



CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL

IN THIS ISSUE:

HEAR, SEE, SPEAK NO EVIL?

EXAMINING EXAMS

GOVERNMENT AID FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS--NO!

GOVERNMENT AID FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS--YES!



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CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL: a medium of expression for the Calvinistic school movement in the United States and Canada

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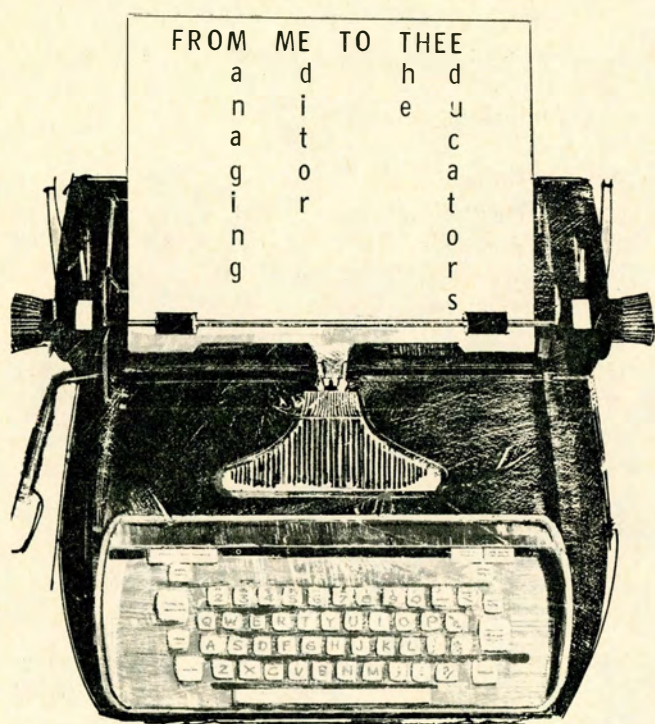
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Christian Educators Journal Association, composed of several member or sponsoring organizations, publishes the Journal as a channel of communication for all educators committed to the idea of parentally controlled Christian schools, whether at the elementary, secondary, or college level. The general purpose of the Journal is to foster the continuing improvement of educational theory and practice in Christian schools. Therefore, its pages are an open forum for significant articles and studies by Christian educators on Christian teaching. Editorial policy favors those contributions that are normative and evaluative rather than merely descriptive of existing trends and practices in American education. All articles and editorials appearing in it are to be regarded as the expression of the viewpoint of the writers and not as the official position of the Christian Educators Journal Association or its member organizations.

Business correspondence concerning subscriptions to the Journal or membership in the Association should be sent to the Business Manager. Subscription price is \$ 2.00 for four issues per year, with issues appearing in the months of October, December, February, and April. Correspondence concerning articles or book reviews should be addressed to the editor of the appropriate department or to the Managing Editor.

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HEAR, SEE, SPEAK NO EVIL?

A familiar piece of Oriental statuary depicts three monkeys with hands clasped in turn over their ears, eyes, and mouth, and with the subscription "Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil". Whatever its merits as an expression of Oriental religion, or even its value as a moral maxim for a person's daily life, it seems to me to be pernicious when it is applied to Christian education.

There is a mentality among us which regards the Christian school as a secure refuge from the various forms of evil abroad in this world. They send a child to, or they teach in, the Christian school so that they may escape the possibility of evil companionship and the probability of contact with anti-Christian sentiments or views. Thus, curriculum construction proceeds by exclusion; the curriculum has excluded from it significant contact with the theory of evolution in science, the theory of Communism in civics, and oaths in lit-

erature, to name just a few examples. Because they are evil, that is, ideas and actions of which Christians do not approve, it follows that they do not belong in our books or on the lips of teachers, except perhaps to deplore them in passing.

What these good folk fail to perceive is that examination of evil, under competent guidance, is a natural and inevitable part of education. It is inevitable because such evil is in at least two places: our culture and our own hearts. Because it is ineradicable from both of these, it cannot be eradicated from the curriculum. The classroom is also the most natural place for such confrontation with evil because here there is always present an interpreter, a guide: the teacher. In the home, in the shop, in the library, in the thousand and one interactions a child has with his culture, there is rarely present an interpreter, a sympathetic and responsible adult who can help the young person find, define and react to the particular form of evil. The classroom is by far the best place to confront it. The size of the doses of it, the context into which it is placed, these are all matters for proper concern on the part of parent or pedagogue, but present it must be.

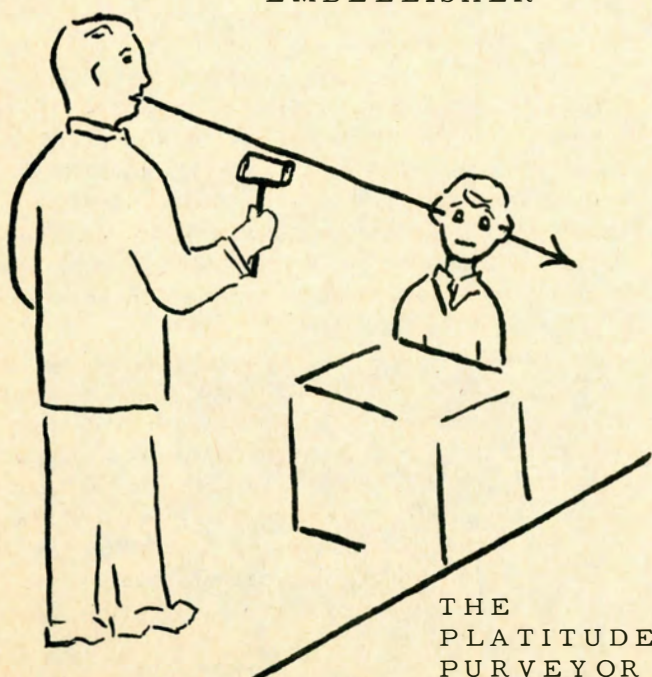
Hopefully, this journal will continue to reflect the belief that coping with evil in our culture and in the lives of students is a concern of the Christian teacher. In the past year we have had articles on the teaching of such political evils as Communism, dramatic evil in plays studied or presented, and personal evil in the form of race prejudice. May this trend continue and even grow.

May we be prepared to hear evil enough to know it in our subject matter, see it clearly enough to teach what it is, speak about it openly in our classes. To either ignore it or to play the role of neutral, objective scholars without bringing our religion to bear on ideologies and actions as we teach them is to abandon an important dimension of good teaching. D.O.





THE
ANECDOTAL
EMBELLISHER



THE
PLATITUDE
PURVEYOR



THE
PAUNCHY
PONDEROUS
PONTIFICATOR

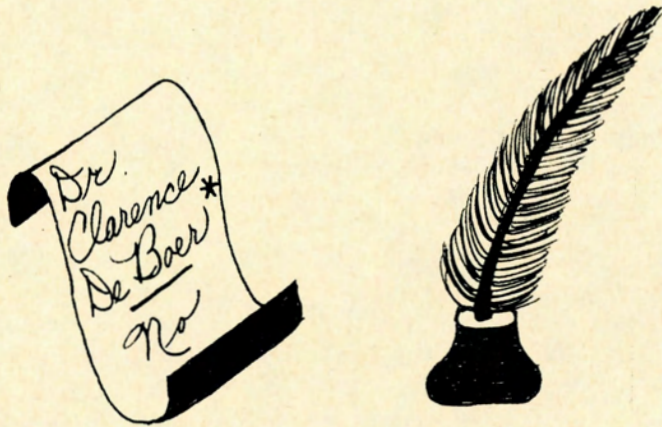
PEDAGOGICAL PROTOTYPES:

"WAYS
OF
MAKING
POINTS"

(Compiled by
CEJ Staff)

Government Aid for Christian Schools? NO!

A few years ago the Christian Educators Journal devoted the major portion of an issue to the problem of government aid for our schools. After reading the issue I was burdened by the opinion that the issue carried a light tinge of flavor in favor of government aid for our schools. I therefore protested, by means of a letter to the editor, the use of the Journal as a



propaganda medium. The editor, however, informed me that I was completely wrong in my impression. With this action of mine in mind I hesitated for a full thirty seconds before accepting the request of the Editor of the Profession-wide Department to write an article on the subject.

I believe that as of 1966 we have entered into a new phase of the problem of government aid for our schools--a phase that has all the dangers of a lung cell in a cloud of cigarette smoke, and if we do not face up to the position we are in, we shall find ourselves as vulnerable as the knee joint of a football player. To spend our time trying to restructure a concept of government, or extolling the virtues of the school system in some far away land, is like trying to redesign a ship while the one we are on is sinking under us. The antics of some of

our people, in the past few years, have brought to my mind an old tombstone epitaph: "Here lies the body of Jonathan Day, who died defending his right of way. He was right, dead right as he sped along, but he is just as dead as if he had been wrong."

After years of debate the government has settled the issue of whether or not government money can be used for parochial and private schools. It has decided that the money can be used providing we accept it on its conditions. These conditions only require that we stop being stubborn and act like the rest of the American people. All we have to do is compromise our belief.

Permit me to develop in broad outline the matrix in which the above paragraph has its setting. This is also the setting in which we as American Christians must function, for all governments are ordained by God, and we must function as Christians under one. In spite of the fact that no government, including our own, is based on only Christian concepts, the relationship of our government to religion is the result of a long history of conflict between governments and religions and between the various manifestations of the Christian religion itself.

In the 150 years between the first permanent colonies in this country and the establishment of our constitutional government, we find a poor record of religious freedom. Freedom was possible only because of the great open space to which one could go if he disagreed too strongly with the dominant religious tenets of the colony. It is with this in mind, and memories of the religious persecutions of their home lands, that the first amendment was written.

Since the national constitution had nothing to say about education, the interpretation of this amendment in its relationship to the school has been carried out primarily by the states. As of 1958, 38 of our then 48 states had statements in their constitutions forbidding the use of government money for private education. In general these were put in as a defense against

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the use of public funds by the Catholic Church for the purpose of parochial education.

The religious path our public schools have traveled from their original position of protestant domination to their present attempt to function in a "neutral" atmosphere is the result of a gradual unravelling of the meaning of the first amendment in its relationship to the



school. The forces that required these changes were the persistent demands by the parochial school people for the use of public funds, and the desire of the protestant majority to maintain the protestant atmosphere in the public school in the face of ever increasing minorities who disagree with the protestant faith. For our purpose the key point in the end result is the generally accepted belief that education can be separated from religion.

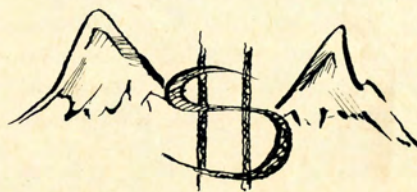
Let me now pull together the larger cords which have resulted in the present government aid bills. It has taken about sixteen years to hammer out the present government aid laws. When the federal government first exposed itself as being interested in getting deeper into the support of the public schools, the demands of the parochial school leaders were not great. In 1949 Cardinal Spellman stated, "We are not asking for general public support of religious schools (but we are asking to) share alike in auxiliary services for which these Federal funds are spent in the states." As late as 1959 Neil J. McClusky, S. J. in a book, Catholic Viewpoint on Education, with a Foreword by the the Right Reverend Frederick G. Hockwalt, agreed in general with the above mentioned opinion of Cardinal Spellman. However, a few years later, during the Kennedy administration, the demands of the parochial school people hardened to requiring full inclusion in any federal school aid bill that was passed. This was necessary because they realized that any bill that was passed would become the guide for future aid both by the federal government and any

state government which would be inclined to aid private schools.

With both sides having reached the point of no return, and with both sides fearing a show-down in the courts in regard to the constitutional issue, the great American political maneuver of compromise came to the rescue. The government was willing to begin furnishing help for the "neutral" subjects in our schools if we would vote for the bill. The Catholic leaders, realizing that this was the best answer they were going to receive to their demands, and aware of the fact that all aid in the foreseeable future at both federal and state level would be grounded in this concept of neutral subjects, agreed to the compromise. It can fit into a concept which separates nature and grace. What has never ceased to confuse me is that some of our leaders fell for this gimmick and helped promote the compromise. If we continue to fall for it, the end result will be devastating.

We are now confronted with three alternatives. (1) We can admit we have neutral subjects, and accept the aid freely. (2) We can refuse to accept the concept of neutral subjects, but accept the aid by looking the other way. (3) We can refuse the aid when offered under these circumstances. This is the national level, and the state level (in Michigan) is of such a nature that it is all but impossible to refuse. By using the second alternative mentioned above we are all stepping onto the tread-mill with our head in the clouds. We are positive that when the time comes that we are required to make a more serious compromise we shall be wise and strong enough to get off. Such wisdom and strength is too much to hope for. Each step in the fall will be so smooth that we shall never know when we have passed the point of no return. Playing the game of brinkmanship with evil is not the way God expects us to live. It is certainly just the opposite of what we teach our children. Our best hope at this time is to have the present national and state bills ruled out by the courts.

Our faith must remain in what we know to be truth and in God's help when we defend the truth, not in any compromise with the truth and the help of man.



Government Aid for Christian Schools? YES!

The Board of Directors of the National Union of Christian Schools has stated: "The utilization of governmental assistance for par- entaleducation of children is valid and it there- fore logically follows that the active solicitation of such assistance is equally valid." Yet the question remains: How should the aid be given?

Most of the democracies in the world-- such as England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, some Canadian provinces, Holland, Belgium, and France, to name only a few of the promi- nent ones--give governmental aid to independent schools. No two give it in exactly the same way. The best system for America would be the one already in effect to a great degree on the university level, namely, tuition grants and



scholarships. Witness, for example, the G. I. Bill, a score of state programs including New York State's \$75-million-aid, the 1965 Federal College Scholarship Act, the War Orphan's Act, the National Science Foundation Scholarships, the NDEA grants, and Wisconsin's equalizing bill that grants students up to \$500 if they attend an independent, but not a state (!) university.

In line with this government aid to uni- versity students--to all students, regardless of

the school they attend, even if it is a denomi- national one--let us look at the Jr. G. I. Bill for the elementary and secondary school levels. Surely there is no principle difference between grades 12 and grades 13. The Jr. G. I. Bill would give every child in grades 1-12 a check equal to the average cost of educating a child in the government schools (approximately \$500). Such a check could be cashed only at an inde- pendent school of the parent's choice. It would not alter one bit the control of, nor the ad- mission to the institution. In other words, aid is given to the pupil rather than to the school. Before giving a tuition grant, the government ought not to ask a school child: What is the re- ligion of your school? But rather: Are you getting an education? Just as the government collects taxes from all regardless of race, color, or creed, so also it ought to give these monies to all school children regardless of race, color, or creed.

Let us examine some of the reasons for this position.

THE WELFARE OF THE NATION

A prime reason for such grants is the welfare of the nation. Tuition grants would sig- nificantly improve the quality of the education of the child in the independent school. Tuition grants of \$500 to school children would enable these schools to have typewriters, chemistry labs, language labs, better libraries, and other instructional materials that only the rich state schools can afford today. The teachers would have better salaries so that instead of spending summers as gas station attendants, they could improve their teaching talents. Better salaries would attract more qualified teachers.

If our nation is going to have good govern- ment and an intelligent citizenry; if it is going to make economic progress and scientific ad- vancement; and if it is going to defend itself against aggression; then it needs well educated children, including the seven million who are now in the nation's independent schools. It needs to have all of its children educated, in- cluding a third of Grand Rapids' children, 40%

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of Philadelphia's and Pittsburgh's children and nearly 50% of New York City's children--all of whom are in the independent schools. A nation cannot afford to lose such a great percentage of talent simply because parents want a God-centered education.

A recent example of government aid because of public need is the Headstart Program. Pre-schoolers are being given a head start for school by being taught such elementary matters as color and shape recognition. Before the government gives aid for this, it does not ask the child or its teacher: What is your religion? It could not care less whether a humanistic secularist or a Calvinist or a nun is teaching the child. It wants the child to get a head start and therefore it aids the child in all kinds of religious agencies and schools. There can be no principle difference between aid for a head start program and kindergarten. Basically they are the same. Nor can there be a difference between kindergarten and grade one. Nor between grade one and two, etc.

FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE

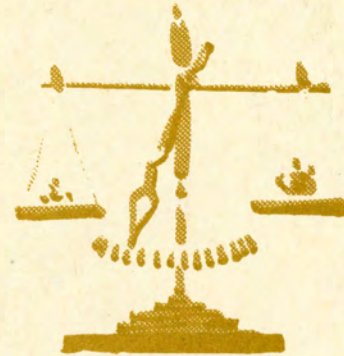
As a Calvinist, this author believes that education is never religiously neutral but that secular humanism is just as religious as Calvinism or Thomism or Judaism. He believes that secularism is against God--that silence about God in the classroom is a most effective way of teaching children that God is not important in education. The author agrees with Jefferson that "to force a man to support a philosophy not his own is tyranny." Therefore, he believes it is morally wrong for the government each year to force him to support with hundreds of dollars a philosophy of life to which he is diametrically opposed religiously. And

there is no moral or political necessity that demands this kind of tyranny.

The Jr. G. I. Bill would remove such tyranny and do it in a completely equitable and fair way. By allowing the tax dollar to follow the scholar, regardless of his school, each religious school community, including the secularist, would receive its proportional share of taxes.

FINANCIAL EQUITY

Today the secularist is getting a free ride. In Grand Rapids, the independent school parents pay a third of his educational costs in addition to their own full costs, or 133% of the educational costs. Those in the state schools pay only 66% of the costs. Obviously this is not equitable. We must protect the freedom of the religious humanist in having his own school, but we ask him to be willing to pay for it. The Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish schools do not ask for a free ride. Neither should the secularist. For the government to subsidize one



kind of religious education, namely, secularism, is obviously unfair.

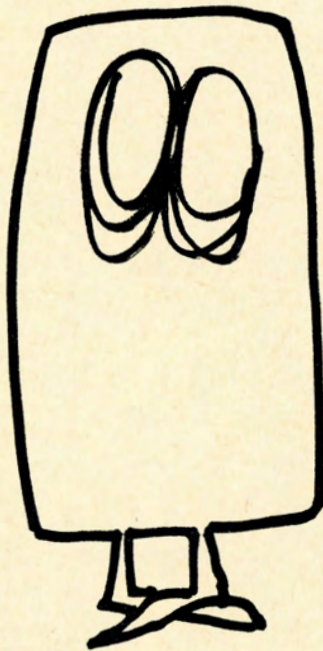
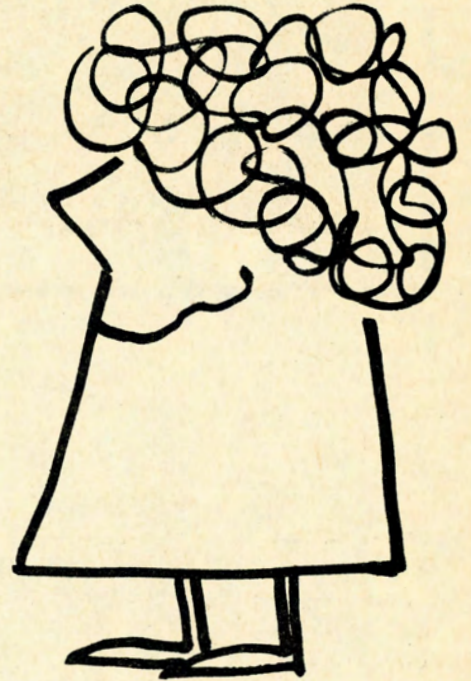
A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION IN THE GOVERNMENTAL SCHOOLS

Under our present tax system our state schools are in an insoluble religious dilemma. If secularism continues to reign in the schools, the orthodox Protestant, Catholic, and Jew are offended. If a Judaistic world-and-life view is taught, the Roman Catholic is displeased, and if a Thomistic world-and-life view is taught the Protestant is unhappy. It is mathematically impossible to superimpose a single philosophy

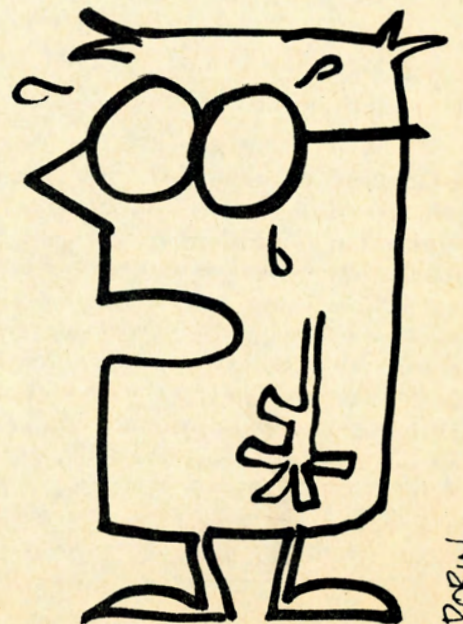
(CONCLUDED ON PAGE 13)

EXAMINING EXAMS

CALM DOWN BOYS AND GIRLS,
JUST REMEMBER THAT A TEST
IS JUST ANOTHER LEARNING
SITUATION AND



WHEN I
MAKE OUT
A TEST
ALL I THINK
ABOUT IS..
GRADING..
GRADING..
GRADING..
GRADING..



NOW AS SOON AS YOU ALL
QUIET DOWN I'LL EXPLAIN
WHY WE WON'T HAVE OUR
MID-TERM EXAM TODAY...



SOCIOLOGIST S^{*} SAYS...

ARE PUBLIC AND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL INFLUENCES DISCERNABLE IN ONE'S SOCIAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR?

In the last article we compared racial attitudes held by Christian and Public high school students. One of our conclusions was that while both groups manifested a not insignificant degree of racial tolerance, neither group was by any means "color blind". More specifically, we indicated some surprise at the great amount of racial intolerance in the area of residence. Though the level of intolerance among Christian high students was consistently lower than among the Public high students, in no instance was the difference between the two groups very great.

The study summarized here, we believe, provides an additional bit of evidence underscoring the lack of large differences between Christian and Public high school students. This study, like the last one, was conducted by two Calvin College students. It differs from the last one in at least three ways: 1) It concerns those already graduated from their respective institutions, 2) It is restricted to Christian Reformed church members currently enrolled at Calvin College, and 3) It seeks to trace the

* THE MATERIAL FOR THIS COLUMN, APPEARING AS A REGULAR FEATURE IN THIS JOURNAL, IS SUPPLIED BY THE STAFF OF THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT OF CALVIN COLLEGE.

impact of school experience to behavior as well as attitude.

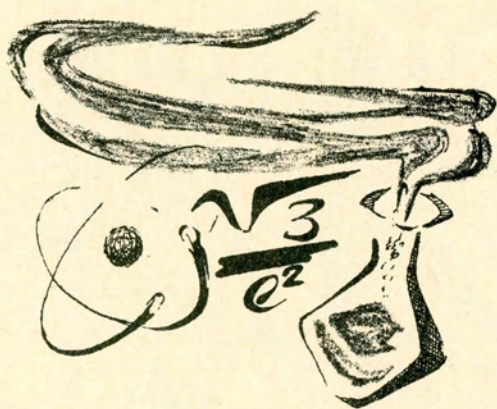
We will report on but one of the behavioral dimensions checked, namely religious activity in college and community. It is readily granted that the specific behaviors selected for study are somewhat superficial and may not get beyond the "externals" of spiritual life. Nevertheless, we assume that they constitute at least a rough measure of more intangible spiritual dimensions.

Reference to the following abridged table indicates that, although the relative difference between the two groups is not as large as we might like to see it, the Christian high graduates are consistently inclined to be more active in the selected religious activities. This suggests that the Christian high school is supportive of the Christian home in the matter of religious behavior.

PARTICIPATION LEVEL OF CHRISTIAN AND PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADU- ATES IN SELECTED RELIGIOUS ACT- IVITIES (Based on self-reports)

	<u>CHS</u>	<u>PHS</u>
Ave. number of worship services attended in last two weeks	3.31	3.21
Ave. number of other religious activities (e.g., religious clubs, church organizations) engaged in within last two weeks	2.02	1.91
Ave. number of unexcused chapel skips this semester	2.68	2.79

Thus, we conclude that prior exposure to Christian education can be detected--though rather faintly, in consequent religiously oriented behavior. Caution must be exercised, however, in making generalizations on the basis of any one isolated study. Only when a number of such studies point in a consistent direction is confidence in any generalization justified. This study is limited by all potential dangers of self-reporting, selectivity of indices of religious performance, and selectivity of sample. The next article will deal with a study attempting to measure general level of spiritual discernment among Christian high school students.



SCIENCE- MATH

Department Editor,
Roger Bratt

Many of our schools have adopted the products of the various science curriculum studies for classroom use. While a longer period of usage will be required before a comprehensive evaluation can be made, it appears that the results of the revisions will have far reaching effects on our science programs. The increased emphasis placed upon investigation and comprehension of underlying principles is healthy.

It is a matter of professional pride among our teachers to stay abreast of the changes and improvements made in education. The fine reputation of our schools as a whole reflects this attitude of the individual teachers. And indeed, if we are to really educate our students, we cannot afford to become lazy in this respect. In Christian education, however, we cannot be satisfied with simply keeping up with suggested

innovations. We must, if our education is to satisfy what we consider to be a God-given mandate, be our own vanguard. We must develop a philosophy of science as well as a philosophy of science education which will best enable us to guide our students in their development toward Christian maturity and citizenship.

To neglect the research and findings of highly skilled educators outside of our schools is suicide. To incorporate their best within a framework established through exhaustive trial and thought on the part of the individual Christian teacher is a worthy goal--a goal perhaps attained only through sheer mental labor. Our education must be unique and therefore the burden of thoughtful development rests with us teachers.

R. B.

SCIENCE CURRICULA: A NEED FOR CREATIVITY

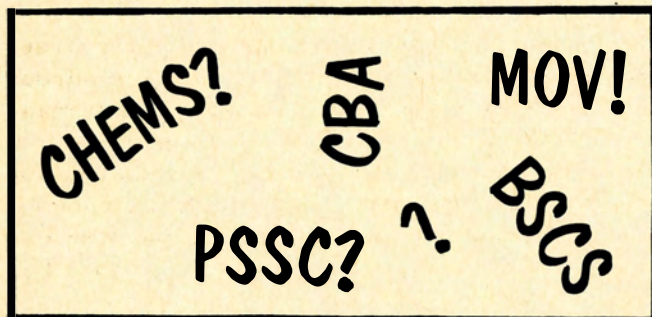
--Gordon
Kamps*

The launching of the first Sputnik brought to a head a great deal of debate concerning science curricula in the United States. Soon new

* Mr. Gordon Kamps, A.B. Calvin College, M.S. New Mexico Highlands University, is instructor of chemistry and physics at Calvin Christian High in Grandville, Michigan. He has been a participant in numerous National Science Foundation institutes in the field of chemistry.

curricular approaches were being written and tried. Considerable support was given to the various projects by the federal government via the National Science Foundation. To date these approaches are being used in an increasing number of schools. Most science teachers are aware of the pioneering work of the Columbia Teachers College Science Manpower Project (K-12 science curriculum) and the Physical Science Study Committee (PSSC--physics), fol-

lowed by the Chemical Bond Approach (CBA) and the Chemical Education Materials Study (CHEMS) in chemistry, and the Biological Science Curriculum Study's (BSCS) three versions in biology. Accompanying these efforts have been various new approaches in mathematics and in science curricula in grades K-9. In the wake of these group efforts have come numerous revisions of traditional texts by familiar authors and new texts following the line of the new materials. Textbook salesmen moved in,



baiting teachers with their offers of books which "combine the best of CBA and CHEMS". To the discerning teacher this is like trying to blend oil and water.

What was wrong with the traditional courses? Why such radical changes? A review of what others have to say regarding this points up the following:

1. Traditional texts were trying to cover too much ground. Revisions resulted in reducing the coverage in certain areas in order that more material related to recent developments could be added.

2. Laboratory work had become an exercise in following directions.

The new approaches for the most part emphasize basic principles of the science involved and the problem-solving methods of classroom teaching and laboratory work. In summary, scientific thinking is emphasized.

CREATIVE TEACHERS AND CURRICULUM

I feel that one of the reasons why major revisions and such radical new approaches to the teaching of science have become necessary is that science teachers are not as creative in the development of their courses as they should be. This is not to say that science teachers are not creative; many are, but much of our

creativity is spent in the gadgetry of science or in the development of some pet project rather than in the continuous reappraisal of the course of study we are teaching.

The new curricula are excellent examples of what the channeling of the creative efforts of a group of teachers can accomplish. We might note that in most instances the initiative for change came from college teachers, although these new approaches soon found a wealth of support among high school teachers. We should appreciate and seek more of this stimulation from our college teachers, but should we always rely on it?

One of the greatest effects of these creative efforts is on the teacher himself: caught up in the spirit of change and feeling of personal involvement, not before experienced, he became a more enthusiastic teacher.

ENTHUSIASTIC TEACHERS AND CURRICULUM

Certainly one of the prime requisites of good teaching is enthusiasm. A teacher can hardly be enthusiastic about a subject or about teaching it unless he becomes actively involved in the study of the subject itself and in the development of a course of study. I question whether the new enthusiasm, supposedly generated on the part of the students for the new curricula, is generated by the new approach itself or by the new enthusiasm of the teacher. I feel that one of the major reasons why traditional courses were unsatisfactory was that the teacher was not as enthusiastic as he might have been. True, one cannot become enthusiastic about teaching a course which does not command enthusiasm, but I feel that the new curricula can, in a few years, become just as worn and ill-taught as the traditional courses sometimes were unless these curricula are continuously subjected to personal, creative reappraisal and revision on the part of the teacher. Only in this way can he remain enthusiastic in his teaching.

CHRISTIAN TEACHERS AND CURRICULUM

Do I mean to say then that it makes little difference what course of study is used as long as the teacher has involved himself creatively in it and is enthusiastic about it? Hardly! Certainly, differences in individual teachers, individual school situations, educational back-

ground of the students, and vocational opportunities will affect the curricula and result in differing courses in different schools, but certainly there should be some mainstream of purpose in the teaching of science in the Christian school. The new curricula as well as the old should be carefully studied with regard to this purpose.

One of the main objections to some of the traditional texts was that to a great extent they were earth-centered, materially-centered curricula instead of God-centered. The educational ideal with the Christian perspective was subordinated to vocational demands. This is also true of the new curricula, although in different ways. One of the greatest stimuli of the new curriculum development was the need for more and better scientists. This is an important goal, but our goal as Christian teachers of science is more than producing more and better



Spiral nebula in Andromeda

Photo by H. Lambert

scientists or even more and better Christian scientists. I feel we have been in error, for instance, in our stress on the vocationally useful triad of biology, chemistry, and physics. We should place greater emphasis on astronomy and geology. These courses are not without their vocational dimensions in our age of space, but we need on occasion to lift our students' eyes and minds from the microscopic and sub-microscopic to the macroscopic, from that which is infinitesimally small to that which is infinitesimally large.

I suspect that in too many of our courses of study, new and old, the command to subdue the earth results in an endeavor to gain mastery over it rather than a balance of this effort with the endeavor to gain an appreciation for that which is beyond man's reach and control. This endeavor demands a study of the frontiers of science as well as the history of science because the frontier is where the scientists are presently grasping with the unknown. For this effort of bringing to the students' minds the struggle of these frontiers we must praise the new curricular efforts. For the lack of effort in existing curricula to present science to the students' minds as a study of the work of God we must as Christian teachers take a more critical look at our curricular offerings and become more active and enthusiastic in the development of our courses of study. CBA or CHEMS or ? The answer to some extent at least should be MOV (My Own Version).

GOVERNMENT AID FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS--YES! (continued from page 8)

of life upon a pluralistic nation and satisfy all. It is far better to recognize that we are a pluralistic nation, not to favor financially the philosophy of secularism, and to let each have his own school money to go to the school of his choice. When that is done, then the state schools can follow the philosophy of secularism and systematically eliminate all meaningful reference to God, and no one will be offended. Until then, the problem will never be solved.

Such tuition grants would not violate the principle of separation of church and state any

more than do the numerous university tuition grants and scholarships of the states, Federal scholarships, War Orphans' grants, NDEA grants or the G. I. Bill.

Neither would such a bill invite government control. The government has granted and continues to grant hundreds of millions under the G. I. Bill and state tuition grants, and it has not attempted to control the independent universities at all. As a matter of fact, without government aid, the government has controlled independent schools by its policy of making them pay double. The power to tax is the power to destroy. And by making the independent school community pay twice and the secularist less than once, it has effectively curtailed the number of independent schools and the quality of their instruction.

SCIENCE OR NATURE STUDY?

--Gordon Van Harn*

Science is a study of nature. However, science, by its method of observation and measurement, is limited to the study and description of the physical and biotic aspects of objects and events in time and three-dimensional space. This does not mean that other aspects of nature cannot and should not be studied using other methods.

NATURE AS AESTHETIC AND REVELATION

The aesthetic aspect of nature is one which is real and yet outside the domain of science because beauty is not physical (although it may have a physical aspect) nor can it be quantified. Beauty in nature may reside in colors, structures, or shapes of objects and organisms, or it may be found in certain relationships observed in nature, such as the relationship between structure and function, between groups of



organisms, or between organisms and their physical environment. Often this aesthetic aspect of nature is best described in terms of the emotions which are conveyed, such as fear, awe, majesty, power, gaiety, tenderness or loneliness. The artist, poet and the musician study this aesthetic aspect of nature and it is their task to convey an emotion or idea of relationship. Wordsworth, in a poem entitled "Daffodils", describes his feeling after observing a panorama of flowers:

A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company:
I gazed--and gazed--but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

Vivaldi in his composition "The Seasons" attempts to convey an emotion of the joy of spring,

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the depressing heat of summer, the happy autumn harvest, and the cruel glacial winds of winter. Paintings which depict nature in its various parts are familiar to everyone. The work of the artists testifies to the study of an aesthetic aspect of nature.

Nature also serves as a manifestation of God's activity or a self-revelation of God. This revelation of the universality of God's action in created reality is often called general revelation. The Psalmist recognized this revelational aspect of nature and wrote:

The young lions roar after their prey,
And seek their food from God.
The sun ariseth, they get them away,
And lay them down in their dens.
Man goeth forth unto his work
And to his labor until the evening.
O Jehovah, how manifold are thy works!
In wisdom hast thou made them all:
The earth is full of thy riches.

Psalm 104:21-24

Berkouwer emphasizes the clarity with which the nature-psalms portray the scriptural conception of God's self-revelation in nature. This revelation of God's activity is in the very "creatureliness" of nature and the nature-psalms emphasize that the creation, control and maintenance of this creatureliness is by the God of salvation. In other words, it is not a deification of nature, but a revelation of God through nature's very creatureliness. The significance of this for the Christian school curriculum is that this revelation can only be recognized in a context of faith in Christ. The God of salvation is the God revealed in nature. Calvin's description of this is in terms of the "glasses" of faith whereby one can know God in this book of nature.

The emphasis on the aesthetic and the revelational aspects of nature should not be in place of the physical and the biotic, but should be a part of, or in addition to, the scientific study of the physical and biotic aspects of nature. The scientific study of the physical and biotic has been extremely important in developing concepts and producing information which



influences man's activity in our contemporary society. These concepts and information help man recognize his relationship to the environment; for example, man's dependence on nature for food, clothing and life, as well as helping man to recognize his role in controlling nature in such activities as domestication of animals, harnessing water power, controlling crops, and curing diseases. Scientific concepts of nature have led to technological advances which make our work easier and our life more comfortable. Science must be taught in order to show our children the approach to an understanding of the physical and biotic aspects of nature, as well as giving others, who will not continue in science, an understanding of the procedures the scientist uses and the types of answers which the scientist gives.

In summary, nature has various aspects (aesthetic, revelatory, physical-biotic) which require the use of different methods of approaches for study and expression. One method is the scientific method which is limited to the three-dimensional space and time element of the physical and biotic. The artist does not use controlled experiments, nor are his observations for the purpose of giving mechanistic explanations of natural process. This conception of nature and science leaves the question of how courses in which nature is the object of study should be organized and taught. Two approaches to a curriculum are organization on the basis of the method of study, i.e. art, science; or on the basis of object of study, i.e. nature study, social study and Bible study.

TWO APPROACHES

The first approach, division of subjects according to method of study, emphasizes the differences between the artist and the scientist. An advantage of this method is that each subject can be very restricted in order to be true

to the approach of the scientist and artist. The disadvantage is that this approach can result in various dichotomies such as science and art, science and religion, science and social studies because each is taught in isolation from the other. These dichotomies often result in a choice of one or the other; consequently some students tend to denigrate science and argue that science only provides tentative limited answers with the implication that the answers have little value. Others tend to absolutize science as the only method for obtaining information of value. Overemphasis on the aesthetic or revelatory aspects at the expense of the other aspects of nature may be indicative of a sentimental or pious anti-science attitude. One aspect of nature is not superior to another because a study of all aspects is necessary to understand nature and each method is best for the study of a particular aspect of nature.

The second approach involves organization of the curriculum on the basis of object studied. In this case, nature is the object of study and the method is not specified so all aspects of nature can be studied using various methods, such as that of the artist and scientist. The wedding of the revelational aspect as seen in the aesthetic and the physical-biotic aspects of nature is not an unhappy one but rather



Photo by H. Lambert



Photo by H. Lambert

a desirable one from the point of view of our conception of nature. The organization of courses on the basis of the object of study instead of on the basis of method of study is not unusual at the elementary level; for example, Bible is taught and not theology, social studies and not sociology, therefore nature study could be taught rather than science.

EXAMPLES OF SECOND APPROACH

One of the usual nature study exercises can be used as an example. Many classes collect leaves in the autumn of each year. Various aspects of autumn leaves could be studied. The scientific approach could be used to investigate one of the following problems: What is the difference in color between summer and autumn leaves? What is the stimulus for the fall of leaves? Is it temperature, season, or short light period? Which type of leaf falls first? Oak, maple, elm, or all at the same time? What are the structural types of leaves and how can they be grouped? The aesthetic aspect can also be studied. It is not uncommon for leaves to be used as a decorative motif in classrooms and homes. Colored and falling leaves elicit emotions and call to mind activities such as burning leaves, children building mountains of

leaves, and sportsmen hunting, which are all associated with autumn leaves. In other words, autumn leaves can raise questions for scientific study but they also stimulate the aesthetic sense and bring to mind cultural activities associated with them.

The study of water is also an ordinary science project. It is used primarily to show the change of state in matter from liquid to gas and liquid to solid. This is water in relation to temperature and pressure. It could also be studied in terms of its role in biological organisms. Can animals and plants live without water? Can seeds germinate without water? Where do water droplets on windows come from? Water in relation to our contemporary culture is also important for power for electricity, transport by boat, recreational fishing. Water in a rushing river, water in a clear blue lake, and water in torrential rain can all result in different emotional responses. So water studied scientifically, as a source of beauty, as a tool in our contemporary culture can be studied as a unit. I am sure these examples can be improved and others can be added, but the emphasis is to show man in relation to his environment.

These ideas are not expressed from a background of knowledge in educational principles and pedagogical techniques. This will be left for someone else to judge. The basis for these ideas is the conception that nature has many aspects, some of which can be studied using the scientific method. In our contemporary society there is a tendency to denigrate or absolutize science and one way to guard against both is to develop a proper conception of nature and recognize the proper and important role of science and the arts in the study of nature.



Consent with pleasure and refuse unwillingly, but let every refusal be irrevocable. Let no importunity move you. Let the No once uttered be a wall of brass against which the child will have to exhaust his strength only five or six times before he ceases trying to overturn it. . . . The worst training of all is to leave him wavering between his own will and yours.

--Jean J. Rousseau

THE ARTS

Department editor,
Vernon Boerman

REVIEW--Fifty Symbols of the Christian Faith

--Calvin Seerveld*

This packet of 50 symbols published by N.U.C.S. to be used in Bible study with children is a good beginning. Pointing the young to Scriptural passages and relating the exercise to a visual object makes good Christian educational sense. The bonus of introducing the boys and girls to designs traditionally associated with Christian motifs is also valuable.

Prof. Boeve's work here has the sober, unsentimental line that identifies much good modern art. The presentation is not cluttered but, with great economy, little is made to say much. There may be a hint of Byzantine interest behind these symbols, but the flat, iconic element that goes with Eastern ecclesiastical art work has happily been given more imaginative, interpretive play.

Some of the designs are excellent: rich, solidly deep, with enough complexity and ori-



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ginality to reward a second and third look, while the symbol is clear and focused at one glance.

No. 31 is a cronkely good vine and branches; it looks tough, woebegone, live and interesting all together--not bad for the bond between Christ and me as a believing child. No. 47 puts chalice, grapes and wheat tassle joyfully together; there is perspective, animation, enough substance to the picture for a teacher to tell storylike about what it all means. No. 34 throws the starry heavens at you in their twinkling immensity, and the angular, odd-shaped planes in the design catch some of the mystery Abraham and his descendants must have sensed whenever they looked up nights, remembering God's promise of Genesis 15:5. (No. 35 by contrast is pallid and unexciting in conception.)



No. 15 on the mustard seed and its tree of faith combines an almost biological diagrammatic, geometric pattern around the oval of a seed with light, airy fantasy, a gossamer web of a tree; the design delightfully talks the language of both earth and heaven. And symbols such as Nos. 11 and 46 are honest, professionally fine, ori-



ginal presentations of old symbols made new and relevant for the twentieth century.

The animals, however, in the symbols are consistently disappointing. Maybe the inelegant beast meant to be a deer (No. 27) comes off poorly because the agonized crying of Psalm 42 is misread as a matter of "piety and aspiration" (cf. accompanying booklet of explanation). The eagle, ox and lion (Nos. 2-4) for the evangelists are not animalic enough, fiercely virile and biblically grand the way Job depicts animals; here they have a barnyard, zoo, domesticated quality that is fair enough for storybooks but not worthy of the strength of John, Luke, and Mark. The "victorious lamb" (No. 8) has too much teddybear character to point one to the awful, glorious lamb of God.

That is, the animals epitomize a weakness that plagues a number of the symbols: a contemplative softness and limp simplicity that

seems somewhat unreal, childish and "mystical" rather than earthly real (like the INRI board, No. 23, is forthrightly real) and close to a childlike perception. For contrast cf. Concordia's Archbooks for children (or even the more standard illustrations in Anne de Vries' Children's Bible, Dutch or English edition) which have a vibrant dynamic and humor that captivates children's attention and breathes the moving, holy, roughhewn spirit of the Scriptures.

The series of crosses (Nos. 38-45) may be informative but they rate low, it seems to me, if the aim is to "enrich perceptions and vivify divine (?!) history."

Christian educators may hope N.U.C.S. explores further these matters of symbol, benefiting from the experience and advances made by our Lutheran brothers in Christ.

#

Creative Dramatics-- an integral part of the classroom

--Nancy Vander Heide*

"Oh, that far-out stuff may be all right once in a while, but I'll stick to the fundamentals: readin', writin', and 'rithmetic."

"I don't have time for that nonsense."

"I'm not creative. How can I handle it?"

"My class just isn't creative--they couldn't express themselves."

Perhaps you've heard or made comments similar to those above. Let me assure you, none of the above comments are true.

Everywhere we turn today, we read that ALL children and adults are creative to one degree or another. The January issue of Christian Home and School has an article about creativity. Each recent issue of the Weekly Reader Teacher's Edition deals with creativity and

its place in the curriculum. The Instructor of February, 1966, has an article on creativity and the culturally deprived child. What is said there, however, is applicable to all types of children.

Creative dramatics is appropriate to all levels of teaching and shouldn't be thought of as a far out or an isolated thing. It results in new ideas and applications of learning in all subject areas and can be readily applied to any typical curriculum. All members of the classroom are encouraged to think, because each response is acceptable and of value. Good ideas accepted in creative play lead to good ideas in discussions in the classroom. The freedom experienced in creative play spurs on problem solving and enhances creative thinking. Children with such experiences are not afraid to venture an opinion. They do not worry about someone saying, "Oh, no, that's wrong." Rather, they are praised for good thinking and are skillfully led to discover solutions.

Teachers using creative dramatics discover that they have a new freedom, too. New

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ideas are uncovered that stimulate them in imaginative teaching; and thus the creative process is continuous.

But where shall we begin? Here are just a few suggestions for using creative dramatics in various subject areas. These have been used in second grade classes, but with a little imagination you can adapt these ideas to your own grade level, or think up new ideas.

BIBLE

Bible stories and Biblical truths can be made real and relevant by use of creative role playing. The story of the shepherds tending their sheep in the dark night outside Bethlehem lends itself well to creative dramatics. Set the mood by story-telling. "How lonely the shepherds felt out there in the darkness. What was that noise? How do you think they felt? Could you show by your movements and actions what it was like? What was that? The angel is speaking from heaven. See how bewildered the shepherds are. I can tell from Ron's expression that he is so afraid. Do you hear that singing? See the joy on some faces as they listen. What shall the shepherds do? Oh, they're going towards the city. They want to see what has happened. They are doing what the angel told them to do."

Every time I do this with a group of children, I enjoy watching their sense of joy and wonder as they become those shepherds of long ago.

Or try this: ask someone to play he is Paul making his speech at the top of the stairs to the angry Jews. The words may be contemporary, but the drama of the situation will be very real.

Old Testament stories present many opportunities for role playing and dialogue situations. One episode I remember very vividly happened after the story of Joshua's siege of Jericho had been told. Some children said they would like to play that they were inside the city as the soldiers marched silently around each day. The anxieties and tensions built up as the siege continued, and the fear and chaos as the "walls came tumblin' down" meant much more after we had been through it! (The beauty of it all is that after once beginning with creative dramatics, the class will constantly ask, "May we please play this part of the story?"

They see many more occasions for expression than I do.)

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language arts is a perfect place to integrate creative dramatics. Creative play can make reading become a subject which lives, and it leads to increased growth in reading abilities and skills. Through dramatic play, words are learned more readily and comprehension of stories can be reinforced. Playing characters in a story can help us understand their feelings and motivations, and we can then better understand ourselves.

Speaking in plays gives opportunities for improving clarity of expression, speaking to be understood, and understanding the mood and character of the story. Vocabulary enrichment comes from discussion of words which arise in a story or poem. Children discover new ways of saying things.

Playing a story or looking for new situations in a story or poem can lead to creative writing. Recently we have been studying the solar system. Much talk centered around the moon and the goals of our country to reach the moon. We did creative play in connection with this. First we played getting ready for our trip: putting on our space suits, getting settled in the capsule, the blast-off, and the weightless trip. We landed right on the moon, and ventured out of our space ship. Since we discovered in our study that the moon has no gravity and no air, we tried to walk the way a moon astronaut would walk. We explored and imagined the discoveries that might be made on the moon.

After the creative play was done in several sessions, we decided to make moon crea-

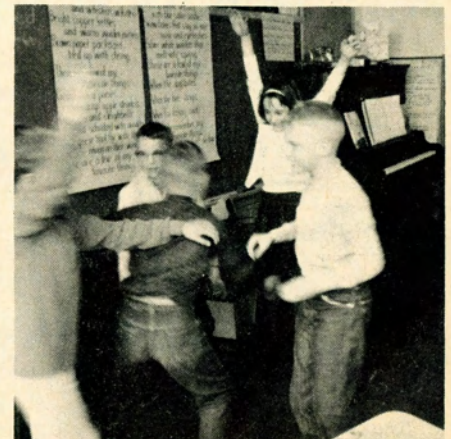
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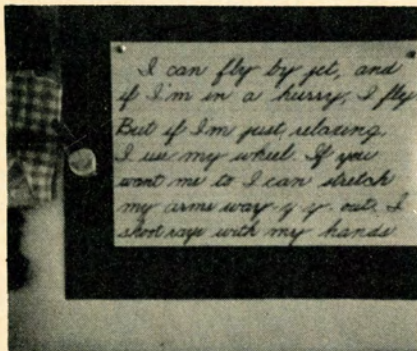
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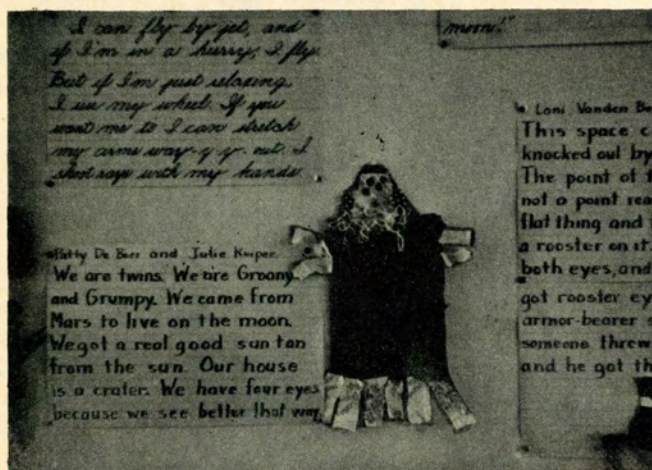
EARTH!



tures which in no way resembled earth people. What fun it was making bodies with many legs, no legs, unusual shapes! Then we invented description and adventures for our creatures, and wrote these ideas down. The accompanying



THESE MOON CREATURES ARE MADE OF YARN, CLOTH, AND PAPER. THE DESCRIPTIONS OF THEM WERE WRITTEN BY THE CHILDREN.



pictures illustrate the play and the results of this play in art and writing forms.

Literature shared and lived provides real stimulus for writing. This poem is an example:

BROOMS

On stormy days
When the wind is high
Tall trees are brooms
Sweeping the sky.

They swish their branches
In buckets of rain,
And swash and sweep it
Blue again.

--Dorothy Aldis

"How tall can you be? Can you be as tall as a tree that sweeps the sky? What does the tree do when it is a stormy day? How does the rain make you feel when it falls on you in buckets? What happens when the blue sky comes

and the storm has passed over? Can you think of something a tree might do on a windy day?"

The following poem is a class creation after such previous experience:

THE TREES ARE PAINTING US

The trees are painting us,
They slap their paint brushes to and fro--
Sometimes they make mistakes
And put mustaches on our faces.
The trees get water from the rain,
Blue from the sky, white from the clouds,
Yellow from the sun,
All colors from the rainbows, even gold.
In the fall when colors are scarce
They use themselves.

The book, The Snowy Day, by Ezra Jack Keats is very stimulating for creative expression because it develops awareness of beauty in winter and helps us understand our feelings about things we love. It reminds us of experiences we all have had with snow. How easy then for the teacher to ask, "How could we use our experiences for a story of our own about the snow?"

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social studies presents another rich field for creative play. Becoming characters of the past in history will make those people more real and understandable. Familiar national heroes like Washington, Lincoln, Lindbergh, and Daniel Boone portrayed with understanding and characterization will mean much more than a mere text-book study.

The study of helpers in the community affords many situations for dramatic play. The



I JUST DISCOVERED LOTS OF GOLD. I'M GOING TO COVER IT UP SO NO ONE ELSE KNOWS IT'S HERE.



THIS CAPSULE RIDE
IS VERY UNCOMFORT-
ABLE, BUT FEELS
GOOD!

policeman, the fireman, the postman, the milkman, the doctor, the nurse, a pilot, a space man are just a few that could be played.

Indians and cowboys out of the past are excellent for use in creative dramatics. People of other lands can be characterized and played in dramatic situations and become real.

ART

Art appreciation, sensory awareness, and art production are increased through creative dramatics. After playing scenes from stories, paint a happening in the story, or make articles suggested in stories: castles, fairy thrones, fairies themselves, figures out of clay, papier maché, and mobiles. The movement in creative dramatic play carries over into expression in the graphic arts. Both rhythmic movement and pantomime are useful for freeing the child's expression of the figure in painting and crayon work. Moods of different seasons, too, can be dramatized and then portrayed on paper with more freedom after such playing.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

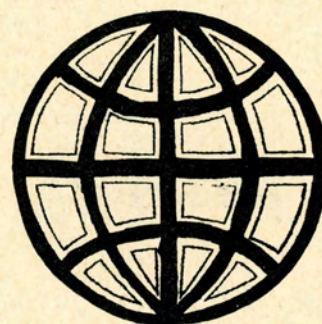
Children find it much more fun to do physical fitness when plain old exercises are dressed up by the use of creative dramatics. Children love to be window shades that are pulled up and down, or pop-corn in the pan, or mountain climbers climbing a rope, or trees bending in the wind. And the physical exercises are just as beneficial when done in this enjoyable manner.

SCIENCE

Science, too, can provide opportunities for creativity. The goal of modern science is

to teach creative thinking using the facts discovered. After we have studied about seeds, we can play what we have learned about how seeds grow. The seeds must be planted; they are dormant, but with tiny plants sheltered inside. Sunshine, rain and air can be played by the children. (They are not troubled about becoming any of these things.) Dramatic play in science can be utilized with studies of any unit: changes of seasons, sound, simple machines, living things, and physical concepts. It is limited only by the bounds of imagination of teacher and children.

Perhaps the greatest boon in the use of creative dramatics is the freedom it encourages and instills in the child. He wants to express himself by movement, by action, and by words. When we began a discussion of our best



known planet, the earth, these were the observations made without hesitation by my second graders:

It's beautiful.

It's round.

It has lots of pretty creatures.

There is no end.

Things stay on the earth because of gravity.

The earth is part of the solar system.

It has atmosphere.

It's a planet.

It's God's. (Psalm 24)

We're still discovering things about it.

It's bumpy.

It's mostly water; some land.

I recorded these and other comments as they were given by the class. Almost all were eager to give an idea. The list shows some have read and absorbed facts, but many ideas are expressed without factual background.

The opportunities are limitless; the creativity is there. Venture out, try your wings, and you will have the greatest reward you can experience in teaching.



Department Editor,
Merle Meeter

ORGANIZING LITERATURE BY THEME: A DEFENSE

--Donald Oppewal*

A quick look at several literature anthologies for secondary English classes should convince anyone that they present an almost bewildering array of answers to the question: How is literature most effectively organized for teaching? Whatever the virtues or vices of the high school literature anthology, certainly it cannot be said of them that they reflect any consistent party-line position on this question.

A little reflection by a Christian teacher may lead in either of two directions: 1) It really doesn't make any difference which of the alternatives are chosen because a given piece of literature casts its own spell without help or hindrance from the selections that come before or after it; or, 2) Teachers and publishers have different objectives in mind when they make this choice. The former alternative really abandons to chance or to practical considerations the matter of sequence and organization. While some teachers may actually operate in this fashion, none, I believe, would argue that it is best to proceed arbitrarily, following only the whim of the day or week. If the teacher

takes the other alternative, namely that in choosing for one arrangement of literature over another he is really making a choice of one set of objectives over another, then he must face at least two further questions: 1) What are the objectives of the different organizational schemes? and 2) Which can be defended as most effective in achieving the major objectives of Christian education? The first demands a purely descriptive answer, and the second one an evaluative one.

ALTERNATIVE ORGANIZATIONS

There are at least three organizational patterns which may be used to organize literature for teaching purposes. Each of them has a logic of its own, and for each a plausible de-

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fense can be given. The three patterns may be called 1) the chronological, or historical arrangement, 2) the formological, or literary type (genre) arrangement, and, 3) the psychological, or thematic arrangement.

In the chronological arrangement, the logic which governs sequence is that of time. The guiding assumption is this: What is written first should be studied first. Hence, anywhere from a decade to several centuries can be selected, and the pieces of literature lined up for study in the order in which written. The whole span can be subdivided into smaller packages and labeled with time signatures (e.g., 19th Century) or epoch labels (e.g., Post-Civil War), with the pieces within each arranged again in chronological order.

In the formological arrangement the logic which governs both choice of content and sequence is the format or type into which the literary piece is cast. The guiding assumption is this: Works similar in form or structure should be studied together. Some literary type (e.g., sonnet) can be selected and examples, irrespective of when written, can be placed in juxtaposition. The pieces within each unit are characterized by similarity in form.

In the psychological arrangement the logic which governs what works can be grouped is that of the psyche, the personal dimension of the learner. The guiding assumption is that those writings which touch our common human nature at similar points should be studied together. Therefore, some universal human problem, some enduring and significant kind of human situation (e.g., war, loyalty) can be selected, and pieces of literature chosen for their ability to illuminate some facet of that theme. Regardless of when written, or in what literary form they are cast, writings in which this theme is prominent can be placed next to each other to comprise a teaching unit. The sequence within the unit is governed by some psychological order, such as contrast, so that opposing views on the same theme are used to illuminate both each other and the total theme by being placed next to each other. Similarity in impact on the personality of the learner is what determines both the content and the sequence of the teaching unit.

THE CASE FOR EACH ALTERNATIVE

The case for each of these may be stated in terms of which objectives of teaching liter-

ature predominate by virtue of the order in which they are taught. The following brief listing assumes that many objectives, such as vocabulary enrichment, encouraging worthy use of leisure time, etc. are achieved equally well by all three. The focus here is on the differences, and it should be evident that no one of these organizational schemes can achieve all these equally effectively.

Some objectives enhanced by a chronological ordering of literature are:

- 1) to relate literature to its cultural setting (e.g., Civil War poetry)
- 2) to show how writers inevitably reflect the times in which they live
- 3) to secure deeper understanding of other cultures and times (e.g., the Victorian mind)
- 4) to show the change and development of literary forms (e.g., from diary to personal essay)

Some objectives peculiarly well-suited to a formological ordering of literary works are:

- 1) to show how different writers use the same or similar styles and literary conventions (e.g., Shakespearean and Italian sonnet form)
- 2) to analyze the structure of a given form (e.g., Japanese haiku, limerick)
- 3) to master literary devices which consistently appear in literature (e.g., irony, alliteration)
- 4) to recognize the characteristics of the major literary types (e.g., lyric poem, epic, personal essay)

Some objectives most easily achieved by a psychological ordering of literature are:

- 1) to make literature relevant to the lives of the learned
- 2) to show the universal truths embodied in all literature
- 3) to stimulate the student to develop a personal philosophy of life
- 4) to achieve the vicarious experience of life in its various dimensions

Any practicing teacher of English could produce more objectives, or variations on these stated above. These are merely illustrative. Perhaps some of them need elaboration to show

why they are peculiarly appropriate to the organizational system under which they are listed. However, since the purpose of the three lists is only to show that sequence itself affects objectives, perhaps the mere listing is enough.

At this point the shrewd teacher might wish to sidestep the problem of making a choice, and try to effect a synthesis of them. While this might seem to be the way of taking advantage of the best in each scheme, the choice cannot be thus evaded. If one decides, for example, to arrange material under thematic headings, but then within the unit to arrange selections in chronological order (e.g., a unit called "The Evolution of the Idea of Freedom"), one makes impossible the use of any psychological principle for determining what selection follows which. It is thus not a real synthesis, but a choice of one over the other, because sequence within the unit as well as the label at the head of the unit must unite to make it thematic or historical in nature.

ORGANIZATION AND CHRISTIAN OBJECTIVES

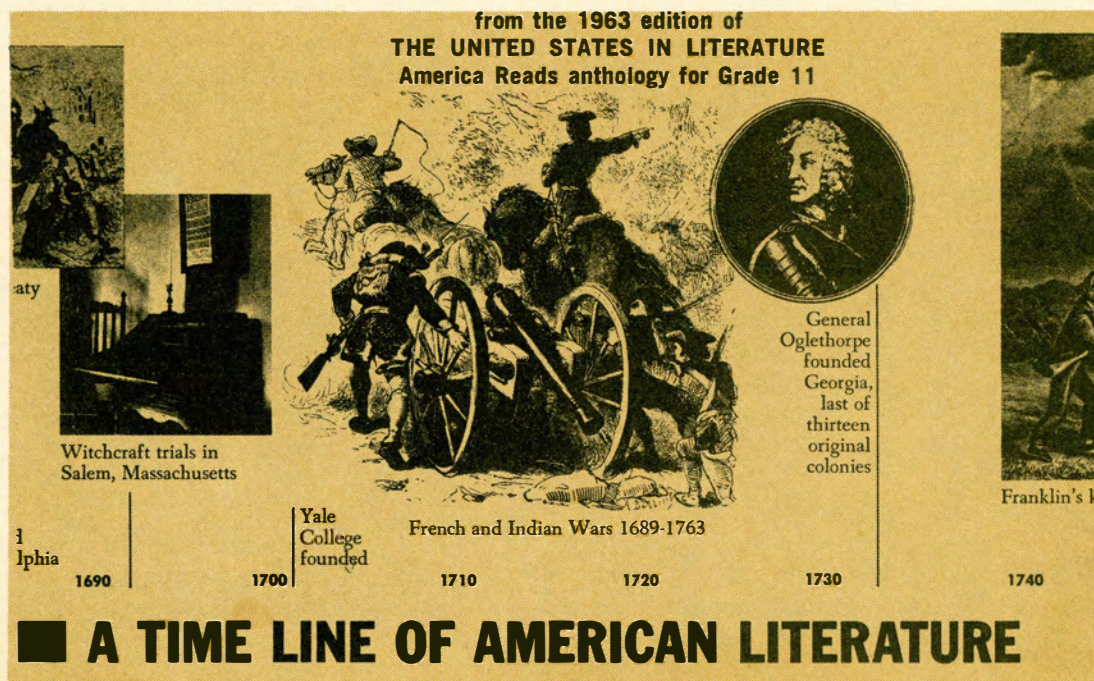
Made aware of some alternatives and the plausible case for each, the Christian teacher now must make his choice by discovering what deeper issues, if any, lie beneath the surface of each alternative. And unless he is willing to settle the question on such practical grounds as the preferences of students, the ease of testing, or what other schools are doing, then he must seek for something in his Christian commitment

that will assist him in his choice. He must, to put it briefly, philosophize about this educational question.

It has always been the contention of Christian educators that the objectives of education should be not only intellectual but moral, that education should challenge and change the heart and not simply furnish and fill the mind, or simply train in technique. Achieving a commitment to a Christian way of life, and not just competence in collecting concepts is the primary goal of Christian education. Scores of convention speeches and other promotional pieces attest to this emphasis.

This educational emphasis has been grounded in more fundamental theological concepts. Theism has always placed a Person at the heart of life, while other systems of thought have placed Idea or Thing in the center, and have made major curriculum decisions accordingly. Schools founded on Christian principles are thus said to have a God-centered curriculum, while others are Idea-centered or Thing-centered.

If it be asked why Person, and its effect on person, should be the regulative principle for all curriculum making, it could be justified at the most basic, metaphysical level. Some philosophies, such as materialism find that reality is basically matter, physical entities; others, such as idealism and realism, find the common denominator to be idea, essence, or law, i.e., non-physical entities. These alter-



natives were already present in Greek and Roman culture, but Christianity presented a third alternative. When St. Paul came to Athens and spoke to the philosophers, he came with a doctrine of being that was so strange to them that it was, we are told, foolishness to the Greeks and confounded the wise. This was because he proclaimed a metaphysic of Person and concept of truth in which reality and man's relationship to it is defined not so much as knowing ideas, or even knowing that some idea exists, but as knowing a Person and "walking in the truth". Jesus was declaring this when he said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

If it can successfully be argued that these are real, and not merely verbal, differences between Christian theology and other non-theistic outlooks, and if it can be argued that these real differences should affect educational emphases, then we are ready to apply our theology to our specific educational question. Literature teachers need to ask which of the alternative organizations most effectively would reach the heart of the student, would confront him most dramatically with that which will engage his mind, will, and emotions. It must be the kind of organization which will make the learner not only see and understand opposing outlooks on man, evil, etc., but also feel personally the tug of opposing basic outlooks. It is out of this encounter that personality is shaped and the heart is changed.

Given the alternatives stated earlier, one can note that regardless of the organizational scheme, each piece of literature has, all by itself, some power to engage the heart. Because literature inevitably deals with people in action, there is some capturing of the emotions, some swaying of the will involved when reading it. Not even the deadliest nit-picker teacher can reduce all literature to examples of this or that technique, or this or that historical phenomenon.

THE CASE FOR THE THEMATIC

The real question is the following: Which of these organizations itself makes the vital heart-contact central instead of peripheral, direct and persistent instead of accidental and coincidental? Which of them most persistently uses person as its point of reference? The answer is, I believe, the thematic arrangement. And this is in part because the type of relationships consistently taught in the other two or-

ganizations neglect the person dimension, the heart dimension.

The primary relationships that are consistently stressed in the chronological arrangement, for example, are those that exist between the piece of literature and 1) the personal life and ideology of the writer, 2) the socio-cultural milieu, and 3) the religio-philosophical allegiances of that time. Other relationships can be drawn, but are either peripheral to or disruptive of these primary concerns. The learner's psyche (heart) can be drawn significantly into these relationships only if he can "live into" the historical epoch, and identify personally with each of this whole complex of relationships. This is a feat not so much impossible as improbable of achievement in one class period a day.

In the genre approach, the major relationships examined are those that focus on the structure of the piece itself: the unity of the elements, like mood, setting, theme, tone, imagery, and rhythm. The chief relationships are those within the poem or piece itself, with all other connections peripheral. While the learner may be drawn into poem and its meanings through the elements of style, the organizational principle does not encourage it. The aesthetic experience can, for the moment, so wed form and content that they are one, but tomorrow there is another piece of similar craft, but a quite different focus in the content. Loss of continuity in the content results inevitably in loss of continuity in the personal-involvement dimension.

In the thematic approach, the universal human experience which is consistently the focal point provides the continuous point of connection between the literature and the learner's own consciousness. When different selections give different slants on the same theme, the learner must choose which way he shall allow himself to be pulled, thus engaging his whole ego. All other relationships that are taught become instrumental to achieving this personal involvement. Out of this encounter with person is to arise the encounter with Person. If our education is to be God-centered each subject must make its own peculiar contribution, and the thematic arrangement would seem to do it best.

SAMPLE OF A THEMATIC UNIT

If the thematic arrangement is to achieve the desired objective of this encounter with

person, if it is to change the heart and not just add to the furniture of the mind, the units of instruction must be carefully built. Many anthologies contain thematic units with selections so loosely related that the unit exhibits neither intellectual bite nor a focus on a universal human experience (e.g., themes like "This is America" or "Treasures From Our Heritage"). They are examples of catchy gimmickry rather than commitment to a pedagogy. The following is an attempt to sketch the outline of a defensible thematic unit. While it will by no means be teachable as is, it contains both suggested content and sequence.

The theme is "The Many Faces of War." The content is selected from those available in Book Three, Pilot Series, published by the National Union of Christian Schools in 1964, and designed for use in the ninth grade. The universal human experience is that of conflict, more particularly the kind of conflict resulting in violence between groups. Appropriate for inclusion is any selection in which the characters--or writer himself--exhibit a stance toward war: why we have it, what it does to people, how they feel about it, etc. The sequence is from those glorifying war, stressing the heroism, excitement, and courage, to those that deplore war, stressing its horror, degradation, and misery. Between these two extremes are those which equivocate or reflect ambiguous reactions to war.

Using material from Pilot Series, Book Three, one might select the following to come first:

- 1) "The Destruction of Sennacherib" by Lory Byron
- 2) "The Charge of the Light Brigade" by Tennyson
- 3) "Duty, Honor, and Country" by Gen. Mac Arthur.

All of these stress the glory of war, and in some fashion leave the impression of admiration for those who fight. Next might come:

- 1) "The Whistle Blows" by Ernie Pyle
- 2) "The Battle of the Ants" by Henry Thoreau.

Both of these tend to reflect the ambiguity of man's attitude toward war, or a neutral, factual stance on the part of the writer. Finally:

- 1) "I Die at Dawn" by Kees X.

unabashedly portrays the negative side of war, and stresses only suffering, injustice, and cruelty. Short poems or essays could easily be reproduced to lengthen the total list or to balance the emphases.

The sequence here depicted could be reversed, with those that show the glory of war placed at the end. Should the teacher wish to highlight the ambiguity of man's (particularly Christian) feeling toward it, the final selections could be those here depicted as being in the middle. All of these are possible within the concept of a thematic unit.

It should be added that commitment to this sequence does not require the elimination of attention to historical-cultural background or to literary devices in a given selection. It does mean that they are taught only as encountered and as they are instrumental to understanding the content of the theme. They become sub-points in the unit outline, never major headings.

SUMMARY

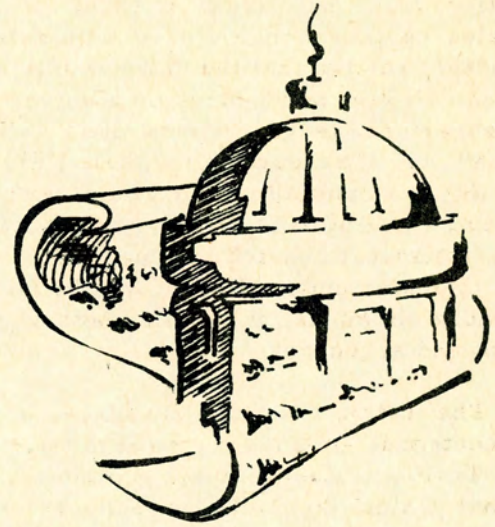
The thesis has been advanced that organizing literature into thematic units is superior to other forms on the ground that it enables teachers more effectively to achieve those major goals of Christian education to which they are committed because of their theology. An example has been included to show that not all thematic anthologies would exhibit the position taken here.



Photo by H. Lambert

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department editor,
Herm Beukema



COMMUNISM AND THE CLASSROOM

--Frederick Nohl*

After dealing with broad convictions and concerns in a previous article, we turn now to the question: How can the Christian elementary school teacher help pupils to explore Communism? Before answering this, three cautions need to be urged.

First, the teacher must know what the issue is all about. To teach from a smattering of facts set in a highly emotional base is to do the pupil, the church and the nation a disservice. Like the iceberg, the one-eighth that shows must have a solid seven-eighths underneath.

The teacher must also remember that the Christian school does not exist to train anti-Communist cadres. Its first purpose is to help church and home nurture a generation that sets its hope in God and that is equipped to be a lea-

ven and a witness in all its relations to the world. All teaching, including that about Communism, must take its place within this framework.

This suggests that the teacher avoid introducing a program that is basically one of anti-communist indoctrination, which states all contrasts in black-and-white terms, and which typically compares democratic principles with communist practices. A more defensible approach is one which stresses the objective study, comparison, and evaluation of communist and non-communist history, beliefs, and practices. This approach is the one outlined in Teaching About Communism: Guidelines for Junior and Senior High School Teachers, published in 1962 by the American Legion in cooperation with the National Education Association (available from the American Legion, P. O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. 42606, 50 cents.)

Finally, the teacher must recognize that any treatment of Communism on the elementary level can be only that--elementary. "The highly charged words of the culture--'democracy,' 'Communism,' 'love,' 'prejudice', and so forth--cannot be seriously analyzed in school."¹ Even the alert eighth grader is going to have much to learn--and unlearn--concerning Communism in the years ahead.

But that something can be done (or at least begun) goes almost without saying. The most important vehicles for exploring Communism are the religion and social studies curriculums. The way these curriculums can be

* MR. NOHL, EDITOR OF LUTHERAN SCHOOL MATERIALS, HERE COMPLETES HIS DISCUSSION OF COMMUNISM BEGUN IN THE FEBRUARY 1966 ISSUE OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL.

used at the several school levels is the next topic.

KINDERGARTEN AND PRIMARY GRADES

The kindergarten and primary grades offer little real opportunity for direct or indirect instruction about Communism. Though a child may occasionally ask a TV-inspired question about Russia or China or about the latest bomb test, the nature and experience level of the five to eight year-old prohibit significant instruction. Probably the greatest contribution the teacher can make at this level is to do the best possible job with the present religion and social studies courses, seeking always to build insights, attitudes, and ways of living that will serve the pupil well in the years to come. Among these, the following are of particular importance, not only for the later confrontation with Communism, but also with humanism, scientism, and other secular faiths:

- 1) God is real; the spiritual world is as real as the material.
- 2) Man, created and redeemed by God, has an inherent dignity and worth.
- 3) Man's purpose in life is to glorify his Creator, and this is accomplished by doing good to all men, whoever and wherever they may be.
- 4) Man was born to live in community; he cannot live alone and still be a man. Interdependency is a fact of life.
- 5) Man's natural tendency is to rebel against God and to abuse God's creation. This compels the Christian to self-discipline, to forgiveness, to sometimes choosing between the lesser of two evils, and not infrequently to cross-bearing.
- 6) Man has an eternal destiny and is ultimately accountable to God.
- 7) God still rules His creation, having made Christ the Lord of the universe. The man whom God has called into His kingdom has nothing to fear; "in everything God works for good with those who love Him." (Rom. 8:28)

INTERMEDIATE GRADES

Teachers in the intermediate grades will first seek to strengthen and to add to the foundations laid in the primary grades, without particular reference to Communism. At the

same time, some incidental teaching about Communism is possible. For example, mission studies can indicate the inroads of Communism (without, however, making fear of Communism the motive for mission work). The religion lessons treating the First Commandment can be illustrated by noting the man-made gods of the Communist creed, a creed which has been phrased this way:

I believe in man--the almighty--creator of all works, and in technology--which rules over all--begotten in the human mind--born of science--suffered under backwardness--resurrected in our time--raised to the highest value--so that it will one day judge the living and the dead peoples.

I believe in the good spirit in man--in the ruling class, the communion of men of good will--in a better life--in a glorious future, and in the permanence of matter.²

Social studies lessons also afford opportunities for incidental instruction. The weekly current events paper can be a starting point for profitable teaching in all grades. Again, as the fifth grader traces the development of his nation, differences between government in a democracy and in a Communist state can be pointed out. Then, too, as the sixth grade geographer journeys across the continents, special attention can be given to the life and times of Communist-controlled areas.

UPPER GRADES

The upper-grade teacher, knowing that for many children the years of intensive Christian education will soon be over, will seek to intensify the development of Christian insights and convictions. Where appropriate, he will, like the middle-grades teacher, also take time to make incidental reference to Communism. However, he need not stop with incidental teaching, for many of his pupils are now capable of handling direct, elementary instruction about the Communist movement.

Unfortunately, the Christian school teacher interested in scheduling, say, a three- to six-week unit on Communism has almost no graded resources written from a Christian viewpoint to draw on. This compels him to use materials having a secular orientation, adapting and supplementing them where necessary.

Though such modifications are seldom easy to make, they are possible.

The teacher may begin his search for current materials by examining his social studies texts, especially his civics texts. Some may contain one or more chapters treating aspects of the Communist question. If so, these could be marked as "must" chapters, with special attention being given to expanding the study by using some of the materials listed below.

If the available texts provide no solid core of information, one of the following special texts may be considered:

Edna McCaull Bohlman, Democracy and Its Competitors (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1962), paper, \$1.28, cloth, \$2.20.

Schlesing and Blustain, Communism: What It Is and How It Works (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963), \$1.72.

What You Should Know About Communism and Why, Edition I, Grades 6-9 (New York: Scholastic Magazines, Inc., 1964), 50 cents. A set of eight correlated color filmstrips, Communism: What you Should Know About It and Why, is available from McGraw-Hill Text Films, New York, \$48.50 the set, \$6.75 each.

A FINAL URGENT WORD

Communism has sometimes been called a Christian heresy. With this in mind, Henderlite reminds us that:

the church must proclaim its faith in God's saving grace as a revolutionary force in history. In this respect Communism, the heretic, is often truer to its task than the Christian faith from which Communism borrows its urgency. Communism proclaims the end in ringing tones and calls youth to the task. The fact that the church sees its goal beyond history rather than within history all too often causes the church to lose its urgency.³

Certainly part of every Christian teacher's calling is to remind the church--and particularly the youth who also are the church--that the hour is late. The world that waits to be won for its Lord cannot wait until tomorrow.

In our day one of the church's enemies has openly laid his cards on the table. Thus the urgency for the church to find itself, to take a measure of the enemy, and then to plunge into its work becomes even greater. For the stimulation of this kind of urgency the Christian elementary school teacher finds himself in a highly strategic position.

¹ Martin Mayer, The Schools (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), p. 349.

² From an East German Newspaper, as reported in The Lutheran Witness, 80 (October 31, 1961), p. 24.

³ Rachel Henderlite, Forgiveness and Hope: Toward a Theology for Protestant Christian Education (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1961), p. 110.

RECOMMENDED: INTRAMURALS FOR ALL

--Peter Duyst*

In the Fall of 1963, the Grand Rapids Christian junior high schools inaugurated a new athletic program. For lack of an official title, we'll call it the Intramural-Interscholastic Program.

For some time we had observed certain inadequacies in our old program, mainly, that the program was geared for participation by only the few highly skilled. At the urging of the Administrators' Council, the athletic league composed of representatives from Creston, Mayfield, Seymour, Oakdale, Southwest, Sylvan, and Westside appointed a committee to work out a new program. It was adopted in the Spring of 1963, and went into effect with the school year 1963-64.

Basically, the new program allowed time for more intramurals. In several schools, the prime after-school time was used specifically

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and exclusively for team practice. Intramurals in most schools were relegated to a short noon-hour, or perhaps, none at all. To do this, the sport seasons were shortened. For example, instead of six flag-football games, four were played. At the same time, we felt the need to acquaint our students with more sports for playing experience. We introduced soccer in the fall of the year for both boys and girls. Volleyball was added for boys to fill the gap between the basketball and softball seasons.

At Seymour, the sport program for boys follows this procedure. For three weeks after school opens in the fall, the boys play a round-robin intramural schedule of flag-football. Each team plays five or six games. Following those three weeks, a school team is chosen which plays four games with other league members. (Some schools with longer noon-hours continue intramurals during the interscholastic season.) After football, we play intramural soccer for a couple weeks, depending upon the weather. Three interscholastic soccer games are played after a school soccer team is chosen.

By the middle of November, we have finished our fall sports, and are ready to begin basketball. In our area, basketball is the "king of sports," so we allow significantly more time for it. Our intramural season lasts for five or six weeks. Not until Christmas vacation do we pick our teams and not until after vacation do we begin our interscholastic schedule. This has some drawbacks. Since we begin our basketball practice much later than other area schools, we must turn down offers of scrimmages and early season practice games. By the time we have a team and are ready to play, other school teams (outside our league) have reached mid-season proficiency and we usually have to "take our lumps" in practice games. However, as our season is shorter, we reach peak at or near the end of the season, which lessens the possibility of having "end-of-the-season doldrums" that some teams experience. In basketball, we play the state-limited quota of ten games.

Between basketball and softball, boys play volleyball. Our boys have taken to this sport and have made it into a vigorous interscholastic activity. Three weeks of intramurals are followed by three weeks (four games) of interschool competition.

Softball and track follow the same plan. Our interscholastic track program consists of

three triangular meets plus a meet for each grade (seventh, eighth, and ninth) in junior high, which we call the "All-City Meet."

The girls' athletic program at Seymour is similar to the boys' program; and in two sports (basketball and softball) is conducted in conjunction with the boys' interscholastic program. In addition, our girls participate in soccer and volleyball in the fall, and one track meet in the spring.

This new Intramural-Interscholastic Program worked out successfully the first two seasons it was tried. It is now being continued during this school year of 1965-66.

Without a doubt, the new program has encouraged more intramurals. For some schools, it was something new. In others, intramurals were given new impetus. At Seymour, intramurals became the basis from which the school teams were chosen. Everyone was given an opportunity to play in intramural sports, regardless of his degree of skill. Those who are more highly skilled must play with the average and below average. Usually they take the lead. Often they help the lesser able to achieve some degree of proficiency. It has proved to be good experience for them to assume this kind of leadership.

We believe that there are other benefits to be derived from our new program. The wide variety of sports that we participate in allows our students to broaden their interests. The school facilities and coach's time are used by all the students, not just a few who have outstanding athletic talents.

Interscholastic athletics are put in their proper place for the junior high level. In the pyramid-shaped triangle that is sometimes used to describe the total physical education program, interscholastic sports are at the peak, built upon the foundation of the required physical education program and the middle-ground of the voluntary intramural program.

To be sure, this new plan is not without its problems. Scheduling is one of them. It is more difficult to schedule a limited number of games than a round-robin schedule. It was felt by some that a limited schedule deprives the more highly skilled of proper development. Some coaches preferred to conduct practice

sessions with a few rather than administer a comprehensive intramural program.

But obstacles can be overcome. We believe that the results after two years warrants a continuation of the experiment. We recommend it to other schools.

CHRISTIAN TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES

--Johanna Last*

Teachers may become all absorbed in task assignments and task accomplishments in their respective classrooms. However, there are times when they too are inspired to look at a certain area of curriculum and ask, "Where am I and the students going?" When I look at the largest of the text books in the fifth grade, which you have guessed is geography, then I too sometimes join my colleagues in sighs and complaints such as, "How does a teacher teach all that and history besides?" The result may be that the teacher strives the more to "cover material".

Yes, there is too much to cover. However, before we even think about that part of it, there is a far more penetrating question the Christian intermediate teacher of geography and history ought to be asking himself. It is not the question, "How can I cover all this material?" The question that prods me on is, "What is the highest and loftiest goal I can aspire to in the teaching of these subjects?" Perhaps someone would phrase it differently, but for me this goal is to help the child see man in his proper relationship to God. The Scriptures reveal clearly that man's place on the earth is under God. This means, among other things, that our teaching may never be man-centered. God must be in the foreground, God must be-

come great in the lives of our children so that he and his fellowman can take their proper place under God.

How do we hope to achieve this? Teachers are individuals and you will do this differently from your fellow teacher. It is something to which we must first of all be sensitive. Awareness of this fundamental truth is the first step in transmitting it. The second thing is to prepare our lessons with this as the main ingredient and all the other ingredients such as factual details, vocabulary words, map concepts, etc., all blended to give direction to the whole. This requires knowledge of the Scriptures. The Christian teacher must know much concerning what Scripture says about God. Knowledge of God and works is paramount. The Scripture is our text for this knowledge. The Bible has much to say also concerning the relationship of man to His God. The Scriptures provide us with the thrust, the pervading emphasis of our teaching, and from there we proceed to help children see God for what He is. In time, consistent planning, teaching, and praying with this one purpose always before us, children will not see you, the teacher, so much any more; they will see God. Is there greater motivation for a Christian teacher? Is there greater security anywhere for the child?

Some of you may say, and rightly so, that this is still only theorizing. If we are convinced that this is a worthy goal, then how does one do this and not seem pious (in the wrong sense) or fanatic, or one who tacks religion on to everything? Again, this is a matter of the individual as well as the grade level. In the fifth grade, we begin our year in the study of United States geography with the question, "What do you think geography is?" In the course of the discussion we formulate a definition that will read something like this, "Geography is the study of the gifts which God has given to people in a certain area. It is also a study of how the people use these gifts." Throughout the study of the area, we come back to this definition. We ask questions as to what these gifts are. They may include such things as fertile soil, level land, waterways, scenic beauty, harbors, suitable climate, etc. Then we look to see what man has done with these gifts. Always the student is mindful that God first must give, then man uses and develops what God gives. I realize our definition does not give stress to man's adjustment to his environment, and the ways in which man changes his environment, but these will not be neglected. Our main objective is to

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create an emphasis which is not man centered, but an emphasis which through the work of the Holy Spirit will make this child sense something of the greatness, beneficence, and generosity of His God.

This emphasis will make little impact on the consciousness of the child if it is a now-and-then insertion in our lesson planning. Our goal to make children see God must be incorporated into class discussion, review, testing, projects, and even bulletin boards.

In the unit test give the child opportunity to write down the relationships he senses between the work which the people do in a particular area, and what God has given to them. Let him tell in a paragraph how he feels about the way people have made use of God's gifts. At some point ask some of them to talk or write about our responsibility in the use of forests, water, scenic beauty, minerals, soil, etc. Some of the students are able to make some pointed observations if they have been guided in their learning by a teacher who is conscious that all things are God's, and that the earth too is included in the redemptive plan of God.

USING BULLETIN BOARDS

One more area which we can utilize to foster our goals is the bulletin board. This teaching aid is often neglected because it is time consuming. However, it has many advantages. It may remain in the room for several days, serve as a constant reminder of some concept which we are striving to communicate, and be referred to by teacher and pupils as they learn. For these reasons the bulletin board must teach that which reinforces our main objective. What can we hope to communicate by such titles on our bulletin boards as, "Indians", "The Central States", "The Westward Movement", "Switzerland"? Just as we tell children why we are studying a given lesson, we also must let them

know what this bulletin board tells us about our relationship to God. Our titles then might be for a display on the birth of our nation, "A Nation Born Under God". Another display may feature these words, "God Gives, Man Uses". Another maybe in question form, "How Are These People Using God's Gifts?" A conservation unit might include a bulletin board with pictures of the flora and fauna of an area with the title, "How Can We Help Preserve God's Gifts?" Wouldn't it be well to picture people of a country or area and ask the question on the bulletin board, "Do These Know Jehovah?"

We have only touched on this whole question of what Christian teaching involves in the area of geography and history. The professor in our secular university tells us that we have grossly neglected the study of man in Social Studies. No doubt he is right, but he has left our greatest neglect untouched. We have neglected the study of God.

Lest someone should think I am not interested in the volume of material we are expected to teach in history and geography, I will add just a word about that.

We know that subjects have been added to the curriculum and none have been deleted. How do we cope with this situation? Many schools have adopted the fused program known as Social Studies. Necessity seems to dictate to us this matter. However, there is this consideration. Children in the intermediate grades are intensely interested in history. May we ignore this interest, or should we capitalize on this "built in" motivation? Added to this, there are values in teaching history to these children which we may not neglect, and which will be more difficult to do in a fused program. Is there a possibility that we keep geography as a separate discipline and in addition carry out two or three well developed units in history? It appears this could be done very well in American history. History is so important because there are abiding spiritual lessons which we as Christian teachers are bound to unfold to the students. In history, perhaps as in no other subject, we come to see that Satan perpetually hinders the progress of God's kingdom, but Christ's kingdom triumphs over this opposition. Judgment and national ruin fall upon the nation or people that violate His rules and persecute His Church. Let's give serious consideration to exploring the possibility of keeping history and geography in the curriculum of the middle grades.

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