take unfair advantage of others.

Other socially important skills and attitudes are learned through the opportunities for leadership which the out-of-class activities provide, and through development of talents for thinking and speaking, and other talents which these activities demand. We will examine one of these activities more closely in the next section to illustrate this point.

Bob Hopkins in American History,

Problems of Democracy, and Student Council

The faculty of Maplewood High School would insist that every part of its program has to do with the making of good citizens. The athletic coach would point out that the spirit of good sportsmanship and teamwork are essential to good social living. Of course, this is true. It is also true, as the music teacher insists, that a nation which neglects music and the other finer arts may become crude and insensitive to those human values on which democracy rests. The same sort of argument can be made for every part of the school program. All of the teachers are deeply concerned with developing the kinds of attitudes on which our governmental system depends.

However, in the past two years, Bob Hopkins has had three activities which focus rather directly on training for citizenship as one of the basic objectives. It is interesting to notice how differently these activities, each of which hopes to teach good citizenship, are organized. These differences illustrate the importance of approaching the same educational objective from more than one direction. The three activities are the student council activities, the course in American history, and the Problems of Democracy class. While all have something in common, each depends on one or more of the principles of learning which we have discussed.

Let us look at the course in American history, for example. This is a course organized around a particular kind of data concerning the past. The data are arranged chronologically (in time-order) so that the direction of trends can be determined. When we look at the record of human experience so arranged, it is possible to discover certain general principles which guide our thought and future action.

Certain underlying principles can only be seen when we organize similar kinds of data in some consistent manner. You will remember our pointing out in the discussion on learning that when we reduce facts to a set of underlying principles we remember the things we have learned longer and are able to apply them in a greater variety of non-school experiences.

Moreover, the method of the historian is one of the thought-tools, of which we spoke earlier. It becomes useful and sometimes necessary to us when we try to answer certain kinds of problems about what is wrong in the present and about what direction we should try to take in the future. The noted historian, Carl Becker, whose textbooks you might have used, once pointed out that "Every man is his own historian." By this he meant that each of us is constantly searching his memory of past events to get some light on the future. The professional historian has discovered that the memory of the individual and the group is often very unreliable. If our judgments based on the past are to be adequate, we have to learn to criticize and constantly recheck the accuracy of every report we find. To gain these habits of careful historical thought we need to have some kind of instruction in history.

Now history has always been considered one of the best ways of teaching citizenship. There once was a time, not so long ago, when men lied about the past in order to make a good propaganda story. They wanted to convince our citizens that our country and our leaders are and have always been perfect. By so doing they thought all of us would come to love our country. Modern historians teach love of country *indirectly* rather than directly. Instead of simply saying over and over how wonderful we are, they try to be as honest as possible in reporting the good as well as the bad. These historians believe that the student who knows his country's history accurately will have a more lasting and dependable love, even if he is more critical, than one who has been misled by lies. He will work harder to see that it more completely lives up to its ideals.

There are some things which one must know to be a good citizen which can only come from instruction in history as such. One cannot learn from past experiences without studying the past: the record of the things we have tried to do, and of the results of those trials. Yet, by itself, history will not make good citizens, nor will a whole series of formal courses organized as history courses are organized. Because this is true, Maplewood provides other kinds of citizenship education to Bob and his classmates. One of these other kinds is the Problems of Democracy course.

Our big national problems can only be understood by gathering facts about many things. We need information about eco-

conomic conditions, about the attitudes of our people and those of other nations, about our governmental system, about our history, about our geography, and about our way of thinking, to mention a few. In fact, all of the problems of life involve many different kinds of information.

In our chapter on learning, we discovered that one of the things which makes school learning useful in non-school life is to learn it in lifelike situations. Unless we practice gathering and using knowledge in terms of the kinds of problems we face out of school, our school learning may not be very effective. The school must, then, provide some opportunities to study problems in the form in which they appear in the non-school world. This is exactly the job of the Problems of Democracy course. If the graduate of our schools is to think and act effectively in terms of problems such as these, he must be taught to do so.

Notice that the Problems of Democracy course does certain kinds of things which the history course cannot do, but that it also lacks some of the advantages of the history course. If we are to develop an ability to think historically, if we are to learn certain principles which can only be seen when historical data are gathered together and arranged chronologically, and if we are to have practice in solving problems as they appear in life, then *history classes and Problems of Democracy classes each* have something

A good school gives students the chance to learn vocational skills.

Pasadena (Calif.) City Schools



different to offer. To train for good citizenship we need some of the learning which comes from each type of course.

However, if you asked Bob Hopkins where he learned the things which he believes will be most useful in making him a good citizen, he might answer that his experience in student council has been most valuable. To be sure, there were "activities" in the history class, and the Problems of Democracy class carried on a number of very worth-while community projects such as getting out the vote, working for the establishment of a Youth Center, and cooperating in a city-wide safety drive. Nevertheless, Bob would point out that the only place where he really had an opportunity to decide what should be done, and to exert effective leadership on problems which he considered important, was in the student council.

Bob's reaction should not surprise us. We know that one learns most rapidly when he works on his own problems and those of his classmates. We know that the greater the personal responsibility one assumes, the more he learns. It is really only in the affairs of the student council that final authority is placed in the hands of the students. This is their business, and they give it most serious consideration.

Actually, the student council experience in no way takes the place of the Problems of Democracy class or the class in American history. One could be on student council for a lifetime and never learn some of the most important things about the problems of American social and political life. Nevertheless, the student council activity does provide a critically important addition to the other courses. Citizenship requires certain definite skills in political leadership, and these skills are not learned by reading. Similarly, attitudes have to be tested in action before they have real meaning. To read, for example, about the struggle to secure freedom of thought in America doesn't alone lead one to really feel its importance. Besides knowing about the struggle, it helps to have faced a situation in which you have tried to defend a minority point of view against an intolerant majority.

Now, let us look at the principle behind this discussion. American history, Problems of Democracy, and student council are only examples of how the school used several resources in order to

achieve a particular goal; in this case, to prepare good citizens. To achieve this objective it provided three different sets of activities. These activities not only involved different sets of subject matter; they were organized in essentially different ways. No one of these ways of organizing the student's activities took advantage of all of our principles of learning, yet each was based on one or more of those principles. A well-rounded program in citizenship education required the use of several different approaches.

The same sort of a story could be told about any other major goal of the school. To achieve any of them we need to organize our activities in many different ways. Sometimes two different kinds of classes are required to fit two different kinds of students. At other times several different kinds of classes are needed to round out the education of any one student.

Jimmy Levine and

Mary Smith

Jimmy Levine and Mary Smith stand at opposite ends of the Maplewood public school system, so far as its students on full schedule are concerned. Their present courses of study indicate the way the school program has gradually changed along with their readiness for certain kinds of activity, their own personal needs and interests, and the things which Maplewood and the larger American community expect of them.

We saw, for example, that because Jimmy is only beginning to become emotionally independent from his home, the teacher gives a major share of her attention to his emotional problems and to his physical health. With Mary, on the other hand, there is no single teacher who watches her throughout the day. By and large it is assumed that Mary is now mature enough to solve most of her own emotional problems and to take care of her own health. To be sure, Maplewood provides guidance counsellors to help when help is needed, but these counsellors do not hover over her throughout the school day. They expect her to come to them when she needs to do so. Her regular classroom teachers are primarily concerned with instruction in their particular subjects.

Moreover, because Jimmy is not yet ready to handle involved abstract ideas, or to carry on independent reading and study, the teacher keeps him busy at play and working with things. The mental tasks she gives him are very simple and are preparation for advanced activities. Because he is not interested in any one thing for any length of time, the teacher moves very quickly from one activity to another. His curiosity is very strong, but it flits from one thing to another. Nothing bores him more than a long discussion about a single idea, especially if the idea is complicated.

Mary, however, has developed lasting interests in certain kinds of activities. She can work by herself, for a long period of time, and she is interested in ideas as well as in things. The school, therefore, has established longer periods of time for each class, and has organized many of the classes around certain kinds of ideas or in terms of certain groups of data—scientific findings, literature, or history.

Much of Mary's activity is directed toward discovering general principles which apply to many different situations. While Jimmy moves from experience to experience almost entirely in terms of his fleeting interests, Mary moves from one item to another which is logically related to the first. To illustrate, Jimmy might at one moment be looking at a fish and at the next moment be exploring a fire engine. Mary, on the other hand, after studying the fish might turn to a consideration of how its skeleton differs from that of a frog.

Because Jimmy is not ready to direct his own activities too well, the teacher works far more closely with him than do Mary's teachers with her. The high school teachers not only expect the students to plan and carry out elaborate projects on their own, but they also give the students much choice in deciding what courses they will take.

The activities of Jimmy and his classmates are not at all specialized. To be sure, each child does very different things because he has very different interests, but neither the children nor the teacher are yet concerned with preparing each child for a different vocation in life. There is really only one course of study for all kindergarteners. We have already seen, however, that among our high school students, each student is taking a different set of classes depending on his interests, on whether or not he intends

to go on to college, and on what major occupational field he hopes to enter.

Thus, as the students go through the Maplewood school system, the program changes gradually as their abilities, their interests, and the things society expects of them change. We are brought back to the central fact we discovered in Chapter One. Because the public school is concerned with many kinds of people, with different abilities and interests, an extremely flexible program of studies must be provided. No single kind of education is adequate for everyone.



In the earlier chapters we have seen that those responsible for education in a community must keep many factors in mind. These factors include: (1) the kinds of people who are in the school, (2) the kinds of people who have an interest in the results of schooling, (3) the historical tradition in which America and American education operate, (4) some principles for deciding among conflicting educational objectives, and (5) the knowledge we have about how learning takes place. The school takes these factors seriously by providing different kinds of classes and by using different ways of teaching for each individual student as he moves through the school system.

Much present controversy about the school program grows out of a failure to consider all of these factors. When people look at only one of them, it is easy to feel that a certain school practice is undesirable. If all of these factors were taken into account, much of the current criticism would vanish.

On the other hand, the school is not infallible. At times the teachers and the community leaders themselves ignore some very important considerations. If they took all of these factors seriously, it would be necessary to change many of the present practices. The present curriculum study, in Maplewood and in other places, is an attempt to review the school program in the light of the kinds of things we have discussed. You can better understand these things if you identify yourself with the students we have used for illustration.



*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217-219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. Compare your present schedule of school activities with those of several of your friends. In what respects are they all alike? How are they different? What differences in your interests, abilities, or vocational plans help to explain these differences in your programs?
2. What principles of learning are demonstrated in Bob Hopkins' courses in American history and Problems of Democracy, and in his activities in the student council?
3. Consider the subject matter with which your various classes and other school activities are concerned. Do you see any differences in the way the subject matter is organized or in the way the classes are taught? What principles of learning are best illustrated by certain of your classes?
4. What basic skills, which you think you need in order to live effectively in American society, are best being taught in your school? Which, if any, do you believe are being ignored or could be better handled?
5. If you have not already visited one of the primary grade classrooms in your school district, arrange with the help of your teachers to do so. On the basis of your observations, determine wherein the attitudes and behavior of the teachers toward the students are different than they are in your school. In what respects are they alike?
6. Make a study of what your school is doing about revising the curriculum (the program of classes and activities). Which of the factors suggested at the end of this chapter do you think are being taken into account? Which, if any, are seemingly being ignored?



CHAPTER TEN



How Do We Organize, Supervise, and Pay for Our Public Schools

MANY groups of people have an interest in our schools. These groups include students, professional educators, parents, and organized bodies of citizens such as the American Legion, the Labor Council, and the Chamber of Commerce. Each of these groups has its own ideas of what the schools should try to do, and each is anxious to make its influence felt. There need to be definite ways of deciding among these competing views.

Maplewood, as we saw in Chapter Three, is in the process of making up its mind about education. We looked in on a school board meeting, a session of the state legislature, a parent group meeting, a private conversation between two veterans in the American Legion Hall, and several other discussions. The picture of all these groups trying to exert an influence on the school is confusing. No effective activity could be carried on in such a situation unless ways of making the final decisions were agreed upon in advance. There must be certain people who have the legal power and responsibility for these decisions.

Schools are organized for decision-making purposes. Who are the people who share the decision-making power? What part is played by those who pay for the schools, and by others affected by the schools? There are four aspects of this problem: (1) the way unofficial groups make their influence felt; (2) the organization of the schools on the local level; (3) the way the states use their power; and (4) the influence of the federal government.

Unofficial Controls on the Schools

Although the practical influence of certain organized citizen groups on the schools is very great, they do not have any official authority to decide school business. For example, the members of the Legion cannot officially decide anything about what the Maplewood schools will actually do. They can discuss what they think ought to be done; they can make recommendations to the official bodies; and they can campaign in the community against officials with whom they are dissatisfied. In some cases, such groups have been powerful enough to persuade the community to elect or appoint new officials. Nevertheless, this influence and power is unofficial, and the final decisions have to be made through official groups according to law.

Many school systems believe that these organized groups represent individuals having a proper interest in school affairs. These school systems make special arrangements for gathering and considering such opinions. In fact, such systems work very hard to encourage the interest and active participation of every honest community group in deciding what ought to be done. Maplewood has such a school system.

When the schools became badly overcrowded immediately after World War II, it was apparent that something ought to be done. The school board called a series of public meetings to consider the problem. A special invitation was sent to every large community group in Maplewood so that they would be officially represented by at least one person. Out of these meetings there grew a Citizen's Advisory Council. The council was asked to make a special study of possible courses of action and to gather the opinions of citizens on alternate proposals. Members of this council met officially with the board of education as an advisory group. The school board did not have to accept the council's recommendations, but it did feel responsible for giving very careful attention to them. The new junior high school was an outgrowth of these efforts.

The Maplewood Citizen's Advisory Council was disbanded as soon as the new junior high school program was well under way. Since that time several new advisory groups have been organized



Seattle (Wash.) Public Schools

A member of a parent-teacher association seeks the support of a neighbor for a bond issue to build a new school.

to give attention to particular problems as they arose. In some communities, however, there is a permanent council which continues to study school problems and make recommendations to the board. There are differences of opinion among educational experts as to whether or not the permanent type of council is better than the Maplewood system of setting up new councils for each major problem.

The Maplewood system has the advantage of giving a larger number of citizens a chance to participate in such activities. Besides, it doesn't demand so much of the council member's time. Then, too, in all school systems there are times when no big decision has to be made, and a permanent council often finds itself with little to do and therefore loses interest in its work. On the other hand, most educational problems in a community are related to each other, and the permanent councils have the advan-

tage that their members come to understand these relationships more fully.

Efforts to make it easier for organized groups to participate in deciding educational questions are also made on the state and national level. Some states, for example, have organized permanent committees representing the teachers' organizations, members of school boards throughout the state, parent-teacher groups, business groups, farmer organizations, and labor unions. These advisory groups make a continuous study of educational problems on the state level and advise the state legislature and the state department of education.

On the national level there have been called, from time to time, great national conferences to consider certain educational problems common to the entire nation. A whole series of "White House Conferences" on the problems of children and youth, and on mental and physical health, have been held in recent years. In 1946 President Truman appointed a national commission to study the future of higher education in America, and in 1955 President Eisenhower called a general conference on the problems of public education. Such conferences result only in recommendations to the legal authorities. The conference members cannot force a change in practice any more than can the Maplewood American Legion. But in both cases the actual influence is great and is not to be ignored.

These are formal arrangements for letting the influence of unofficial groups be felt. Far more important in the long run are the less formal ways. In Maplewood, the American Legion and other groups depend mostly on informal conversations with teachers and other school officials. Occasionally, as we have seen, they may propose an essay contest, or give a prize for certain activities.

On the state and national level, also, the informal influences are most important. Most members of the legislature belong to some of these organized groups. They have come to think about educational problems much as do other members of the group to which they belong. They are often met in the legislative halls and committee rooms by paid lobbyists who are hired to represent the point of view of some organization. Some of the organizations and their lobbyists are highly selfish in their point of view, and a few are downright dishonest. The great majority, however, represent

citizens who have a right to be heard, and often they provide the legislature with vitally important information which would not otherwise be available.

There are many kinds of groups which have unofficial influence over Maplewood's schools. Some groups like the local P.T.A. and the National Education Association are concerned with almost every educational problem. Other groups such as the American Legion and the Labor Council become actively interested only in the most important and general of school problems. The members of the Farm Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce actually live in Maplewood. Other people, like those in the colleges which train teachers and the authors and publishers of textbooks, exert their influence indirectly and from some distance.

It would be very hard to overestimate the influence of these unofficial groups. Yet, as has already been said, all this influence is brought to bear through certain legally named officials.

The Local Organization of Schools

WHY DO WE BELIEVE IN LOCAL CONTROL OF SCHOOLS? There are a number of very important reasons why Americans like to keep the control of their schools very close to home. In the first place, they think that any governmental agency which is too far away finds it too easy to ignore the problems and desires of the local community. Secondly, they are in the habit of thinking of schools as local affairs. During the long period of our frontier experience, communities were isolated from each other and had to depend mostly on local resources for educational as well as for social purposes. The old frontier habit of having the teacher "board around" in the homes of the district left a permanent mark. Americans have come to feel that local control of the schools is the "natural" and the "right" way.

There is a third reason why Maplewooders, and other Americans, like to have the control of schools left in local hands so far as possible. In its concern with children and youth, the school touches a spot very near to the heart of the people. Most people are reluctant to let strangers decide things which deeply affect their own children.

Moreover, educators have come to realize more fully how much individual students differ and to recognize that the whole situation in which the student lives determines how much is learned. If intelligent use is to be made of this knowledge, there must be ways for the home and the school to cooperate fully. Such cooperation is only possible if the local school has the power to modify its program to fit individual cases. The need for flexibility in the school program is a fourth reason, then, why Americans think it wise to keep control of the schools on the community level.

HOW ARE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS FINANCED AND ORGANIZED? A final reason for local control is closely related to these others. It is that most of the money for operating schools comes from the local community. Local controls are important if those who have the responsibility for financing an activity are to have some power in deciding how the money will be spent.

Practically all of the money which is used for schools is raised by taxation. Some of it is provided through the federal government, some through the state government, and some directly through the local school district. Of the money used in Maplewood schools in 1950, about 2 per cent came from the federal government, around 40 per cent came from the state government, and the rest came from the local school district.

While we are talking about how the school district gets its money, we might notice some surprising differences from year to year and from state to state. Until 1930 the local communities or counties provided at least 80 per cent of the money spent for public schools in the United States. The rest of the money came from the state and the federal government. By 1950, however, the local school districts and counties were providing only 55 per cent of the money, while the state had taken up the difference.

The situation varies a great deal from state to state. Maplewood is in an average state in this respect. In one state—Nebraska—however, the local school districts furnished around 90 per cent of school funds in 1950. In another—Delaware—the local school district and the county provided only 11 per cent of the total. The tendency is for the state to carry an increasing share of the burden. The reasons for this trend will be seen in the section on state controls.

Of course, the money which came to the Maplewood schools from the state government was collected by the state from its citizens, including those in Maplewood. This being so, it has seemed wise that a board representing taxpayers and other interested citizens in the local community have the final power over educational spending. The organization which has this power, and which also has the final say on many other school questions, is the Maplewood Board of Education.

The Maplewood Board of Education is composed of five citizens, each of whom is elected by the voters of the school district for a five-year term. The terms are staggered so that no more than two new members are elected in any one year. This guarantees that the board will always have experienced members.

The number of school board members, their terms of office, and the manner of their election vary from state to state and, sometimes, from community to community within the same state. In the larger cities around Maplewood, the board is appointed by the city government.

The local board of education operates what is called an *administrative unit* of education. An administrative unit has a single board of education, a single overall budget, and a single chief administrative official. The Maplewood school district is an administrative unit, of which the Maplewood Board of Education has official control, and for which Dr. Benson is the chief administrative official.

Within the Maplewood school district there are several *attendance units* which are simply individual school plants. Of course, the attendance units usually have a principal in charge. Sometimes they have their own P.T.A. and advisory groups. Nevertheless, their funds are controlled by the district as a whole, and final decisions about policies such as the teachers to be hired and the instruction to be offered are made on the district level. Mr. Rogers, the principal of the Maplewood High School attendance unit, is under Dr. Benson who represents the administrative unit.

Sometimes an administrative unit consists of just one attendance unit, sometimes of many. The Maplewood district has several. However, some of the school districts in the rural areas around Maplewood, though they are administrative units, maintain a single attendance unit which is an elementary school. Sev-



Cities Service Company; photo by Nelson Morris

School transportation enables individual schools to serve larger districts and to provide richer programs.

eral of these rural administrative units send their high school students to Maplewood. You may recall that Jean Swenson comes from such a unit in Ryeville. For this privilege, the Ryeville district pays a tuition charge to the Maplewood school district. In recent years there have been repeated efforts to consolidate all of the administrative units sending students to Maplewood High School into a single system. These efforts for consolidation have paralleled similar movements in many of the states.

Educational experts generally believe that an effective administrative unit should have enough students to permit the development of a good elementary and high school system. It also needs enough financial resources and students so that it can afford to hire at least part-time specialists in areas such as remedial reading, art, guidance, and health.

The exact size of the ideal administrative unit depends on such factors as how thickly the area is populated, what kind of road conditions exist, how much taxable property there is, the policy of the state in financing schools, and a number of other factors. An administrative unit that cannot afford to provide a rich program of instruction and to have access to special services is too

small. Yet it is also possible for an administrative unit to be so large geographically that it does not provide effective service to the community, or to have so many people living in its borders that it becomes difficult for those interested to make their influence felt. The ideal lies between these extremes, but it cannot be described in exact numbers without looking at specific cases.

When communities such as Jean Swenson's village of Ryeville face the question of whether or not to consolidate with a larger system, a number of very important problems are involved. Jean's father, for example, opposed consolidation because he thought the rural voters would be swallowed up by the numerically larger group in Maplewood. If that happened, he believed they would lose effective control over their own elementary school. He also felt that the Ryeville School provided an important community center and gave the people of the village something in common with each other. He argued that if its schools were consolidated with the Maplewood system the village of Ryeville might degenerate until it became nothing but a crossroads marked by a pair of service stations. He was probably correct in both arguments.

Yet Jean's uncle favored consolidation. So far as control was concerned, he admitted that consolidation would give the Ryeville parents less influence over their elementary school. But he pointed out that since they have no high school of their own they now have absolutely no control over the high school program. If they joined the Maplewood school district they would have something to say. He also called attention to the guidance services, the art and music specialists, and the remedial reading program which the Maplewood system can afford, but which are not available to Ryeville elementary school students. His reasons were also sound ones.

In some states the problem of providing special services for smaller administrative units, and of acting as a middleman between the state and the local community, is the concern of certain *intermediate units* of school administration. In the state in which Maplewood is located, the county acts as an intermediate unit. This unit maintains a county school board and a county superintendent of schools. These county officials act as state agents in collecting information about the schools, in dividing and distributing

state moneys to the schools in the county, and in checking on the certification of teachers. The county also provides the smaller administrative units with certain special services such as a public health nurse, a traveling library, a film library, and an attendance officer.

The nature of these intermediate units varies from state to state. They may be counties, towns, townships, or an area larger than the county. In certain states the intermediate units are very important, in others there are no such units. Sometimes the officials of the intermediate unit are elected, and in others they are appointed.

At the present time there seems to be a growing feeling that the intermediate unit can fill a most important need in providing special services on a voluntary basis to the administrative units which request such services. The state of New York, for example, has passed laws which make it possible for intermediate units to provide almost unlimited types of special help. Some such units hire a regular staff of music teachers, physical education teachers, school psychologists, art consultants, guidance counsellors, remedial reading experts, and others. These teachers and specialists are then loaned out on a contract basis for part-time service in the smaller administrative units.

WHAT POWERS DO LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS HAVE? Before we leave the local administrative unit, however, there are two more things that need to be discussed. One of these is to look carefully at the question of what kinds of decisions the local unit can make. The second is to review the division of responsibility between the citizen board of education and the professional educators.

According to the American constitutional system, all the powers of government are divided between the federal government and the state governments. Whatever legal powers are exercised by units smaller than the states are *delegated* by the state. That is, the state has said that the county, the city, and the school district may act for it in certain respects. The city police force, for example, has authority to make arrests only because the state has said it may do so. If the state legislature wanted to do so, it could change the powers granted to the city. However, in most cases the grant of power is included in a charter for the city and cannot be changed easily.

So it is in respect to education. When the Maplewood Board of Education makes any decision it does so because the state government has given it that right. States can and do add to or subtract from the powers given the local board of education. Nevertheless, for reasons already mentioned, most states have granted a great deal of power to the local community. The general practice is for the state to set up some limits and then permit the local board to do as it wishes within the limits.

Thus, for example, the state has told Maplewood that it must tax all property within the school district for at least nine mills (nine-tenths of 1 per cent of the estimated value of property). This would mean a tax of \$108 on a house assessed (officially estimated) at \$12,000. It has also said that the school district may not tax for more than thirty-five mills, a \$420 tax on the same house. Within these limits the school board, with the approval of the voters at the annual budget hearing, may decide how much money they wish to spend for schools. They then instruct the tax collector to collect the money for them. In Maplewood, and in every other state, nearly all of the school money raised in the local community comes from a property tax.

The state has also set up certain requirements for teachers. No person may teach in the Maplewood schools unless he has been certified by the State Department of Education. However, among certified teachers the local board has the power to hire any teacher it wishes. In Maplewood, the school board can also fire teachers for any reason.

However, several other states have decided that people who live in constant fear of losing their jobs for no good reason can seldom be effective teachers. These states have passed *tenure* laws, which differ in detail from state to state. The essential idea of such laws is that a teacher who has served a *reasonable* trial period cannot be fired except for very good reasons. Moreover, before he can be fired he must be given a chance publicly to hear the charges against him and to defend himself. In states where no such laws exist, many teachers and school boards have worked out agreements in which the board is morally bound to give fair treatment to teachers.

To understand further the powers of the local school board, we might look at what is taught in the schools. The state directs

that certain subjects must be taught, and it makes the teaching of some other things illegal. Within these limits the local school district has a great deal of freedom to change the program as it sees fit. In some of the states this freedom includes the right to choose textbooks, although a number of states designate the books to be used in certain subjects. Still another power granted the local district is to determine the location and design of school buildings and to arrange attendance units within the districts.

It is important to realize, too, that the state makes some minimum requirements to insure the safety of the students. State laws also define some rules about student attendance and discipline, but, as in the other cases, much freedom remains with the school district.

So far, however, we have spoken of the local district as if it were a single person. Actually it is more complicated. It consists of (1) a citizen body which elects the board and approves major decisions concerning such matters as the budget and building programs, (2) the board of education, and (3) the professional teachers and administrators. In theory the citizens' groups (school board and voters) make the major decisions about *what* the objectives of the school will be. The professional experts are supposed to know *how* best to achieve these goals.

In practice, however, it cannot work so simply. To begin with, one cannot decide *what* the school ought to try to accomplish without having some idea of what it can do. Moreover, the task of deciding which of several social agencies should do a particular job requires a thorough understanding of our way of life and of the position of the school in that way of life. In other words, the task of gathering evidence to use in deciding what the schools *ought* to do demands professional expertness and leadership. The citizen bodies expect their trained educators to provide such leadership and knowledge.

On the other hand, the trained educators cannot alone decide the *how* questions. Sometimes there are several ways of doing a particular job. Each of these ways has certain advantages and disadvantages, and the citizens must judge among them. Moreover, the average community, such as Maplewood, contains many well-educated citizens whose opinions on the problems of education are invaluable. The psychologist can often help the teacher

in finding ways to help a particular student, the lawyer can often help the superintendent in deciding how to handle certain legal problems, and the architect can often give invaluable advice on the planning and arranging of the school plant.

Sometimes the professional educators are themselves of different opinions, and the community invites specialists from the outside to work with them in planning the school program. As a matter of fact, most teachers and school administrators find it helpful to them if the community occasionally invites outside experts to review the program. Even the most talented expert finds it hard to be calm and free from prejudice when examining his own work. The critical judgment of another in whom one has faith is most valuable.

Thus we see that, though it is often said that the citizen groups decide *what* should be done and the professionals decide *how*, there is, in fact, constant need for all groups to work together on all parts of the program.

The State Influence in Education

Much has already been said about the power of the state to control education. For example, the power of the local school districts technically is only loaned them by the states. In questions that are strictly educational, the state is even above the national government. The federal Constitution, which is a contract among the federal government, the state governments, and the people, makes no mention of education. However, the Tenth Amendment clearly states that all powers neither granted the national government nor denied the state governments, shall remain in the hands of the state or its citizens. This amendment has been taken to mean, among other things, that the final authority over education in the United States rests with the states.

There is a historical tradition which justifies the claims of the states against both national and local governments. Among the earliest legal provisions for schools were the laws passed by the General Court of the Colony of Massachusetts in the 1640's. One of these laws instructed the towns to establish schools. Our

present state legislatures are the direct descendants of this General Court which established its right to dictate educational policy over three hundred years ago.

For many years of our early history, the colonies and states did not take their educational responsibilities very seriously. Yet, as we have noted, the final establishment of our public school system was as a result of state action. In recent years the state has again assumed a greater responsibility for the school program. We have seen, for example, that an increasing share of the money which supports schools is now raised by taxes on a state-wide level and distributed by the state to the local administrative units.

One reason for this increased state activity is that the growth of industry and of educational costs has created severe inequalities among local districts. We might, for example, look at the Milltown and Ryeville districts, which lie close to Maplewood. Milltown is a very small area having only sixty-five school-age children. It also has a large factory worth several hundred thousand dollars. A 2 per cent tax on the property of the Milltown school district would provide around four hundred dollars a year for each school age child in the district.

On the other hand, Ryeville, which has more children, has considerably less valuable property. The same 2 per cent tax on its property would bring less than one-half as much per student. The state, however, can tax everyone in the two districts equally and can divide the money among local school districts according to the number of children to be educated. If the total costs of education were borne entirely by the local district, then children living on one side of the school district boundary would receive a much poorer education than did their neighbors. This might be true even though the parents in the poorer district were paying higher school taxes.

Plans for evening up educational opportunities are sometimes called "equalization programs," "foundation programs," or "minimum programs." Where such plans are found, the state usually guarantees that every district will have enough money to provide what is considered a minimum educational program. To participate in the state plan, the district is usually expected to collect a minimum tax on its own citizens, and it is always given the right

to collect additional taxes if it desires a more satisfactory school program.

Besides the need to equalize educational opportunities and costs, there are other reasons for increased state activity in education. For one thing, the people of the entire state are directly concerned with the quality of education in every district. If the children raised in one area grow into lawless or incompetent people, the whole state must care for them. If they lack the intelligence to participate wisely in state political affairs then everybody is burdened with poor state government. Moreover, people do not always remain in their home school districts. Between 1940 and 1950 more than half of the families in the United States made at least one move, usually to a different county or state. If children receive a poor educational start in one district, then a second district has to pay the price.

The people in some areas of the United States are very interested in schools. They are wise enough and wealthy enough to provide sound education for their children. Yet every state has other communities whose people have little interest in education. If left to their own interests they would almost ignore the school. Because ignorance is so costly, the state governments feel they must insure every child a chance to receive at least a minimum education. To provide this insurance the state encourages and regulates the district school program.

We have already seen that the state can make almost any decision it wants about education. The only limits are those set by the state and federal constitutions. A few state governments make all sorts of detailed decisions at the state level, although the more common way is to delegate most of the responsibility to the local administrative units. The state always keeps the power to decide how school districts will be organized and financed. It usually certifies teachers, requires certain subjects to be taught, prevents certain kinds of instruction, inspects the schools, regulates the minimum program, and says something about the textbooks to be used.

Besides its power to *compel* the local administrative unit to do some things, the state also acts as an *advisory body* and as a source of help where other kinds of problems are concerned. State de-

partments of education sometimes collect materials to be used in the schools, give advice to school districts concerning building programs, help the district in planning what it will teach, and exert general leadership of education in the state.

On the state level there are several official bodies which have important powers. The state legislature, for example, actually makes the laws concerning schools in the state. These laws are, however, subject to the veto of the governor. If they exceed the powers granted to the legislature by the state or federal Constitution, they can be declared illegal by the courts.

According to the laws passed by the legislature, state educational policies are usually made by a state board of education. The state board corresponds somewhat to the district board of education. In most states its members are appointed by the governor, although arrangements are made so that the entire board is never changed at once. The state board has as its chief official a state superintendent of schools. In the majority of states the state superintendent is still elected by the people. However, educational experts generally feel that, since this job calls for professional expertness, the superintendent should be appointed by the state board. Under the state superintendent of schools there is a professional department of education. The state department corresponds to Dr. Benson's local staff of teachers.

The way in which citizen advisory groups work with professional educators on the local level is also carried over to the state level. Moreover, there is also as much difference in the way various state educational programs are organized as there is in the way local school districts carry on their work.

The National Interest

in Education

It is customary to say that the state governments control education, while the national government simply *encourages* the states in their efforts. As a very general statement this is essentially correct, although it does not tell the whole story. At times, the national government also exercises a certain amount of *control* over education. And, within its various departments, the national gov-

ernment actually maintains a significant educational system of its own. Annapolis, West Point, and the new Air Academy are examples. Yet so far as the public schools are concerned it is true that the national government has absolutely no legal authority when *purely* educational questions are involved.

As a matter of fact, though, there are a number of very important questions of school practice which are not purely educational ones. In such questions the national government often becomes deeply involved. The most striking recent example involves the segregated school systems of the southern states. In these cases it has been argued that the problem of citizenship rights is also involved, and the United States Supreme Court has ruled that this is a federal problem.

It may well be that, in the long run, few decisions concerning the public schools in America will have had such far-reaching consequences as the Supreme Court's decision declaring racial segregation in public education illegal. If by control is meant the power to bring about important changes in practice, then the Supreme Court has exerted great control by ruling that segregation is unconstitutional. However, the significant point in this

The national interest in education: a local teacher of agriculture, whose salary is partially paid out of federal funds, meets with a group of farmers from his district.



decision, the matter of civil rights, did not hinge directly on an educational question.

There have been a number of other very important cases in which decisions of the Supreme Court have made a great difference in the operation of the public schools. In one series of such cases, the Supreme Court ruled that the schools cannot force children to pledge allegiance to the flag if such a pledge offends their religious beliefs. In other cases they have attempted to define what the schools can do about religious instruction and about providing transportation for parochial school students. These decisions have all had an important effect on public education, but, as with the case of segregation, the educational problem was not the thing that gave the national government a right to speak and decide.

If we turn from the problem of control to that of encouragement, the record is very clear. From the very beginning our officials have recognized a national interest in the provision of sound education for all citizens in all states.

The fact that the federal Constitution does not mention education is sometimes mistakenly taken to mean that the Founding Fathers were not concerned. Nothing could be further from the truth. Those who expressed a belief that democratic government depends absolutely on the presence of an educated citizen body include most of the hallowed names: Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, and John Adams, to mention a few.

For approximately one hundred years, the United States Office of Education has been in existence gathering and distributing important information and providing leadership for the states. Acceptance of the leadership depends on the voluntary action of the states, but the federal influence has been very great.

But the national government has not limited its encouragement only to fine words and advice. From the very beginning, the national government has given financial aid, in one form or another, to the states for educational purposes. Usually this aid has been for the purpose of encouraging a particular type of instruction, but it reveals the continuing national interest.

For example, even before our present Constitution went into effect, the Congress adopted a policy of setting aside a certain proportion of federal lands for the encouragement of public

schools. Starting in 1785 with the states of the Old Northwest, Congress provided that the proceeds from the sale of a section of federal land were to be used for school purposes. Unfortunately, much of this land was sold at such low prices that schools did not get a substantial revenue from it. Yet most of the states which came into the Union under these arrangements continue to enjoy some benefit from this early national decision.

Another example of federal aid to education came during and after the War Between the States, when grants of land were made to various states to encourage them in establishing colleges of agriculture and mechanical arts. Many of our great public universities are the result of these grants. Even the private universities are partly supported today by expensive research grants which the federal government makes for defense purposes.

In the present century, the national government has taken an active interest in encouraging various kinds of vocational instruction in the secondary schools. We have already noted that part of the salaries paid to teachers of agriculture and home economics in Maplewood comes from the national government.

During the years of the Great Depression of the 1930's, federal money was made available for building schools in hundreds of American communities. Other communities which were profoundly affected by war and defense installations received federal aid in building and operating schools during the recent war and post-war years.

If we add the grants already mentioned to the amount spent by the National Youth Administration to help students in the last depression, and the tremendous sums more recently spent for veterans' education, the extent of federal aid to education is clear. Federal aid to education is not a new thing. Usually money raised by the national government has been used to encourage special kinds of educational service which the states and local districts would hesitate to start on their own resources. It is as if federal officials have felt a partnership with the state and have tried to help out in their own way without disturbing the basic operation of the schools.

At different times during the last century, there have been attempts to have the national government assume some responsibility for equalizing educational opportunities among the states.

It has long been recognized that even if the poorer states tax themselves more heavily, they simply do not have the wealth to support the kind of education offered in the wealthier areas. The nation as a whole has suffered from these inadequate programs, as have the wealthy states themselves.

During the last war and in the post-war period, the number of men educationally unqualified for military service has been too high in many of the poor states. People who lack the educational qualifications for military service are also less effective in agricultural and industrial jobs. This lack of adequate education in the poor regions has thus caused a waste of the human resources of our whole people.

Moreover, Americans have followed an age-old custom of migrating to improve their lot. In doing so, they have tended to move from the poor to the wealthier states. Consequently, such states as New York and California have had to absorb a lot of poorly educated workers from the less prosperous states. The same arguments which are raised in favor of equalizing educational opportunities within the state apply with some force to the problem of unequal opportunities among the states. Recent proposals for federal aid to education have grown out of these arguments.

So far every attempt to enlist the financial support of the national government in an equalization program has failed. Like most educational problems, this one is mixed up with religious controversy about the position of parochial schools and with the political controversy about the level of national spending. There is no evidence that equalization help will come for some time. However, some further aid in the construction of school buildings is receiving serious consideration.



THE schools, then, are actually controlled by two kinds of groups: (1) unofficial community groups and (2) the legally designated officers. The influence of the unofficial groups cannot be overestimated even though they work

indirectly. The ways of using indirect influence are similar at all levels of school government.

The state, which has final legal control in educational matters, delegates a great deal of the actual responsibility for operating the schools to a local administrative unit. This local unit is run by a district board of education.

There have been cases in which the United States Supreme Court has exercised control by overruling the state legislature in matters involving education and in basic questions of civil rights. In purely educational matters, however, the national government serves only to encourage the state and local units in their efforts. This encouragement has on a number of occasions taken the form of very substantial financial aid.

Many difficult problems on both the state and national level remain unsolved. How can we extend equality of educational opportunity to children living in the poorer states and communities? How can we improve the quality of education in our local communities? How can the citizen who is neither a member of a powerful group nor of the school board make his influence felt? What can you do now as a student and later as a citizen interested in our public schools?



*Some Things to
Think About and Do*

REMEMBER that the books listed on pages 217-219 may be of help to you in carrying out these projects.

1. With the help of your teacher, arrange to attend a meeting of the board of education in your community. On the basis of your observations, how would you answer the following questions:

- (a) With what kinds of problems was the board most concerned?
- (b) Were the problems discussed more like the problems treated in this chapter or the problems treated in Chapter Three?
- (c) Were any citizens groups represented at the meeting?

- (d) Was a school administrator or any other professional educator present? If so, what part did he play?
- (e) What other things do you think were important about this meeting?

2. With the help of your teacher, arrange an interview with a member of the board of education in your community. During the interview try to find out his views on the following questions:

- (a) What are the most important problems facing the schools in your community?
- (b) What are his responsibilities in helping to solve these problems?
- (c) What are the responsibilities of parents and organized citizens' groups in helping to solve these problems?
- (d) What are the responsibilities of teachers and other professional workers in helping to solve these problems?

3. Write a newspaper article describing public school conditions in your community. Be sure to include information on:

- (a) The number of students in the elementary schools and high schools
- (b) The size of the school budget
- (c) The yearly cost of educating each child
- (d) The percentage of each school dollar that comes from local, county, state, and federal taxes, and from other sources such as tuition, proceeds from athletic contests, etc.
- (e) The school tax rate (Illustrate this by telling how much school tax would be paid by a family with a \$10,000 house; by a factory whose property has an assessed value of \$500,000.)
- (f) The present size, membership, and background of the board of education

4. Several times in this book the controversy over the junior high school has been raised. What do you think are the arguments for and against having a junior high school?

PART FOUR



Standard Oil Co. (N. J.)



Part Four

PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN OUR DEMOCRACY

How have public schools contributed to our democracy? What are the problems they face as they look to the future? Can they continue to shoulder the enormous responsibilities we have assigned them? These are important questions to consider, along with a very personal one: What does all this mean to you as a citizen in today's America?



CHAPTER ELEVEN

Our Public Schools

EVER since they were founded over a century ago, the public schools have played a tremendous part in the development of our American nation. Their contributions have been so great and varied that it is difficult to summarize them briefly. Yet it is important for Americans to know about these contributions as they look to the future and make decisions about the education of their children.

In 1955, the Educational Policies Commission, a group of prominent college presidents, school superintendents, classroom teachers, and other educational leaders, made an effort to deal with this important problem by publishing a little book called *Public Education and the Future of America*. In this book, they tried to tell the American people the story of their public schools—of how they came to be, of how they have contributed to the health of American democracy, and of some of the problems they face as they look to the future. Their conclusions have been widely read and discussed by American teachers and citizens.

What do the members of the Educational Policies Commission believe to be the most important contributions of our public schools during the past century? Their book lists seven:

1. *Public schools have helped to induct more than thirty million immigrants into American life.* Here, the commission is referring to the vast job the public schools have done in teaching the American language and the American way of life to the millions of immigrants who have come to our shores.

2. *Public schools have helped to unite the American people.* Here, the commission is pointing to the fact that although Americans are of many different religious, economic, racial, and national backgrounds, they are a unified people who think of themselves as Americans all. The commission argues that the public schools, where children of all backgrounds mix together on a common basis, have played an important part in the development of this unity.

3. *Public schools have enriched the spiritual life of the American people.* Here the commission argues that in bringing together the children of many different religious faiths, the public schools have always taught the great ideal of brotherhood. Moreover, in teaching honesty, respect for others, the value of truth, and other important values, the public schools have taught the great moral and ethical values common to all religions. The commission believes this to be an important foundation for the religious liberty of our people—a liberty which joins the right to have one's own religious point of view with a respect for the religious views of other people.

4. *Public schools have helped to make real the American principle of equality of opportunity.* Here the commission is referring to the large number of scientists, businessmen, judges, artists, lawmakers, teachers, and other leaders who owe their education to the public schools. Without the public schools, many leading men and women would have been denied the opportunity of advanced training, and therefore, the opportunity to become outstanding in their respective vocations.

5. *Public schools have helped to make the American economy a miracle of production.* Here the commission is referring to the tremendous part the schools have played in increasing the productivity of business, industry, and agriculture. The schools have done this by providing skilled workers and skilled leaders for the farms, the factories, and the offices of our nation.

6. *Public schools have provided citizens with the keys to knowledge and understanding.* By this, the commission means that a free people must have both knowledge and the tools for getting knowledge. As discussed in Part Three, these tools include both skills, like reading and writing, and thought-tools like history, science, and the other disciplines. Only a people who *know* can be

free, and public education is one important way in which Americans have provided every citizen with the opportunity for knowledge.

7. *Public schools have built a deep and abiding loyalty to the American way of life.* By this the commission is pointing to the many ways in which public schools have inspired in young Americans a deep respect for the great principles of freedom, equality, and self-government on which our nation is founded.

Members of the commission believe that the public schools have played a tremendously important part in making our nation what it is today. You, yourself, could probably even add other great contributions to their list. Yet, these educators are not only concerned with the past. They are equally concerned with the future. They believe that because of the position in the world which the United States has assumed since World War II, the public schools cannot rest on past achievements. They must be ready to bear an increasing burden of responsibility if the American people are to do the jobs world leadership calls for. Put another way, as important as the public schools have been in the past, they are more important than ever in today's America.

Some Problems of the

Public Schools

As the public schools look to the future, however, they face many very pressing problems. Some of these problems grow out of the great variety of things that Americans have asked their schools to do. Even with unlimited funds, it would be extraordinarily difficult to produce citizens who can make decisions on foreign and domestic issues, who can work productively in our complicated industrial economy, who can be intelligent family members and wise purchasers, who can live healthfully, and who can appreciate the finer things of life. Yet, these are the very kinds of things Americans have asked of their schools.

There are other problems, however, of a very different sort. They are created by financial difficulties, by the fact that citizens cannot agree on age-old questions of educational policy, and by the fact that some citizens simply don't care about their schools.

(This last problem is probably the most dangerous of all because it either allows the schools to fall into the hands of selfish pressure groups with their own interests at heart or it allows them to hobble along with poor equipment and poor spirit.) What are these problems and what do they mean for American citizens in the years ahead?

1. *Meeting the problem of rising enrollments and costs.* Many Americans are completely unaware of the fact that unless a tremendous effort is put forth during the rest of the 1950's and the 1960's, the United States is going to endanger its national security with poor education. The need for this tremendous effort is caused *first*, by the steadily growing number of children coming into the public schools; *second*, by the fact that virtually no new school buildings were erected during World War II; and *third*, by the rise of school costs created by the inflation following World War II.

Enrollments are rising because more families have had more children during and following World War II. These children began to enter the schools around 1946, and they have been coming in greater numbers ever since. In 1955, there were over thirty

Teaching is a profession which attracts both men and women. Here student teachers observe children's play as part of their training.

Austin (Tex.) Public Schools



million children enrolled in the public schools, and the prospect was that this number would increase by at least a million each year for the next decade. Obviously this would mean new buildings, new classrooms, and new equipment.

What, however, was the building situation? By 1955, it was rapidly becoming a national disgrace. Over 700,000 children were in schools operating on double or triple shifts. (This means that each child received only one half to one third of a day of schooling each day.) Some 800,000 were in poor quarters, many of them firetraps; 300,000 were in "temporary" buildings like barracks, with little or no proper equipment; 400,000 were in rented garages, basements, halls, and churches. The National Education Association estimated that over 300,000 new classrooms would be needed just to "catch up" with the building lag, and that, in addition to these, over 700,000 more classrooms would be needed by 1960.

These huge figures can only have one meaning: thousands upon thousands of American children are simply not getting the education which is their birthright. How to cope with these problems has today become a major national issue. Some citizens and educators argue that only if the federal government contributes billions of dollars to the states to help build new public schools can the situation really be significantly improved. Others, fearing that federal aid is inevitably going to bring with it federal control, are seeking remedies at the state and local level. In some rapidly growing local communities, however, particularly suburban communities near large cities, school taxes are already tremendously high, and schools are still terribly crowded. And at the state level, there are vast differences in the *ability* of the different states to support education, no matter what their desire. Some states are poorer and some are richer, and these differences show in the education of children. In 1950, for example, the people of Mississippi spent \$85 for the schooling of each child, while the people of New York spent \$324. Yet, and this is important, the people of Mississippi were making a *greater effort* in spending \$85 per child than the people of New York in spending \$324 per child. The people of Mississippi simply have had less wealth in their state to begin with.

The solution to these problems is obviously not going to be

worked out overnight. Yet speed is needed. The year 1955 saw a growing number of students graduating from elementary school *without having ever had a full day's schooling in their lives*. And yet, thoughtful citizens know that it will take a number of years to develop truly effective remedies to these problems.

2. *Obtaining adequate teachers*. Closely tied to the problem of new buildings is the problem of obtaining a continuing supply of well-prepared teachers. The American people can build thousands of new classrooms; but if new young teachers are not prepared to take the places of retiring teachers and to meet the need of expanding school enrollments, the new classrooms will be worthless.

What was the actual teacher situation in 1955? The shortage was almost as acute as the building shortage. Around 80,000 teachers were teaching with sub-standard preparation. The National Education Association estimated in November, 1954 that 173,000 new teachers were needed for the year 1954-1955 to properly staff the public schools. Yet, the number of new teachers being graduated annually from colleges and universities *was actually declining*. Obviously this poses a serious problem.

The problem is further complicated by the fact that a person going into teaching has to know more today than ever before to do a good job of it. The time has long since passed when a good teacher could be educated in one, two, or three years past high school. As was pointed out in Chapter Two, the specialized professional knowledge as well as the general education required for a teacher now takes at least four or five years of study beyond high school. Thus, at the very same time as the demand for new teachers is sharply increasing, so are the requirements for teaching.

How can capable young men and women be attracted to enter the profession of teaching? Here, too, is one of the most important problems facing American citizens during the years ahead. Certainly part of the solution lies in improved teachers' salaries. While the average salary of classroom teachers in 1955 was \$3800 a year, 12 per cent of the teachers were earning less than \$2500 a year. True, these figures have shown definite increases since 1945; yet, rising costs of living have wiped out many of the gains. It is clear that a continuing rise in salaries will be necessary if teaching is to compete with other professions for talented young people, and if



American School Board Journal, April, 1909

Getting a good school site was as hard fifty years ago as it is today.

the flow of trained teachers into non-teaching jobs is to be halted.

The teacher's salary is important, but so is the teacher's morale. It is also clear that if communities want to obtain and retain qualified teachers, they must create the conditions in which teachers sense the importance of their work. This can mean many things, all the way from the improvement of physical conditions and the reduction of "extra" loads (in some communities, teachers are expected to teach Sunday School whether they want to or not), to the removal of unfair restrictions on teachers (in other communities, teachers are expected to buy their clothes and other things in the community rather than have the same freedom as

anyone else to purchase wherever and whatever they wish). Certainly, citizens must give immediate attention to the improvement of these conditions if they hope to have well-staffed public schools to educate their children.

3. *Preserving the "commonness" of the public school.* We saw in Chapter Five how the Americans who originally built our public schools hoped that an educational system which was supported and controlled by the citizenry and which embraced children of many different social, religious, and national backgrounds would provide a firm foundation for a democratic society. They hoped that children educated in such a system would develop a sense of mutual respect and appreciation that would enable all to live peacefully together while each retained his most cherished individual beliefs. In large measure, these hopes have shaped the development of American education for the past hundred years. Whether they will continue to do so, however, is a decision that citizens will have to face again in the years to come.

Many Americans today simply do not believe that a school embracing many different kinds of young people is the best place in which to educate their children. Members of some religious denominations, for example, think that the best kind of school for their children is one closely tied to their church or synagogue, and one in which teachers and children of their own religious persuasion predominate. It is the legal right of every American to educate his children in this kind of school as long as it meets certain minimum requirements of the state. Nevertheless, by exercising this right, a parent inevitably takes part in making a larger decision about the future of American education in general.

Actually, at no point in our history have all children ever attended the public schools. Ever since the colonists first came to the New World, private schools of many varieties have provided worthy and useful education to the students who have attended them. What is important, it seems, is the *balance* between the number of children in public schools and the number in non-public schools. In the past, guided by the ideal of the common school, the great majority of American children have received their education in the public schools. During the years since World War I, however, the number and proportion of children in non-public schools has been steadily rising. In 1955, the proportion was about

87 per cent in public schools to 13 per cent in non-public schools.

The point being made here is that if, on the basis of millions of decisions by millions of American parents, the balance should change to 60-40 per cent or 50-50 per cent, this would represent a basic change in the American educational tradition. To make this change is certainly the right of the American people. Whether or not they should do so, however, is quite another question—one that deserves the most careful and searching examination before fundamental moves are made.

Another important aspect of this problem concerns the question of racial segregation in the school. We saw in Chapter Six how segregated school systems for Negroes and whites were built in a number of our states during the years after the War Between the States. We saw also how even though these school systems tremendously enlarged educational opportunities for Negroes where few had existed before, they were opposed to the spirit of a public school common to all citizens.

These segregated school systems have been under attack from the very beginning by persons and groups who argue that they deny the equal rights of Negro citizens. For many years, state and federal courts held that it was the right of the states to maintain separate school systems for Negroes and whites, as long as they were equal in quality. Some citizens thought this "separate but equal" principle was quite in keeping with the American tradition. Education is a state matter, they said; and if a state wants to maintain segregated schools, as long as they are equal in quality, no one is being denied equal opportunity.

Other citizens, however, argued that the "separate but equal" principle was unconstitutional because it violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. This amendment says that no state "shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States"; nor "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

The issue of segregated public education was argued before the United States Supreme Court during its 1952 and 1953 terms and, on May 17, 1954, the Court handed down a decision declaring the "separate but equal" principle unconstitutional. Having made this declaration, however, the Court wisely noted the tremendous

variety of local conditions in which segregation would have to be removed, and therefore delayed for a year its final action on just how and when the decision would have to be complied with. When the final action did come on May 31, 1955, the matter of carrying out the decision "with all deliberate speed" was put into the hands of the federal district courts, thereby assuring that local conditions would be considered in the move toward integration. There was little doubt, then, that the matter of desegregation would be treated in different ways in different places, and that it would demand continued public attention during the years to come.

One final question that should be raised in connection with this problem of the "commonness" of the public schools, concerns the influence of informal neighborhood groupings on public education. What happens, for example, when a neighborhood becomes populated primarily by Negroes, or Polish Catholics, or German Jews, or businessmen who earn over \$10,000 a year? How "common" is the public school in that neighborhood? Even if every last child in the neighborhood attends the public school, how much contact with other groups will be achieved?

The question is one that has given much concern to citizens and educators, particularly in big cities where such neighborhoods are often numerous and large. Probably the most promising solutions that have been suggested involve the increase of opportunities for contact within the *school system* if these opportunities are not present within *individual schools*. In other words, if individual schools are largely homogeneous (attended by children of similar backgrounds), emphasis can be placed on athletic programs, musical programs, debating events, and other educational activities which bring large numbers of children from different schools together under the supervision of the school system. In this way, many of the values of common schooling can be preserved in communities where the benefits of intergroup contact are today more valuable than ever.

4. *Building the best possible school program.* As we have seen at many points in this book, one question on which Americans have always argued is what the schools should teach. Because of new world responsibilities which the United States has assumed, the period since World War II has been one of very sharp con-

troversy in this area. Many books and articles have appeared on the subject. Some are written by people who know a great deal about the public schools; others are written by people who haven't been in a public school for twenty years. Some have the good of the schools at heart; others don't. Some have only praise for the schools; others have only blame. And of course there are the middle-of-the-road books and articles which have some praise and some blame to offer.

Some authors have roundly criticized the public schools for trying to do too much. They argue that the main business of the school is to train the mind, and that the other things schools do are unimportant. Many of the people who take this point of view think that activities like woodworking classes, driver education classes, guidance clinics, and extra-curricular activities are "fads and frills" which simply waste money from the school budget which should be spent for more important things. You will remember that in Chapter Three this is the point of view which Mrs. Bryce argued before the Maplewood Women's Club. People who take this point of view usually argue for a "return to the fundamentals."

Parents visit a classroom to get first hand information about the school's curriculum and activities.

Board of Education, City of New York



Other authors criticize the public schools for not having gone far enough in providing a sound program for all the children who attend. These authors want more extra-curricular activities, more guidance clinics, more music, painting, cooking and woodworking classes—more of the very things other people are calling “fads and frills.”

One special area which has excited a great deal of citizen interest since 1945 is the problem of religion in the public school program. Most Americans agree that the public schools, serving children of all religious faiths, are no place for the teaching of sectarian religious doctrines. Yet, many Americans think that there should be some religious emphases in the public school program. Some think it should be done by having the schools teach *about* religion but not teach any one body of doctrine. Others think it should be done by dismissing those children who desire religious instruction early one day a week so that they can go to their places of worship to obtain the instruction. This is called the “released time” plan, and is very much like the one which the committee of senators discussed in Chapter Three. Finally, some citizens think that the public schools ought to continue to teach ethical values as they always have, but not religion. Religion, they maintain, is not the province of the public school.

We saw in Chapter Three, and again in Chapter Seven, how many people and groups in Maplewood are interested in the school program. Every American community where people want the best for their children has this interest. What the schools actually do teach grows out of decisions which are constantly being made by citizens and educators working together. And few decisions today are as important to the nation's future as are those about what shall be included in the program of the public schools.

5. *Maintaining the freedom for teachers to teach.* Another problem which demands continuing attention from the American people is the problem of freedom for teachers, commonly called *academic freedom*. The tradition of academic freedom is a long one, and one that has been closely associated with freedom of speech and of the press. Democratic societies support academic freedom because they think they will benefit from giving competent teachers the freedom to explore in the world of ideas and

to share the results of their explorations with their students. Like all freedoms, academic freedom carries with it a responsibility, that of trying to be fair to all sides of controversial questions.

Now academic freedom sounds like a good thing to most people. If we give our scientists this freedom, they produce results of great benefit to mankind. Our artists, given such freedom, produce great art. But now and then, when a teacher of history, or economics, or literature goes exploring with his students in the world of ideas, they may come to certain conclusions which may be unpopular with certain groups in the community. This raises the question: How do we balance the right of the people to control their schools with the need for careful, fearless thinking on important social issues?

The problem is a difficult one. We saw in Chapter Three how different organizations in Maplewood want their special points of view taught in the schools. Labor unions want a labor viewpoint taught and businessmen's groups want a business view taught. Some people say, let all of these important viewpoints be presented and then let the students choose for themselves. Others say, let's keep all such controversial issues out of the schools. The schools should be interested only in facts. Still other people argue that if we keep out everything on which citizens disagree, nothing worth-while will be left, and schools will be dry-as-bones places to be.

Most Americans believe that only if teachers are *free* to deal with ideas will our nation stay free. Most Americans also believe that young people should have the opportunity to hear many points of view in school and to learn to judge issues for themselves. Yet, sometimes, when a conflict over freedom of teaching arises in a community and the "chips are down," citizens forget these principles and try to get the school board hastily to "fire" the teacher in question without a hearing. It is then that communities need the steady hands, the clear minds, and the resolute support of citizens informed about schools and about the values of academic freedom.

Obviously the five problems we have discussed here do not exhaust the list of educational problems today facing the American



National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools

Citizens meet on all levels—local, state, and national—to discuss educational problems and their solutions.

people. But they are examples of how great are some of the problems connected with the public schools. In different communities and at different times, different educational problems will call for the greatest attention. What is important is that Americans be awake to these problems and realize that only when there is extensive citizen concern with the great issues of public education do these issues get resolved in ways beneficial to the nation as a whole.

The Public and the Public Schools

The public schools are the public's schools. This fact should be kept in mind; it is the most important principle there is in making decisions for the future of public education. The public schools have always belonged ultimately to the American people, and it is the American people who have assigned to the public schools their most important tasks. In doing this job, the American people have always consulted with educational leaders. Just as the Maplewood school board consults with Dr. Benson before making important decisions, so have the American people generally

worked with their educational leaders on matters of educational policy. Yet, it is the people, through their state legislatures, school boards, and other agencies, who have ultimately made the decisions about the directions in which the public schools will move.

This fact places tremendous responsibilities on Mr. Average Citizen. He is constantly being asked to make up his mind on important educational matters. Should the federal government appropriate money for schools? Should a bond issue be approved to obtain money for a new junior high school? Should the taxpayers pay for a psychologist in the schools? Should religious instruction be given on school time? Should the taxpayers pay for driver education? For instruction in typing? For student trips to the state capital? For cooking equipment? For school lunches? Should this candidate or that candidate be elected to the school board? These and thousands of similar questions are presented to American citizens each year in communities throughout the nation. They are questions which grow naturally out of the great problems discussed above. We have seen how some of these questions are handled in Maplewood; and Maplewood's experience is repeated from Maine to California.

What happens? In some communities, nobody cares. There are communities in the United States where ten thousand people live and only a few hundred take the trouble to vote in school elections. Citizens "just don't get around to it." And often this means that the professional staff in the schools—the people described in Chapter Two of this book—simply don't do their work properly for want of funds or moral support.

In other communities, on the other hand, citizens show great interest. Parents and other adults are concerned. They talk over educational questions with their educational leaders and among themselves. And then they vote intelligently on the controversial questions presented them. In communities like this, public schools are usually good schools—good to work in and good to attend. Citizens have justifiable pride in them.

What makes the difference between communities? Obviously, many things. Some of them you can undoubtedly think of yourself. But doesn't so much depend on the citizens themselves? If they are interested, if they are informed, if they take the trouble

to find out "what's going on," the public schools are fairly sure to profit.

You and the Public Schools

What does this mean to you, or to the other members of your high school class? It means that all of you, for your own sake as well as for the sake of your future children, have a great personal stake in the public schools. It means that you must begin, if you haven't already done so, to think of the public schools as *your* schools. It means you must think of them as actually belonging to you and to your neighbors. If the public schools in your community are good schools, it is to your credit. If the public schools in your community are poor schools, it is your fault. It means that credit or blame for the quality of your public schools can never be passed off onto "the other fellow." To repeat: *the public schools are your schools.*

Students can take an important part in community efforts to improve public education and its facilities.

San Diego (Calif.) City Schools



The questions that come naturally to mind are: "What can I do about it? How can I make sure that the public schools of my community will be good schools?" Speaking generally, you can do so by making sure, as a citizen, that the schools of your community are getting adequate financial support, that they are attracting and holding qualified teachers and other specialized staff members, that they are offering a rich enough program to serve all the differing educational needs of the Jack Browns, Mary Smiths, Jean Swensons, Joe Randolphs, Jimmy Levines, Dorothy Kellys, and Hans Bergers in the community, and that they are good schools to work in and good schools to attend. Speaking specifically, you can do some or all of the following things:

1. *Take a personal interest in the public schools.* This is something that you can begin right now. Having thought through the problems raised in this book, you are in an excellent position to understand some of the things your own school is trying to do with you. All too often, students see their own education as a continuing fight between themselves and their teachers. They are completely unaware of the great importance of their education to themselves and their community. They are equally unaware of the battles which had to be fought to secure educational opportunity for every American child. As one who is aware of these things, you can begin to be a "school-conscious" citizen by trying to understand what your teachers are trying to accomplish with you and your classmates, and by helping them to do the job as well as possible.

Your interest in the schools, however, only *begins* when you are a student. After you have been graduated, you should visit the schools now and then and see for yourself what is going on in them. It is truly amazing how much a school can change even in the first five years after you have been graduated. You will find that almost all school staff members enjoy having visits from citizens in the community. (Of course it is only common courtesy to give advance notice of your visit.) You will find that if you stay in touch with your schools, you will be better equipped to help make decisions on school policy, better able to vote intelligently on school affairs, and better able to judge the activities of your representatives on the school board and in the legislature.

2. *Join a group of your fellow citizens interested in school im-*

procement. During the past fifty or seventy-five years, Americans have found that if they join together with other people of like mind to get things done, things will get done more quickly. Workingmen learned this when they formed unions; businessmen learned it when they formed chambers of commerce; and veterans learned it when they formed veterans' organizations.

Citizens interested in school improvement have also learned this fact over the years. In many American communities, there are one or more citizen groups dedicated to school improvement who work closely with the educators to bring school improvement about. It can be a parent association; or a school development council, or a public education association. You will recall that in Maplewood, there were a number of parent-teacher associations as well as a School Improvement Association. (Interestingly enough, the effectiveness of these groups is so well known that in some communities groups of citizens *opposed* to better public schools have actually called themselves School Improvement Associations or School Development Councils.) Shortly after World War II, a group called the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools was organized with headquarters in New York City. The National Citizens Commission is anxious to have a citizen group dedicated to school improvement in every community in the nation, and is willing to help citizens organize such a group if none now exists where they live.

3. *Direct the attention of other citizen groups to school improvement.* Do you remember in Chapter Three how the Maplewood Women's Club, the Maplewood Labor Council, the Maplewood Chamber of Commerce, and the Maplewood Post of the American Legion all displayed interest in school improvement? This situation is quite common in American communities. *If the public schools are the public's schools, then the more of these groups that take an interest in public education, the better it is for the schools.*

Here is another place where you can do something about the schools. You will undoubtedly be a member of one or more of these groups after you have finished your schooling. If you can become active in these groups and turn their attention to *their* stake in public education, to the problems of public education, and to ways in which they can work with school authorities to

assist and improve the schools, you will be doing the groups themselves, the public schools, and your community a great service.

4. *Work for election or appointment to a school board.* One of the most important continuing needs of the public schools is a steady flow of dedicated, informed citizens to serve on school boards. Board members are rarely paid for their services so that one who gives of himself and his time to perform these services does a great public service. You may ask yourself: "How could I ever get elected to a school board?" You will find that communities are constantly on the lookout for men and women willing to serve on school boards in a public-spirited way. If you keep in touch with the problems of the public schools, if the citizen groups of which you are a member know of your interest in and knowledge of school affairs, if they think you have the best interests of the school at heart, there is no reason in the world why you should not be able to gain election to a board of education and do a fine job after you are elected.

5. *Become a public school teacher.* As a citizen, then, you can contribute in these four important ways to school improvement. There is, of course, one other way—the most direct of all. That is to prepare yourself for teaching and actually become a teacher in the public schools. We have seen in Chapter Two how many different kinds of specially trained persons are required for our public schools. Tens of thousands of new teachers will be needed during the next ten or fifteen years if the public schools are to continue their work. There are few jobs in which young men and women today can better combine a life of warm, exciting, and spiritually satisfying personal and professional associations with some measure of financial security. Here, then, is a fifth way in which you can contribute to improving the great work of the public schools.



Public education is a worthy and noble enterprise. For more than four generations, the public schools have contributed to the freedom, the prosperity, and the happiness of the American people. Whether they can continue to do so

in the future, whether they can meet the great problems facing them, depends very much on the continuing interest and loyal support of you and your fellow citizens. The whole theme of this book has been that the public schools are *your* schools, designed to serve you and your neighbors. What *you* do about them will make all the difference in the world.



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The Education of Free Men in American Democracy

Public Education and the Future of America

The Purposes of Education in American Democracy

The Structure and Administration of Education in American Democracy

The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy

The following publications of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, 2 West 45th Street, New York 36, N. Y., discuss the role of the citizen in the making of educational policy.

Financing Public Education in the Decade Ahead

How Can Citizens Help Their Schools?

How Can We Advertise School Needs?

How Can We Get Enough Good Teachers?

How Can We Help Our School Boards?

How Can We Organize for Better Schools?

How Have Our Schools Developed?

Audio-Visual Aids

Many school systems provide audio-visual materials and information concerning their uses through a special department, or through the school library. State departments of education supply information as to sources and in some instances materials also. Many museums and libraries, such as the American Museum of Natural History and the Boston Public Library, have relatively inexpensive materials for sale or loan. Various departments of the federal government, such as the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Commerce, are valuable sources. The teacher seeking further guidance will find the following list of directories and other general sources useful. *This is by no means an inclusive list, but it is fairly permanent, representative, and reliable.*

- A Directory of 2002 16MM Film Libraries*, Visual Aids Section, Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C. Write to U. S. Government Printing Office.
- Directory of United States Government Films*, U. S. Film Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C. Write to U. S. Government Printing Office.
- Educational Film Guide*, H. W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, New York 52, N. Y. Cumulative annual catalog, with evaluations of each of over 2000 films, original sources, and local distributors or libraries.
- Educators' Guide to Free Films*, Educators' Progress Service, Randolph, Wisconsin. Annotated lists of films and slide films for free distribution.
- Filmstrip Guide*, H. W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, New York 52, N. Y. Gives information similar to above relative to filmstrips.
- 1001 Blue Book of Non-Theatrical Films*, Educational Screen, Chicago, Illinois. Includes list of films and distributors. Annual compilation.
- Sources of Visual Aids for Instruction in Schools*, U. S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C. Sources of films, filmstrips, lantern slides, charts, pictures, posters, maps, globes, exhibits, specimens.
- DALE, EDGAR, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*. The Dryden Press, New York, N. Y., 1948. An excellent guide to the use and evaluation of all audio-visual aids. An extensive list of sources of teaching materials is included.

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Department of Visual Instruction, National Education Association,
1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Educational Film Library Association, 45 Rockefeller Plaza, New
York 20, N. Y.

We have listed below some specific titles of appropriate films and their sources. Since such a list of sources changes so often, it is suggested that teachers interested in obtaining the latest films on a given subject consult one of the above directories.

Accent on Learning (28 min., Ohio State University, Columbus 10, Ohio)

Designed to show the variety of teaching techniques used in a good school program.

And So They Live (24 min., New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Place, New York 3, N. Y.)

Tells about education for community improvement in the rural South.

Fight for Better Schools (22 min., March of Time, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Text-Film Department, 330 West 42 Street, New York 18, N. Y.)

Describes a two-year campaign by citizens of Arlington, Virginia, for better schools.

Freedom to Learn (17 min., National Education Association, 1201 16 Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.)

Describes the experience of one community in dealing with the problem of teaching controversial issues in the public school.

From Sociable Six to Noisy Nine (22 min., McGraw-Hill Book Co., Text-Film Department, 330 West 42 Street, New York 18, N. Y.)

Deals with typical behavior of children between the ages of six and nine.

Horace Mann (17 min., Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., Wilmette, Illinois)

Traces the life and work of the "Father of American Public Education."

The School (19 min., Castle Film Division, United World Films, Inc., Russ Building, San Francisco 4, California)

Reviews a day in a typical small-town elementary school from the time the janitor arrives in the morning to the close of the evening P.T.A. meeting.

School Board in Action (27 min., Educational Film Library Association, 345 E. 46 Street, New York 17, N. Y.)

Deals with the matter of public control of public education through duly elected or appointed school boards.

The School-Child's Community (16 min., Wayne University, Audio-Visual Materials Consultation Bureau, 5272 Second Boulevard, Detroit 1, Michigan)

Treats techniques of teaching in a modern elementary school.

School in Centerville (20 min., National Education Association, 1201 16 Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.)

Portrays a good school in a rural community.

Schoolhouse in the Red (45 min., Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., Wilmette, Illinois)

Deals with the problem of rural school district reorganization from the viewpoint of the farmer and his family.

Skippy and the Three R's (29 min., National Education Association, 1201 16 Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.)

Portrays the experience of an average boy during his first year in the public schools.

Who Will Teach Your Child? (23 min., McGraw-Hill Book Co., Text-Film Department, 330 West 42 Street, New York 18, N. Y.)

Treats the problem of attracting gifted young people into teaching.

Wilson Dam School (20 min., Tennessee Valley Authority, Film Services, Knoxville, Tennessee)

Dramatizes a typical day at a good modern elementary school.



INDEX

The fictitious people and groups mentioned in this book are indexed under the heading Maplewood.

- Ability to support education, 201-202
Academic freedom, 97-98, 208-209
Academy, 67-68
Adult education, 14-16, 18
Audio-visual aids, 220-222
- Barnard, Henry, 74, 75
Bibliography, 217-219
Board of education, 176-182
- Carter, James G., 74, 75
Church-related schools (*see* Private schools)
Citizen participation, 210-215
Citizenship education, 45-46, 48-50, 114-118, 124-125, 163-167, 198-199
Clubs (*see* Extra-curricular activities)
Common school, 18-19, 75-81, 90-91, 159-160, 204-206 (*see also* Public schools)
Comprehensive high school, 96, 159-160
Compulsory attendance laws, 91-92
Consolidation of districts, 178-179
Control of education
 local, 175-183
 national, 186-191
 state, 183-186
 unofficial, 172-175
Controversial issues, 96-97, 209
Curriculum (*see* Public schools, program)
- Denominational schools (*see* Private schools)
Dewey, John, 95
Discipline in school, 64, 66
Disciplines of knowledge, 113
- Education
 and democracy, 54-55, 68-69, 114-118, 197-199
 and equality, 73, 76, 198-199
 and freedom, 114-118, 198-199, 208-209
 and industrialism, 53-54, 198
 and nationalism, 73, 199
 and schools, 118-126
 and social reform, 73-74
 and loyalty, 199
 and universal suffrage, 71
 goals of, 105 ff.
Educational Policies Commission, 106, 197-199
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 174
Elementary education, 62-64, 76-78, 95, 154-158
Emancipation Proclamation, 90-91
Emotional health, 108 ff.
Equal educational opportunity, 76, 78, 81, 190
Extra-curricular activities, 51-52, 161-162, 166-167, 207-208
- "Fads and frills," 51, 133-134, 207
Federal aid to education, 189-190, 201
Federal Constitution, 188
 First Amendment, 77
 Tenth Amendment, 83, 183
 Thirteenth Amendment, 91
 Fourteenth Amendment, 91, 205
 Fifteenth Amendment, 91
Federal government, 32-33, 176, 186-191
Films about education, 220-222

Franklin, Benjamin, 67-69, 73, 95
 Freedom for teachers (*see* Academic freedom)
 Froebel, Friedrich, 95

G.I. Bill of Rights, 94
 Goals of education (*see* Education, goals of)
 Graduate education, 96-97
 Guidance, 8, 11, 26, 132, 167

Harvard College, 65
 Health, 13-14, 108 ff., 124-125
 Herbart, Johann Friedrich, 95
 High schools, 78-81, 84-85, 86, 92-93, 95, 163-167
 Higher education, 66, 80-81, 85, 93-94, 96-97, 189
 Hornbook, 63

Indirect learning, 143-146, 164 (*see also* Learning)
 Intermediate unit, 179-180

Jackson, Andrew, 72
 Jefferson, Thomas, 68-69, 73, 75-76
 Junior high school, 158-162

Kalamazoo Case, 93
 Kindergarten, 11-12, 154-156

Ladder system of education, 64-65, 75-81, 159-160 (*see also* Common school)

Land Ordinance of 1785, 189

Learning, 18, 108 ff., 129-151, 163-169
 and drill, 148-150
 and interest, 138-146
 and motivation, 138-146
 and punishment, 140
 and readiness, 134-138, 155-156
 and remembering, 146-150
 and rewards, 140
 and underlying principles, 147-150, 163-167
 and use, 146-150, 165-166
 at different stages of life, 108-110
 different kinds of, 111-114

Lewis, Samuel, 74

Local control of education, 175-183
 Local support of education, 175-183

McGuffey readers, 79

Mann, Horace, 74, 75

Maplewood

Maplewood--*Continued*

Chamber of Commerce, 48-49, 115, 117, 171, 214
 citizen groups, 39-55
 description of, 1-4
 map of, 6
 Maplewood Citizen's Advisory Council, 171-172
 Maplewood Labor Council, 49-50, 115, 117, 171, 214
 Maplewood School Improvement Association, 40
 Maplewood Tax League, 40
 Maplewood Teachers' Association, 40, 46-48
 Parent-Teacher Association, 40, 43-44, 115
 Dr. Benson (school superintendent), 15, 25, 31, 34-35, 40, 41, 177
 Hans Berger (adult student), 14-15
 Miss Booth (science teacher), 25, 33, 34
 Angie Brooks (adult student), 15-16, 110, 111
 Jack Brown (high school student), 5-7, 109, 111, 115-116, 131-132, 138-140
 Dick Fisher (Legionnaire), 44-46, 115
 Tom Halliday (Legionnaire), 44-46, 115
 Mr. Henderson (guidance counselor), 9, 25-26, 30, 144, 150
 Bob Hopkins (high school student), 8-9, 109, 163-167
 Miss Horowitz (reading specialist), 13, 22-24
 Miss Johnson (elementary school teacher), 13, 28-30
 Dorothy Kelly (elementary school student), 13-14, 108, 111, 114, 141, 145, 149, 156-158
 Jimmy Levine (kindergarten student), 11-13, 108, 111, 134, 135, 136, 154-156, 168-169
 Joe Randolph (junior high school student), 10-11, 138-140, 158-162
 Mrs. Reed (home economics teacher), 16, 32, 33
 Mr. Rogers (principal), 16, 30-32, 40, 177
 Mr. Sanford (business arithmetic teacher), 10, 31, 33-34
 Mary Smith (high school student), 7-8, 109, 111, 168-169

American Legion, 44-46, 171, 214
 Board of Education, 39-41, 177-179

Maplewood—Continued

- Jean Swenson (high school student), 9-10, 109, 111, 178-179
- Mrs. Williams (elementary school teacher), 11-13, 27-28
- Mills, Caleb, 74
- Milltown, 9, 184
- Moral education, 77-78, 208

National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, 214

National Education Association, 105-106 (see also Educational Policies Commission)

- National interest in education, 186-191
- National Youth Administration, 189
- Negro and education, 90-91, 187-188, 205-206

New England Primer, 63

Oregon Decision (1925), 94

Out-of-class activities (see Extra-curricular activities)

Owen, Robert Dale, 73

Parker, Francis W., 95

Parochial schools (see Private schools)

Pestalozzi, Johann Heinrich, 95

Private schools, 61-66, 85-86, 94, 204-205

Professional education, 96-97 (see also Teacher education)

Projects (this book), 20-21, 38, 55-56, 70, 87, 101-102, 127-128, 151-152, 170, 191-192

Public Schools

- and American unity, 198
- and equality of opportunity, 198
- and immigrants, 197
- and loyalty, 199
- and other social institutions, 118-126, 156
- and spiritual values, 198
- and the public, 210-215
- control of, 52-55, 66-67, 78, 84, 171-192, 210-215
- early leaders, 74-75
- enrollments, 16-20, 84, 92, 93, 200-202
- history, 59-102
- opposition to, 82-83
- problems, 37-38, 199-210
- program, 19-20, 50-51, 63-64, 76-78, 94-98, 107-170, 206-208
- staff, 22-38, 182-183
- struggle to establish, 82-85

Public Schools—Continued

- students, 5-20
- subjects (see School subjects)
- support, 40-41, 47, 66-67, 78, 92, 171-192
- teachers, 22-38, 98-101, 182-183, 202-204

Purposes of education (see Education, goals of)

Readiness, 23, 134-138, 155-156

Released time religious instruction, 41-43, 208

Religion and education, 77-78, 123-124, 208

Ryeville, 9, 178-179, 184

School administration, 30-32, 34-36, 175 ff.

School buildings, 62, 65, 100-101, 201

School district, 176-183

School equipment, 62-63, 100-101

School essay contests, 48-50

School principal, 30-32

- School services, 24, 33-36
 - guidance, 8, 11, 26, 132, 167
 - health, 13-14, 108 ff., 124-125
 - remedial reading, 22-23

School subjects

- agriculture, 32, 33
- American history, 15, 96, 163-167
- arithmetic, 11, 13, 95, 143
- art, 95-96, 135
- commercial courses, 10, 95, 96
- drawing, 95
- driver education, 44
- English, 7, 15, 96, 138-139
- foreign languages, 65-66, 96
- geography, 95, 138-139
- history, 95
- home economics, 15-16, 32, 33, 95
- mathematics, 11, 13, 95, 137, 143
- music, 12, 95
- physical education, 95, 96, 135
- problems of democracy, 163-167
- reading, 11-12, 13, 62-64, 95, 134-135, 156
- science, 8, 95-96
- spelling, 95
- social studies, 7, 96, 163-167
- "three R's," 50-51, 62-64, 95, 134-135, 156
- vocational courses, 95
- writing, 95, 134-135

School superintendent, 34-36, 177

- School taxes, 40-41, 47, 66-67, 78, 84, 92, 171-192
- Schoolbooks, 62-63
- Secondary education, 65-66, 79-81, 84-85, 86, 92-93, 95, 158-167
- Segregation and education, 90-91, 187-188, 205-206
- Separation of church and state, 77-78, 124
- Seven Cardinal Principles, 106
- State board of education, 186
- State control of education, 41-43, 183-186
- State equalization program, 184-185
- State superintendent of schools, 186
- State support of education, 184-185, 201
- State university, 17-18, 80-81, 85, 93-94, 189
- Student government, 166-167
- Supplementary movies (this book), 220-222
- Supplementary reading (this book), 217-219
- Support of education, 40-41, 47, 66-67, 78, 84, 92, 171-192, 201
- Swett, John, 74
- Taylor, Orville, 76
- Teachers (*see* Public schools, teachers)
- Teacher education, 22-38, 98-101
- Teacher salaries, 40, 46-48, 202-203
- Teacher tenure, 181
- Teaching, 37, 215
- Teaching conditions, 203-204
- Teaching methods, 28-30, 63-64, 65-66, 98-101, 129-151
- Truman, Harry S., 94, 174
- United States Supreme Court, 42, 91, 94, 187-188, 205-206
- Universal education (*see* Common school; Education)
- Vocational education, 32, 33, 95, 109-110
- White House Conferences, 174
- Wiley, Calvin, 74

He that ne er learns his A, B, C,
For ever will a Blockhead be ;



But he who to his Book's inclin'd,
Will soon a golden Treasure find.



