CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL

IN THIS ISSUE:

October, 1966

CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL, VOLUME 6, No. 1, OCTOBER, 1966
A medium of expression for the Calvinistic school movement in the United States and Canada

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.

PHOTO CREDITS: Harold M. Lamberts, pages 7, 16, 28, 29

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EDITORIAL

Some Changes Made

Now entering its sixth year of publication, the Journal has evolved through several stages in both ownership and format. Hopefully the changes have been all to the good and have produced a periodical more substantial in size and quality, and read by more teachers. Since the subscription list has recently expanded, both new readers and others may appreciate knowing what series of forces have shaped these pages.

THREE STAGES

The idea of a publication written by and chiefly addressed to Christian school teachers had been at the talking stage in many places. The Midwest Christian Teachers Association, for example, in 1957 had a committee on this very matter. In 1960 a small group of teachers in the Grand Rapids area agreed among themselves that the best way to begin a publication was to begin it rather than talk about it. Consequently they burst upon the scene with a four page publication entitled C.E.A. Newsletter. Making themselves the Executive Committee of a purely paper organization called the Christian Educators Association, they solicited manuscript, membership and subscriptions in this Newsletter. These brave souls, with never a membership-readership of more than two hundred, and with money from private "angels," actually published five issues in 1960 and 1961. In the early issues these teachers did most of the writing themselves, making strong pleas for greater professional awareness among educators, and for more money and membership for their Association. They were trying valiantly to create a national organization which would tie together all the Christian professional educators. They hoped that regional associations would back them.

During these two years the group received no official institutional or organizational endorsement, and the Christian Educators Association never met in official convention with elected delegates. It seemed destined to die in infancy, even though the National Union Educational Foundation offered to underwrite travel costs involved in such a meeting of delegates. The first stage looked as if it would be the last.

The second stage involved institutional support, and a change in the format of publication, but not a change in the structure of the organization publishing it.

In the Fall of 1961 the name Christian Educators Journal appeared on a 5 1/2 X 8 1/2 inch sixteen-page issue. The lead editorial by Dr. John Van Bruggen explained the change. The Education Department of Calvin College decided in April, 1961 to cooperate with these private citizens publishing the Newsletter, and "to join them in improving their publication and making it more professional." Two members of the Department were appointed to aid the existing editorial committee. In addition to this support, the C.E.A. received $500 from the National Union Foundation in 1962. When Calvin College matched the contribution a year later, the cumulative effect was to put a financially shaky enterprise on a sounder footing. The hope still was that regional teacher organizations would also lend support to the Association and to subscription to the Journal. Only the latter succeeded.

The Midwest Christian Teachers Association, with 1200 members, was the first to take official action. At the Fall, 1962 institute the MCTA House of Delegates voted to increase membership dues and to include subscription to the Journal in its membership benefits. This vote of confidence by the largest regional teacher organization, and the subsequent influence on the Journal by the MCTA Board provided the impetus for stage three.

In the third stage dramatic changes in organizational structure and in the format and structure of the Journal occurred.

For one thing, the dream of a nation-wide Christian Educators Association evaporated and an Association of existing organizations took its place as the sponsor of the Journal. At that time only three had lent financial and editorial board support, and two of these were not even teacher organizations, but were the NUCS and Calvin College. Since then, a number of teacher associations have joined, and a complete listing of them is on the inside front cover.

Other changes in this stage included an expanded size and format, substantially that of this present issue. Separate curriculum departments were created, each with its own editor. Color and illustrations were introduced. Other special columns have slowly been added since 1964, and the size has averaged thirty-two pages.

That brings us to today.

A FOURTH STAGE ?

The Journal seems, finally, to have made its mark, so to speak. With increased circulation has come increase in

finances with which to create more improvements. But the story has not ended.

Will there be a fourth stage that will boost the periodical into a stable orbit, or will it fizzle and fade in a few years? It must be said, with both charity and candor, that Christian teachers themselves have not been the first to feel the need of talking to each other about Christian education. Remember that NUCS, which is a school board organization, and Calvin College, which is a teacher training institution, have been chiefly responsible for its progress so far. Unless the rank and file teachers themselves become more involved, in both the reading and writing dimensions, it will fall short of stage four.

Hopefully, in the next few years, this magazine can increase its publishing schedule, at least from its present four issues to six issues per year. It should also expand its coverage of Christian education via more special columns, departments, and features. This means more work by more teachers spread over more regions than in the past.

A mark, once made, can be multiplied, smudged or obliterated. Which will it be? D. O.

HOW DO PRESTIGE SYSTEMS IN PUBLIC AND CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS COMPARE?

Sociologists assert that in any social system, prestige by its very definition is in scarce supply. Not every one has it or gets it, but everyone competes for it. This is as true in any high school, public or Christian, as it is in society at large. Sociologists have taken a "hard look" at the prestige systems found in adolescent high school sub-cultures. They conclude that the fundamental competition in a high school is not primarily for grades, nor for athletic achievements, nor any other such attainments. Rather, high schoolers compete for "recognition and respect" – the elements of which prestige is composed – in the eyes of their peers. To be sure, winning recognition and respect in the eyes of parents, teachers, and other significant adults is of some importance. More significantly, however, competition for scholastic or athletic honors, as well as competition in other activities, is important to the competitors, not on its own account, but because it provides a means of winning prestige in the eyes of other teen-agers.

In 1960 a Calvin College senior did a study of the differences in prestige systems of selected high schools in a midwestern metropolitan area. The primary aim of the study was to compare the prestige systems of public and Christian schools. Since prior studies have shown that the dominant social class background of students has significant impact on the prestige system of the high school, three high schools were singled out for study: (1) a public high school with upper middle class students, (2) a Christian high school, and (3) a public high school which drew students primarily with working class backgrounds. The following table, based on the occupational status of the fathers of the respondents, reveals that the Christian high school falls between the two public high schools in terms of social class background of its students.

Table I. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS (SOCIAL CLASS) OF RESPONDENTS' FATHERS

	White Collar	Blue Collar	Total
(1) UMC Public HS	88%	12%	100%
(2) Christian HS	41%	59%	100%
(3) WC Public HS	30%	70%	100%

To acquire information on how students gain respect and recognition in these high schools, a self-supporting questionnaire was employed. Approximately 100 boys and girls from each school returned the questionnaire. All boys in the sample were asked, "How would you most like to be remembered in high school: as an athletic star, a brilliant student, or most popular?" For girls the question was exactly the same except that "a leader in extra-curricular activities" was substituted for the phrase "an athletic star." The results from these questions are given in the following two tables.

Table II. HOW BOYS WOULD MOST LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED IN HIGH SCHOOL.

	Brilliant Student	Athletic Star	Most Popular	Total
UMC Public HS	36%	25%	39%	100%
Christian HS	45%	30%	25%	100%
WC Public HS	49%	31%	20%	100%

* THIS COLUMN IS A REGULAR FEATURE APPEARING IN EACH ISSUE OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL, AND WRITTEN BY DIFFERENT MEMBERS OF THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT OF CALVIN COLLEGE.

Table III. HOW GIRLS WOULD MOST LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED IN HIGH SCHOOL.

	Brilliant Student	Leader in Extra-Curricular Activities	Most Popular	Total
UMC Public HS	26%	43%	31%	100%
Christian HS	57%	33%	10%	100%
WC Public HS	39%	27%	34%	100%

It should be noted at this point that these data are the results of only one investigation. Any conclusions or generalizations from such data can be accepted only tenuously; one should avoid pushing analysis to unrealistic extremes. Confidence in generalizations drawn from these data can be gained only by continuing research.

In this analysis it is assumed that when a high percentage of the students have chosen the same response (e.g., "brilliant student," "athletic star," etc.) that this reflects a definite preference for that kind of prestige. If responses show a fairly even percentage distribution, we assume that there at least three equally acceptable channels for prestige achievement. Unfortunately this study is in no way complete and leaves several questions unanswered. For example, the findings of this study would have been enhanced if information had been collected for two additional matters: (1) the amount of "overlapping" which occurs between prestige systems, e.g., the number of respondents wishing to be remembered as both brilliant students and star athletes; (2) the extent of the influence of "leadership cliques" on prestige systems of high schools.

Nevertheless, there are some interesting propositions that can be drawn from this particular study. First, it is worthwhile noting that in almost all the high schools, less than half the students wish to be remembered as brilliant students. This would seem to openly conflict with the public interest of teachers and parents alike, since the majority of the students do not feel "scholastic success" is the most rewarding achievement in the eyes of their peers. Consequently energies are expended to achieve prestige and esteem in activities other than academic achievement.

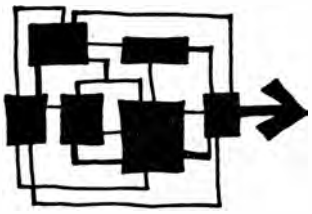
While generally it seems that all prestige achievement systems – academic achievement, sports or extra-curricular activities, and popularity – are significantly represented in all the high schools studied, there are some important differences. One of the most obvious differences is the tendency for boys of the upper-middle class high school to want to be remembered as the "most popular," and girls in the Christian and working class high schools to be attracted toward remembrance as "brilliant students." Ironically it is the upper-middle class high school which displays the highest proportion of graduates who continue on to college. In one sense, these results are somewhat unexpected in the light of similar studies which find a tremendous emphasis among boys on achieving prestige in the eyes of peers through athletics, regardless of the social class background of the school. On the other hand, the data for girls is supported by other studies. Generally, the higher the social class background of the high school, the more attractive is the role of "activities leader" for girls as a means of gaining respect and recognition in the eyes of fellow students.

In conclusion, this study does not find much that is unique about Christian high school adolescent sub-culture, that is, in their choice of the three prestige systems. The only proposition to be suggested here is that there is greater social reward for Christian high school females in seeking to be "brilliant students" and a considerable de-emphasis of "popularity" as a means for gaining prestige, than what normally is expected. Outside of this, there seems to be a more general conclusion: that social class background could almost as accurately predict the predominance of certain types of prestige systems found in these high schools, if the Christian versus public comparison were omitted. In other words, the fact that one of the high schools in this study was Christian had little impact on the outcome of the data. Hence, as the social class background of the Christian high school tends to fall between that of the other two public high schools, the relative dominance of the various prestige systems in the Christian high school also lies somewhere between the two public high schools with their different social class backgrounds. The question arises, does the nature of prestige systems in our Christian high schools follow the class line? Furthermore, how many other patterns in our so-called "Christian way of life" also follow the class line?

HE WHO HELPS A CHILD HELPS HUMANITY WITH A DISTINCTNESS, WITH AN IMMEDIATENESS, WHICH NO OTHER HELP GIVEN TO HUMAN CREATURES IN ANY STAGE OF THEIR HUMAN LIFE CAN POSSIBLY GIVE AGAIN. PHILLIPS BROOKS

A KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE IS A PERMANENT POSSESSION WHICH CAN BE USED THROUGHOUT LIFE. CHARLES A. BEARD

NOT THE FACT AVAILS, BUT THE USE YOU MAKE OF IT. RALPH W. EMERSON



PROFESSION-WIDE

editorial

CREATIVITY: SOME NOTES AND QUOTES

Within the pages of previous issues of this journal, the subject of creativity has been dealt with in relation to writing and dramatics. It would be correct to assume that the authors of these articles used the term in its general sense. Moreover, this is the way the term is usually used in conjunction with the classroom and the teacher's concern with the development of the individual child.

Hughes Mearns has much to offer on creativity in his book, CREATIVE POWER. He speaks not only broadly about the subject, but also about its application for the teacher.

"Though few children are geniuses, all children, I early discovered, possess gifts which may become later their special distinction. A thousand talents await recognition."

"Someone should stand by in the early years to watch for and foster these natural endowments. It is not enough to discern a native gift; it must be enticed out again and again. It needs exercise in an atmosphere of approval. Above all, it must be protected against the annihilating effect of social condemnation."

"Too many teachers – and this includes many professors – seem never to travel far from the books they have studied, but that is only where the instruments of learning are polished and made ready for personal adventure. The peculiar mark of the creative teacher – as different from all other businesses of man – is not his learning alone but his ability to transform others by the contagion of his own peculiar creative powers. If he can only repeat the studied work of another but is unable to create something of his very own, his teaching will be of minor importance."

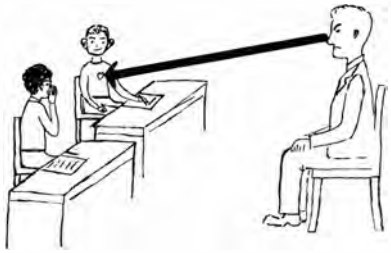
Consider now the twofold use of the term creativity within the classroom. For those students who possess general creative ability, the teacher is the controlling figure who will either promote or stifle the outgrowth and development of this ability. These are the many students who may succeed "because of" a creative teacher.

Even though the creative teacher would also provide a stimulating atmosphere for those possessing true "creativity," could it be that these few who have strong, individual personalities may also succeed "in spite of" a teacher?

INTRODUCING THE DEPARTMENT EDITOR

SHERI HAAN, A.B. CALVIN COLLEGE, M.A. MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, HAS TAUGHT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN GRAND RAPIDS AND BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN. SHE IS NOW TEACHING AT CALVIN COLLEGE IN THE AREA OF HER GRADUATE SPECIALITY, THE TEACHING OF READING. SHE ASSISTED IN PREPARING THE NUCS LANGUAGE ARTS COMPOSITION GUIDE, AND WROTE AN ARTICLE IN THIS JOURNAL LAST YEAR DESCRIBING THE GUIDE. ALL MANUSCRIPT FOR THIS DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE SENT TO HER AT CALVIN COLLEGE EDUCATION DEPT., 1331 FRANKLIN, S.E., GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. 49506--MG.ED.

The Steely-Eyed Starer



The Socratic Entangler

PEDAGOGICAL PROTOTYPES:

"WAYS OF MAKING POINTS"

(Compiled by CEJ Staff)

THE TWO FACES OF CREATIVITY

MARCIA ZWIERS *

The finest compliment which one person can pay another nowadays is to describe him or her as "creative." The term "creativity" is a "many-splendored thing"; its conventional meaning is related to the chance whimsy of the apt remark of the youngster and the awesome grandeur of a Beethoven symphony. In whatever situtaion applied, this magic word connotes the new, the imaginative, the original.

Many persons in the fields of psychology and education are concerned about the precise meaning of the term "creativity." If the scientist is to formulate generalizations based on studied observations of this type of behavior, then he must be able to differentiate it clearly from other forms of behavior. If the educator is to build into the educational enterprise recognition of all of the cognitive potentialities of the learner then some consensus of opinion is badly needed here, too.

Who is the "creative" person? Which behaviors having which kinds of characteristics are appropriately labeled thus? The word, of course, is a concept or construct which is used to describe something. It does not occupy space; it is not directly measurable. On that we should agree from the outset.

In the accumulating body of literature associated with creativity, two main streams of thought have emerged. These two faces of creativity are quite different; to hold one is to exclude the other for the most part. One approach implies an operational orientation diametrically opposed to the other. Fortunately, the apparent conflict is not related to disciplinary lines, i.e. the educators are not on one side of the fence and the psychologists on the other. Eminent persons associated with both of these fields are represented on each side.

First of all, there is a group of investigators who view creativity as a general ability encompassing a number of cognitive and personality characteristics. To be adjudged creative, a person must evidence the ability to solve problems in a systematic and effective way; he must exhibit originality and an adaptive flexibility with regard to existing need and situation; he must demonstrate fluency in his ideas and his working vocabulary; and, he must be highly sensitive to problems. In essence, whenever a person behaves as an ingenious problem-solver or problem-finder, he may be described as a "creative" individual or his behavior may be described as "creative."

Certain of these investigators stress the importance of a general awareness on the part of educators that all children, to a certain degree, possess this ability or the potential for it. They advocate strongly an atmosphere of encouragement in the classroom – a planned nurturing of all behaviors associated with "discovering" problems and solutions. They are vitally concerned with an over-emphasis on the teaching of skills and instruction which tends to suppress the development of the self-initiated or does not provide sufficient time for such expression. In short, these investigators view the creative as a delicate bud found in all persons which needs, in order to blossom, the careful nurturing of a perceptive teacher.

Another group of educators and psychologists takes a different approach to creativity. To these persons, the creative individual is one who has produced a singularly unique identifiable something. The process of behaving creatively is identifiable only in as much as it is related to an original and significant contribution which by the test of time and in the opinion of experts in the field is adjudged so. To meet a creative person is to meet a member of a tiny minority who has given to society a highly unique product or idea. For every one thousand highly intelligent persons there is only one truly creative person. The term cannot possibly be used to describe the efforts of both the sixth grader who writes an original poem and that of William Shakespeare. The activity of the sixth grader is of a different kind rather than of a different degree, i.e. it represents qualitative as well as quantitive differences in behavior.

The experimental methods employed in the exploration of creativity by the two groups of investigators would, of necessity, be quite different. Those who view creativity as a general developing process have constructed a variety of tests which may be used to identify the creative person. For example, the child who gives many unique and original answers to a question such as "How many uses can you think of for a brick?" is exhibiting such potential. Those who view creativity as related to an eminent product seek out those few individuals in society who have made singularly

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unique contributions, explore all facets of their personalities in relation to the personalities of others considered to be successful in their respective fields but not creative. In general, these investigators have found the creative person to be the individual who has a good opinion of himself but is frank in his criticism of self. Further, he is inventive, determined, independent, enthusiastic, industrious, and inclined above all things to stress his individuality. The non-creative, but successful person is the individual who is responsible, sincere, reliable, dependable, clear thinking, tolerant, understanding, and inclined above all things to stress good character and sympathethic concern for others. Some of the behaviors associated with behavioral descriptions of creative persons include: "a need to find out things by himself", "a preoccupation with pet projects", "an enthusiasm about all projects on which he works", "tends to question the orders of superiors", and "dislikes routine jobs."

To use an analogy, a child is bouncing a ball on the sidewalk in front of his home. He notices suddenly that if he drops the ball from a position above his head it makes a different sound when it hits the pavement than when he drops it from from a position hear his waist. So, he proceeds to cock his head and listen to the sounds of the ball as it hits the pavement. His grandfather is Dr. Pauling, a scientific genius who has given the world the understanding of a process of breath-taking propensity. Are both of these persons behaving creatively? Is it not possible that one is simply out of the other's "league?"

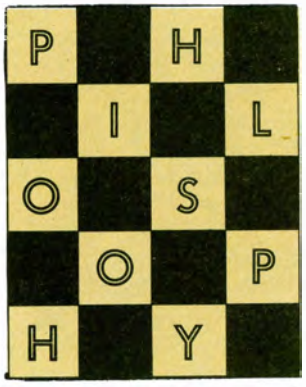
It would appear that the two faces of creativity are basically incompatible even though they would call for relatively similar recommendations for the classroom. To choose one approach over the other is not to be more democratic. Rather, this is a problem of functional semantics. It has been suggested that different terms be used to denote these two faces: the term "general creative abilities" for the potential for original behaviors and the term "creativity" for those behaviors associated with unique products. Whether or not we make changes in our terminology, we owe it to our readers and our listeners to specify which approach we are taking to this thing called "creativity."

WANTED: A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

ALBERT E. GREENE, JR.*

There it was in black and white, a bit shocking and hard to accept, but there it was. The class was studying a course in educational philosophy at a large state university in the summer of 1965. The text was recently revised and highly regarded. In a summary chapter, the author reviewed the various prevalent philosophies of education: idealist, naturalist, pragmatist, etc. He included a clear and comprehensive statement of the Thomistic position expressed in Roman Catholic parochial education. Then came the footnote. He explained that his omission of a Protestant Christian Philosophy of education might appear strange, but the fact is that there isn't any Christian philosophy of education to be reported on. A Christian school supporter would have been insensitive, indeed, not be have been struck with it. One could hardly brush it off with the defense that the author was prejudiced against Christianity. In earlier treatment of reality, human nature, and values, he had given laudably fair and comprehensive statements of the Biblical position. Yet he said there wasn't a Protestant Christian philosophy of education. The remark gave one the embarrassed feeling of a hard-running, clear-fielded end, through whose fingers the touchdown pass had just slipped, or of the contract-winning construction company which found that its bid on a brick church had not included the cost of the bricks. Is the charge really true? Does it make any difference? What can be done about it?

No one who knows the schools of Reformed persuasion can qustion that there is a distinctive Reformed world and life view. In many a schoolroom the patient instruction of a



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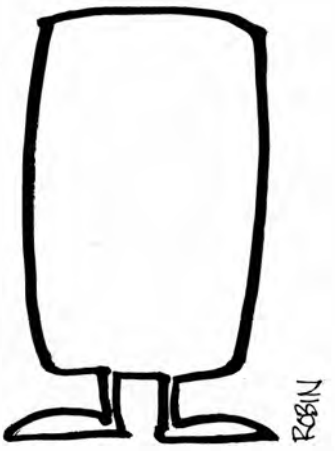
DEGREES HIGHER

WHY YES, I DID FINISH UP THIS PAST SUMMER!

FOUR YEARS WAS ENOUGH FOR ME!

I NEED ALL SUMMER JUST TO GET READY FOR FALL AGAIN...

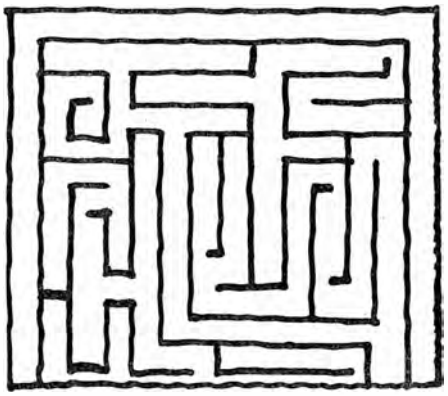


OUR CARTOONIST IS MR. ROBERT A. JENSEN, B.F.A. AND M.F.A., OHIO UNIVERSITY, WHO DRAWS UNDER THE NAME OF 'ROBIN.' HE IS PRESENTLY A MEMBER OF THE ART DEPARTMENT FACULTY OF CALVIN COLLEGE. THE PERIODICALS IN WHICH HIS CARTOONS HAVE APPEARED INCLUDE FRIENDS, ONE, SCOPE, MOTIVE, CLASSMATE, YOUTH, HIS, ETERNITY, AND THE WRITERS DIGEST.

Godly teacher has opened Christian windows on the world in the minds of Christian school students. (The work of such teachers makes the sacrifice involved in maintaining Christian schools eternally worthwhile.) Surely one cannot say that these teachers have no Christian philosophy of education. Yet the fear persists that because it is incoherent and undefined, it loses much of the force it ought to have. Faith rises repeatedly to assert that God is – that He is sovereign– and that His glory is the end of all being, but stumbles in the attempt to relate these glorious doctrines to practical subject-matter disciplines. The Christian view of education is more theology than philosophy. The light of the Word of God, so magnificently apparent in the theology of the Reformation, does not seem to have penetrated to a corresponding degree into other areas of human scholarship. It is true, without question, that there is no complete, coherent statement of Christian educational philosophy that has wide currency. Sporadic efforts have been made, beginnings have appeared here and there, but little seems to have come of them. In a day when printing is cheaper, easier, and more attractive than ever before, there exists little pressure for distinctive Christian textbooks in every subject area. Our Christian philosophy of education does not seem to demand them. Perhaps this is because it is ill-formed itself.

It may be, however, that there is another way of looking at this matter. Since idealism, naturalism, pragmatism, and the other views are already well worked out, can one not take a Christian form of one of them? Won't Christian idealism or Christian pragmatism do for a Christian philosophy of education? The answer is that any such hybridization produces sterile progeny. Each of these viewpoints has deep-seated presuppositions, particularly, the assumption of the independence of human reason. A Christian pragmatist, whatever he may be personally in the area of his faith, turns out philosophically to be either not really Christian or not really pragmatist. As the old saying goes, when two men ride on one horse, one of them has to ride in front.

The Roman Catholic position would seem preferable to this. As a matter of fact, many Protestant Christian educators are probably a good deal nearer to the Catholic position than they realize. The good St. Thomas, faced with the incursion of intellectually heady Aristotelian philosophy into the fortress of medieval Catholic dogma, came up with a solution that has survived the centuries remarkably well. He fabricated a philosophy something like a double-decker London bus. Placing human reason as the conductor on the lower level, he made truth in the realm of nature accessible to anyone possessed of the capacity for logical thinking, without regard to his religious convictions. At the stairway to the upper level, the realm of grace or supernature, he stationed the Church, insisting that understanding of the truth in the area of God and heaven and eternal life was accessible only by the light of revelation mediated through the dogma of the Church. But this is no solution for the Reformed Christian either. No one who believes that the fear of the Lord is the chief part of wisdom can agree that truth in the wide area of so-called natural law can be comprehended without the light of the Word of God.



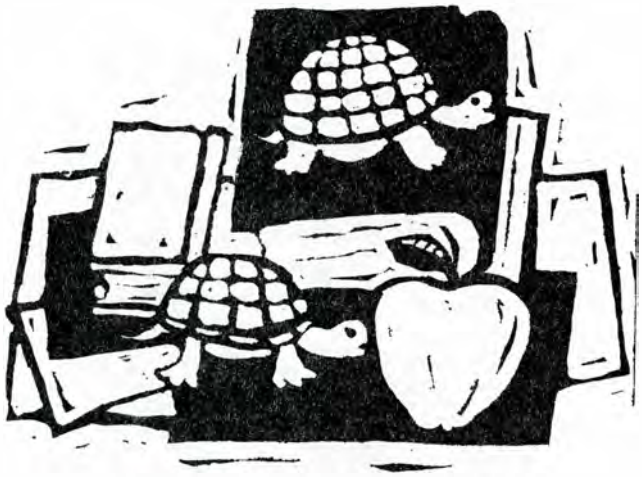
It would appear then that the footnote was right. Thomism won't do and syncretism won't do; but if we do have a philosophy it is yet to be put on paper.

The next question is: Does it really matter that we don't have an elaborated Christian philosophy of education? Philosophy doesn't dig any potatoes or build any houses, does it? Isn't philosophy only theoretical and impractical after all?

Yes, philosophizing may be quite ivory-towered and impractical, but philosophy itself is perilously potent. Ideas are deceptively powerful. They have a way of fading for a time, but reapparing in the most harsh and practical realities. Neitzsche died miserably insane, but a few decades later his stark philosophy reappeared to haunt Europe in the frightful tread of the Nazi storm trooper and the horrors of the gas chambers. The introduction to a recent edition of part of Hegel's works suggests that there has not been a political view since Hegel's time that was not affected by him. One writer even holds that World War II may be viewed as a conflict between two opposing camps of Hegelians and that at Stalingrad the left wing and right wing Hegelians met in mortal combat. Nor is this a strange view to the Bible believer. The temptation in the garden came in the form of a false view of life and the world. The spirit that now works in the children of disobedience does so by means of a twisted apprehension of the way things are. The truth which sets us free is not, to be sure, a philosophy – it is a Person, but this contrast must not blind us to the fact that the knowledge of Christ comes to us in concepts that embody a distinctive view of life and of the world and which, therefore, have implications for every aspect of human life, culture, and endeavor. Ideas are powerful.

Furthermore, actions always embody ideas of one sort or another. Clearly defined ideas seem to result in powerful actions, whether for good or for ill. Confused and self-contradictory ideas issue in actions that are of little real moment in the world. Like the bugle that blows uncertainly, or the fighter who beats the air, they don't accomplish much. If it is true that our "Christian" philosophy of education is an unholy mixture of sound Reformed theology and humanistic secular thinking, it is not surprising that we have not spelled it out, nor is it likely it will produce a world-startling and God-glorifying Christian witness.

What is to be done? If we do not yet have a truly Christian philosophy of education and if the effectiveness of our work in Christian schools depends on having one, the answer is obvious. It is time that we sought the light of the World of God upon areas beyond the theological. It is urgent that we struggle to discover the significance of the Biblical view of reality for the whole sweep of scholarship and that we incorporate this Biblical view in teacher training courses and in Christian textbooks, which will undergird, rather than undermine, our Christian school effort. Who is likely to do it if Christian educators don't? And if they don't, are Christian schools likely to survive?



I'M NOT A TURTLE

an adventure in the mind and life of a child

by Ron Matthies ILLUSTRATED BY JANET MATTHIES

I looked over my eyes
and the whole room was laughing
in their hands.
Everyone except me and teacher.
I dipped my finger in Nathan's back
and said, What's happening?
He said, On her desk.
That's all he said
and it took me a while.
I'm slow sometimes.

I saw them though.
I saw them on her desk.
She saw them too.

They were turtles. Two of them.
They stumbled across her desk
over the paper and the pencils,
over the calendar and the apple
She let them.
She would've let them fall over the edge
and break their shells on the wood
I didn't let them.
I shouted, Don't let them fall.
She swung her finger in the air
Towards me.
She made her mouth a mean ball
and dragged her nose down to her lips.
So it was you, she said.
That does it, she said.

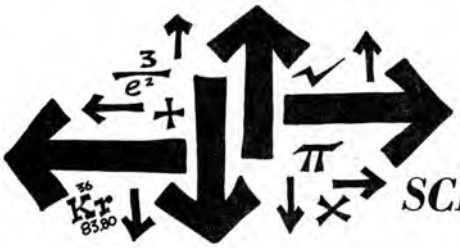
It wasn't me.
I never saw the turtles
until they went plopping across her desk.
But she blamed me for everything
because I usually had done everything.
I wasn't mean.
I just wanted her to notice me
and she never did unless I was mean.
She never noticed my school work
except to say it was the worst in the class.
I guess it was.
I guess I'm not just slow. I'm dumb.
Teacher thinks so.
The kids think so.
They laugh at me. Right on my face they laugh
and breathe all over me.
I've heard them say, Boy, you sure pulled a
Gordie Larson.
That's my name—Gordon Larson.
I know what they mean, too.
They mean that something dumb was done.

Teacher put my ear in her fingers
and pulled me up from my desk.
She said, We're going to the psychologist.
We did too.
We went together
through the empty hall
that smelled of wet
and chalk and lavatories.
We went together
until she let my ear loose.
We were in front of a door.
It was covered with fat gold letters.
It was the psychologist's room.
I could tell. The door letters started with P
and ended with T.
Teacher made a fist,
but she didn't hit me.
She knocked on the door
and man sounds started on the other side,
Yes. Come in, please.
We came in. Teacher and me.
She looked mean again
and she wanted me to feel bad.
I could tell. But I felt good
because she was noticing me.

I didn't like him
because teacher left.
He had hair on his face,
under his nose.
He sat a long time and didn't say anything
He just pulled on that hair under his nose.
He said, We're going to play a game.
I knew right away he was lying.
You don't play games with psychologists.
I was right, too,
because he slipped and said,
This is the Roar Shock Test.
So it was a test. I knew about tests.
They certainly weren't games.
I felt sorry for a minute.
He'd spilled ink all over his Roar Shock.
But he didn't mind.
He said there were pictures hidden in the ink.
There weren't.
There were just big ink splotches.
He said, What do you see?
I said, Spilled ink.
He said, LOOK harder. Try to see pictures.
I did. I tried. I slit my eyes
and pushed the paper to my nose
and held it far away.
There weren't any pictures. I told him so.
Then he really tugged that hair.

He tried another test.
He called it the Ape Procession test.
This time there were pictures.
I could see them. I said,
I see them. I see the pictures.
He said, Of course you do.
I want you to tell me a story
about the people in these pictures.
I didn't though.
How could I?
How can you tell stories
about someone you don't know.
He was mad at me.
I could tell by his eyes
and his hands were fists.

Teacher came back.
I didn't look at her.
I just looked
at my shoes where Mother had tied them.
I wanted to run out of that room.
The man said something about
adjustment and problems
and not retarded.
They talked like I wasn't there.
People always did
like I had a turtle shell.
But I'm not a turtle. I'm like
anyone else.
Can't you hurt inside just because you're dumb?
I hurt inside.
I hurt all the time.
But no one even notices.
If they did, I might not be so dumb.



SCIENCE-MATH

EDITORIAL

In the past ten years we have seen many changes in the science curricula of our schools. The advent of Sputnik I not only increased emphasis on science at all levels of education, but also changed the approach to the teaching of science. The typical science course once involved the learning of definitions, theories, laws, formulae, and the application of these. Today the emphasis has shifted. The student must be taught to think scientifically. The amount of material, even the topics covered, are really not so important, so long as they are thoroughly understood. The conscientious teacher, who tries to evaluate his course or to select a new textbook, is immediately faced with the choice of approach - the modern or traditional?

Perhaps the best way to solve the problem is to review the objectives of the teaching of science in a Christian school. Are our objectives really different from thise

school. Are our objectives really different from those of the public schools? If our objectives are different, should our science curriculum be distinctive also? Or is the difference only in the way in which the knowledge is applied? How do we differ in our method of teaching the average lesson in our classes? Is there really a Christian approach and application to the various topics we cover?

In our college education courses we were taught principles of Christian education. The application of these principles, however, was left primarily to the individual. We as teachers can profit from reading examples of how our colleagues in other schools apply these principles to very definite topics studied in the classroom. In this issue we have two articles written by experienced junior high school teachers in which they present their ideas on the content of the junior high school science curriculum and how this curriculum can apply our Christian principles. Hopefully we will have a similar articles at different grade levels in future issues.

We would also encourage other science teachers at all grade levels to write a brief description of how you teach a particular science topic to your class in a distinctly Christian way. These contributions would be published in future issues, and would help make this department of the Journal truly profitable for its readers, thus providing better Christian education for our students.

W. S.

INTRODUCING THE DEPARTMENT EDITOR

WILLIAM SELLES, A.B. CALVIN COLLEGE, M.S. CLARKSON COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY, HAS TAUGHT BOTH SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS IN CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOLS IN MUSKEGON, CUTLERVILLE, AND NOW KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN. HE HAS ATTENDED SUMMER INSTITUTES IN HIS FIELD FOR SEVERAL YEARS. PROFESSIONALLY, HE HAS SERVED ON THE NUCS SALARY STUDY COMMITTEE. ALL MANUSCRIPTS RELATIVE TO THE CURRICULUM AREAS OF MATH AND SCIENCE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO HIM AT 2411 ALTHEA ST., KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN—MG.ED.

What's the BIG Idea?

EDGAR BOSCH *

"The kind of science taught in many of our schools and colleges today consists of massive doses of facts without conceptual order, without unity, without a knowledge of their development, and without a feeling for the intellectual methods that pulled these facts from nature." – Dr. Paul De Hart Hurd, Stanford University.

This shocking indictment should gain the attention of all who are genuinely concerned with education. It should especially stir the conscience of anyone associated with the teaching of science – for the indictment is true! It manifests itself at every level of science education, be it in the college

(TO PAGE 31)

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laboratory or in the elementary classroom. Nowhere, however, is it more vividly portrayed than in today's junior high school, where it takes on the guise of "general science."

In all fairness to those who labor at this level, and for the benefit of those far removed from it, let me say that steps have been taken to improve the science education here. What is being taught has taken on a more technical nature, as sound textbooks bring basic scientific principles into sharper focus than ever before, and do so in ways more appealing to the adolescent. In many cases the gimmicks, the sensationalism, and the "Mickey Mouse Club" atmosphere have given way to serious scientific study.

In spite of these strides, major problems remain which interfere, violate, and in some cases even destroy the very purpose of science education. Without a well established program, "general science" can easily become so broad, so all-inclusive, and so general that it could perhaps be better known as "general confusion."

A good science program deserves a regular class period every day of the school year. I cannot conceive of science being taught on alternating days, alternating marking periods, or alternating semesters. If science merits a place in the school curriculum, it merits a full and complete place.

FACETS OF A SOUND PROGRAM

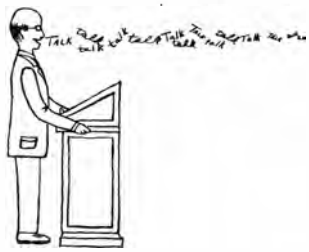
A good science program contains a balanced selection of material from all of the sciences. Very often teachers in junior high school tend to over-emphasize "pet sciences" – those in which they have received the bulk of their training, whereas other important areas are too frequently slighted or, even worse, omitted.

A good science program is integrated by other areas of the curriculum. Do you exploit mathematics to its fullest as you study chemical equations, Ohm's Law, or the Work Principle? Principles become more meaningful and practical if they can be worked out by the student. Correlating the students' knowledge of geography with principles of geology and meteorology possesses great carry-over potential.

A good science program is closely correlated with the sciences taught in the high school and the primary grades. Meeting with teachers from affiliated schools serves to strengthen the science program in all the schools concerned. Merits of certain areas can be discussed, trouble spots can be pointed out, and unnecessary overlapping eliminated. To see your program as others see it can be a profitable experience.

"Develop critical thinking"..."Encourage individual exploration"..."nurture the scientific interests of the individual" ...These are three goals of science education – goals which are sometimes abandoned for the sake of expediency. Too often junior high science uses a descriptive, teacher-centered approach. Be honest – put yourself in the student's desk. Imagine the scientific skills you would learn, the critical thinking you would do, how much individual investigation you would undertake, from hearing your teacher just talk about science! Science must become more student-centered. We must allow for the individual investigation, for these goals are realized from within the individual.

Students should have opportunity to conduct experiments themselves, not merely watch demonstrations of them. Some experiments can be assigned as homework, provided the students are given a worksheet of instructions and questions on the experiment. Laboratory work in the classroom itself should be an essential part of the program, especially in the



study of biology. Even though there may not be lab tables, desks can be rearranged as an improvisation. Group work should be included to allow students to share ideas and learn from one another. A unit on the human body, with groups formulated according to the various systems can serve as a good starter for this type of work.

When the energy, enthusiasm, and devotion of today's adolescent are channeled, science becomes a living and rewarding experience for both student and teacher.

SCIENCE AND FAITH

The old "conflict" between science and the Christian faith seems to have instilled today's teacher with a fear of attempting correlations of the two. As a result, Christian perspective in science teaching may be totally avoided, or given superficial treatment in the form of an occasional pious phrase, awkward to student and teacher alike.

Christian commitment is not something which can be tacked on as an addition to the subject matter. It must be the foundation of the course and must radiate from the teaching of it throughout the year.

The student should see at the very beginning of the course that God has revealed Himself in His universe as well as in His Word. Science enables us to better understand this universe, and in so doing our concept of God's wisdom and greatness will be enriched. The student should see the tremendous value of the scientific method in reaching scientific conclusions. At the same time he should realize that as Christians we accept certain things by faith alone. Also that this faith in God's Word will certainly tend to influence our interpretation of what we study, and we need not apologize for this.

Once the teacher has laid these foundations, Christian interpretation does not seem awkward when applied to the intricacy of the atom, the magnitude of the universe, or the marvel of the living cell. These foundations and interpretations, however, should not be an end unto themselves. They should provide a framework in which the Christian faith and science are not alienated from one another, but where each respects and enhances the other. When science is conscientiously taught and studied within this framework, the conclusion of the student certainly must be, "How great Thou art!"

IT IS NOT IN THE NATURE OF THINGS FOR ANY ONE MAN TO MAKE A SUDDEN, VIOLENT DISCOVERY--SCIENCE GOES STEP BY STEP, AND EVERY MAN DEPENDS ON THE WORK OF HIS PREDECESSORS.

--SIR ERNEST RUTHERFORD (1871–1937)

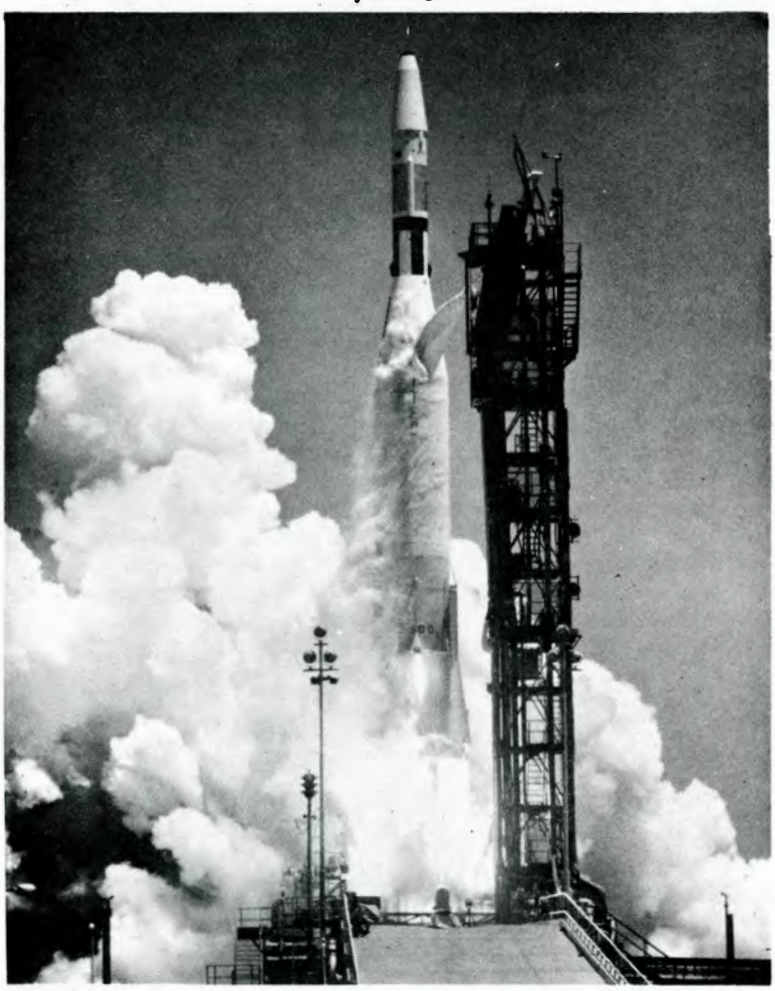
GENERAL (CONFUSION) SCIENCE

FRANK KASS *

One's definition of science influences his teaching. An excellent definition by Dr. James B. Conant suggests that science "consists of a series of conceptual schemes developed through observations and experiments and leading to further conceptual schemes." Man as a scientist is a concept seeker, and he explores the universe to seek orderly explanations of its phenomena.

It is clearly the responsibility of the Christian teacher of science to give his students every opportunity to explore the physical universe, in order that they may seek orderly explanations of the objects and events which they observe. The challenge of the teacher is to guide the natural curiosity of his students into finding reliable answers, and to further channel this natural inquisitiveness into new fields of discovery. The teacher helps his students to uncover concepts and to form conceptual schemes.

The teacher's product should be a student who understands his world better, being able to use concepts to give him orderly explanations for the objects and events what will later confront him. Teaching of concepts gives relevance to a course of study and unity of meaning to his experiences.



In a sense, science is an experience in search of meaning. It is an experience in a search for a conceptual framework for understanding the world in which we live. For example, many laboratory workers must have noted the growth of "penicillium" in their Petri dishes – but only a few of them had developed the conceptual framework to enable them to recognize the importance of the event. Alexander Fleming was one.

Even before the first man-made satellite was launched, scientists and science teachers had begun to evaluate science courses in a search for a better presentation of "meaning" in science education. Such groups as the Physical Science Study Committee, the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study, and the CHEM Study Committee were formed. Their courses of study, followed by the publishing of teaching materials, produced changes in both the content and approach to the teaching of high school biology, chemistry, and physics courses. The impact of these changes led inevitably to a re-evaluation of the science offerings in the earlier grades. One of the tangible results has been tha allotment of more time to the study of science in our junior high schools.

The impact of curriculum changes and modifications of better science facilities, and of increased classroom time has, in general, resulted in new patterns of organizing junior high school science around major conceptual schemes. Two major themes have emerged which consolidate concepts around the relationships of living things and their environment (biology and ecology), and the relationships between matter and energy. As a result, the general science courses in junior high school are now variously called life science, earth science (including meteorology and space), and physical science. Considerable overlapping in these areas is obvious. Green plants, for example, use the matter of the earth and the energy of sunlight in photosynthesis. Again, physical laws affect all living things: Newton's Laws of Motion apply to persons in a speeding vehicle as well as to the launching of a rocket. In other words, relationships among living things, matter and energy are best expressed as conceptual schemes that tend to give unity, meaning and relevance to areas of specialization in science. Junior high school experiences in science must help the student build a framework for understanding his world and for later specialization, should he make science a career.

Let us state three examples of conceptual schemes (large organized patterns to give unity to objects and events) which can be comprehended by junior high school students:

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LANGUAGE ARTS

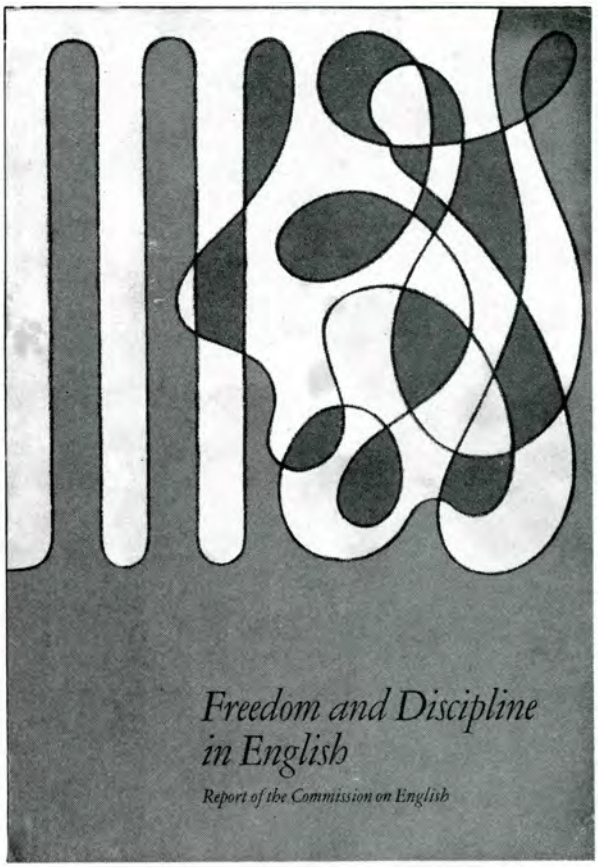
EDITORIAL

On Freedom and Discipline in English *

Every workman has a few tools he reaches for again and again – the reliable shears, the sturdy ladder, the sound book. Freedom and Discipline in English, (1965), may become such a tool for English teachers. Out of the work of the College Entrance Exam Board came the Commission on English. Their summer institutes have formed the pattern for NDEA programs, and their report on curriculum cannot be ignored by faculty study committees. College departments should evaluate its "qualifications for teachers," and the sections of language, on literature, and on composition should help teachers rethink staid practices.

The book is sane. It sees that the latest fads in method and matter need not be the finest approach to the humanities. It reminds us that literature is a unique art form, but also the expression of the human spirit. Therefore the authors maintain the need for careful study of the intrinsic meaning of a work, but urge the consideration of the philosophic and moral bases which undergird it. For example, after warning about value hunting and moral homilies, the report states,

> But the Commission believes that no discussion, no study, no reading of any work is complete without some consideration of possible extrinsic meaning, meaning that brings the work directly against the reader's own philosophical convictions and experience. It may be ironic that, after so many years of



INTRODUCING THE DEPARTMENT EDITOR

GRACE HUITSING, A.B., CALVIN COLLEGE, M.A. UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, HAS TAUGHT IN CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOLS IN ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN, AS WELL AS IN THE NETHERLANDS AS AN EXCHANGE TEACHER. SHE NOW TEACHES ENGLISH AT EAST CHRISTIAN HIGH IN GRAND RAPIDS. SHE HAS BEEN PROFESSIONALLY ACTIVE IN NDEA AND UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN INSTITUTES, AS WELL AS A PARTICIPANT IN THE RECENT NATIONAL UNION–CALVIN COLLEGE WORKSHOP IN COMPOSITION. ALL MANUSCRIPT FOR THIS DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE SENT TO HER AT 1010 WORDEN, S.E., GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49506--MG. ED.

* FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE IN ENGLISH, REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ENGLISH, COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION BOARD, PUBLICATIONS ORDER OFFICE, BOX 592, PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY 08540 ($2.75 CLOTH-BOUND, $1.75 PAPERBOUND)

> complaint about teachers who taught the moral instead of the work, warning should now be given against the incompleteness of any study of literature that avoids this consideration. But the Commission believes that "close reading" may as readily sterilize the study of literature as moralizing once stultified it. Perhaps the warning is needless, not just because, as Samuel Johnson said, all men are moralists, but because once men begin to ask questions, they cannot stop short of the most pressing question of all: What does this mean about life? (p. 72)

The Christian teacher has known this to be our impetus – to aid the word-forming child of God to judge, in art form, alternative answers that have been given to the meaning of life. Hence, M. Meeter's concern in selecting significant plays, and M. Venema's unit on courage.

The report is also provocative. It provokes one to rethink not only goals but also the structure of a curriculum, and prods one to attempt approaches slighted in past years. For instance, the critical process is discussed at length, with consideration of a list of questions that might be asked for every work studied – questions of form, of content, of value. A useful bibliography encourages the teacher to pursue the critical process for himself in order that he may guide students to the questions they must increasingly ask themselves if they are to grow into – for us – intelligent Christian critics. The report discusses the questions for learning, teaching, and testing that each teacher should grow adept at. On "teaching questions," for example,

> A teacher using this method does not ask questions at random or questions that lead to nowhere. He must have a clear idea before he begins the steps by which he plans to proceed, and he must know beforehand the answers (there may be more than one to each question, of course,) that make the next questions relevant.
>
> Ideally, the teaching questions begin either with the issue on which interest is likely to be highest and answers most varied and assertive, or at a point of decision on which most other decisions about the text will depend. (p. 77)

And in summarizing section,

> The foregoing discussion of "critical questions" about literature suggests, as it is meant to do, that the process of questioning is essential to critical activity. It represents not only a procedure but an attitude, and the attitude is one thatthe Commission believes should dominate the English classroom in secondary school whenever literature is being read or taught. The spirit of inquiry, the belief that answers are worth working for, and the willingness to accept answers that are less than final and absolute: these characterize the attitude most likely to make the study of literature worthwhile, especially for the adolescent, to whom questions and the effort to answer them are almost a way of life. (p. 76)

Herein are the tensions for the Christian. It places a large concern before each of us – elementary to college: "How shall I continue to lay the foundation for Christian maturity and further the truth of the Reformed heritage, yet avoid being so dogmatic in my literature class that I destroy the zest of exploring, the discomfort of temporary uncertainty, thereby preventing perhaps the hard-reached conviction that becomes one's own by struggle?" The question of the Commission should encourage us to rethink the growth – or lack of it – that goes on in our classrooms through apt – or inept – questioning.

The book is a tool for stirring at the roots of composition programs and language studies as well...perhaps next issue.

G. H.

A Thematic Unit on Courage

MARY VENEMA*

A recent article (April, 1966) in the CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL by Dr. Donald Oppewal, "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." I write in support of that article by presenting a thematic literature for the eighth grade, examining three aspects of courage.

The general objectives for this unit are:

1. To make students aware of the shallowness of the popular concept of courage.
2. To provide students with the opportunity to sift and evaluate character in determining whether a man is truly courageous
3. To help students realize the importance of maintaining personal integrity and courage
4. To present students with the challenge of

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seeking the joys of a properly motivated Christian life.

COURAGE IS GALLANT ACTION

Students begin by examining the popular concept of courage as propounded by newspaper features and READERS DIGEST heroics. No new material is taught; the teacher has only to guide the discussion after providing an initial example of a courageous act.*1 Students then divide into groups, each group preparing a report including its definition of courage, an example that supports its definition, an analysis of why the action was courageous, and a concluding statement. Following the group reports, the teacher fills in weak spots, illustrates the short-comings of the popular concept, and guides the class to a definition of popular courage. The ideas of a spur-of-the-moment action, the absence of consideration of personal danger, and the application of culturally conditioned values should somewhere be incorporated into the definition.

COURAGE AVOIDS EXCESS

The Aristotelian concept of courage is next considered. Before presenting the introductory lecture, the teacher must be well acquainted with Aristotle's Doctrine of the Golden Mean found in the NICOMACHEAN ETHICS. Courage is studied as a virtue which a man, in order to be virtuous, must exercise "at the right times, with reference to the right objects, toward the right people, with the right motive and in the right way."

The mean of the virtue courage is between those two extremes which destroy it, the extremes of excess (rashness) and defect (cowardice), and is difficult to attain. After the introduction, the teacher distributes sheets containing such questions as, "Should bravery motivated by fear of punishment be considered courage?" "Is a brave man ever afraid?" Students then proceed to evaluate literary characters and their deeds on the basis of their circumstances, character, and motivation before deciding whether or not an individual is virtuous or has an excess or defect of courage. Excellent materials for this activity are "Edmund G. Ross" from Kennedy's PROFILES IN COURAGE (Teen-age Abridged Version); Plato's account of the death of Socrates; "To Build a Fire" by Jack London; and, from the PILOT SERIES, BOOK TWO, "Child Pioneer," "Battle of the Breakwater," and "The Legend of Kate Shelley."

Students are then assigned a report on a longer work dealing with courage, applying the Doctrine of the Golden Mean. For example,

> An introductory chapter of PROFILES IN COURAGE contains this statement, "Compromise need not mean cowardice." Daniel Webster sacrificed his name and the possiblity of a presidential nomination by his decision to compromise rather than side with his friends whose position favoring the abolishment of slavery made Southern states threaten to secede from the Union. Evaluate Daniel Webster's act of making the "Seventh March" speech in terms of the Doctrine

> of the Golden Mean by commenting on his motive for doing it, the circumstances which led to his action, and his character. Then tell if the statement "Compromise need not mean cowardice" is applicable to Webster's case and whether he actually possessed true courage.*2

COURAGE IS SELF-ABNEGATION

The Christian concept of courage, the last section of this unit, focuses on New Testament heroes such as Peter, John, Stephen and Paul, whose courage embraces yet transcends the other kinds exemplified and studied. Each of these men recognized his Christian obligations and did not flinch in the face of consequences. The Apostolic fathers provide beautiful examples of the Spirit-motivated Christian courage of self-abnegation. Paul speaks for them all when he writes, "For me to live is Christ." This, then, is the supreme motivation for enduring the slander and cruelty of men "without the pale."*3

Again, students should make a revised definition for this concept of courage and defend it with any of a number of specific Bible passages. Once this is completed, the teacher assigns a problem-solution composition which will lead him to examine whether his own values and principles are truly Spirit-motivated. For example, "You are a rising young defense attorney requested to defend a man about whose innocence both you and the general public are in doubt. Would you defend the man or not?" After completion this assignment, the class will be ready to make a final definition of courage.

Far too often junior high literature is a wasteland of ill-suited works sandwiched between prepositions and compound sentences without careful scrutiny of the enlightening possibilities it could offer. Teaching literature thematically is peculiarly fitted to junior high, for young teenagers are beginning to grope towards broader horizons yet they need a carefully ordered frame of reference which will offer them room to become involved in both social and religious relationships.

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1. "The Long Jump" and "A Fight with an Octopus" (PILOT SERIES, BOOK TWO) may be recalled.
2. Other titles: THE MIRACLE WORKER, (Gibson), The Trojan War (Hamilton's MYTHOLOGY) THE BIG WAVE (Buck), KAREN, WITH LOVE FROM KAREN (Marie Killilea), DEATH BE NOT PROUD (Gunther), DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, APRIL MORNING (Fast), THE SMALL WOMAN (Burgess)
3. I'd suggest the reading of the Phillips or New English versions for clarity.

Selecting and Producing the High School Play

MERLE MEETER *

Only drama that edifies as it entertains is worthy of our Christian schools and is presentable before God. But delightfully instructive plays – tragedies as well as comedies – are not easily adapted to Christian-school staging for several reasons: 1) Those plays that deal with significant moral problems are painful – they threaten our self-satisfaction 2) Excellent plays – those managing serious concepts in carefully designed dramatic structures – are often difficult to produce with inexperienced actors. The best plays have contrapuntal lines of action, merging patterns of symbolism, ironic devices, and calculated ambiguity – as well as a multiplicity of motivations individualizing credibly complex character. 3) Many serious contemporary plays, and that excludes most farces and melodramas, reflect the violent naturalistic reaction of Ibsen, Strindberg, Zola, Hauptman, Shaw, Chekkov, and O'Neill to the poetic diction, the theatrical cliches, and the idealized characters of romantic drama (early 1800's). The naturalists wrote polemics designed to shock their audiences with social-economic injustices, with crude, vulgar, and profane characters, with loathesome environments, and with pathetic incidents.

But naturalism and the outgrowing modern theater have interpretations of life that deserve our attention – as do existentialist drama and the theater of the absurd, although even professional groups have trouble making sense of these plays for their audiences – and the judicious Christian director can make imaginative emendations without dissipating the integrity, the thematic import of the work. Plays usually require abbreviation, and the sensible producer considers the capabilities and tolerances of his audience. Program notes can be helpful and dignified without being either satirical remonstrances or Pharisaical homilies. Every teacher engages daily in similar explication as he discusses literary works with his classes. The drama, too, is educative and requires expert commentary; moreover, the Christian constituency is entitled – by the adjective – to considerate enlightenment.

I suggest as possibilities the following good popular plays: ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS, THE CAINE MUTINY, TWELVE ANGRY MEN, THE GLASS MENAGERIE, THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, THE MIRACLE WORKER, SUNRISE AT CAMPOBELLO, and A RAISIN IN THE SUN – though I do not want to imply that their authors present a Christian view of reality (a playwright gives, explicitly or implicitly, his idea of destiny through his working out of plot and the final disposition of his characters).

Not all good plays are contemporary, of course; therefore, consider also ANTIGONE, MACBETH, A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, AS YOU LIKE IT, JULIUS CAESAR, Moliere's MISER, Schiller's MARY STUART, Goldsmith'sSHE STOOPSTO CONQUER, Rostand's CYRANO DE BERGERAC, Chekhov's THE CHERRY ORCHARD, Ibsen's A DOLL'S HOUSE, Shaw's PYGMALION, and Wilde's THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST. (I would also enjoy seeing dramatizations of THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS and DON QUIXOTE.)

The main criteria for selection are invariable: aesthetic excellence and conceptual-moral seriousness. Serious drama presents characters in conflict, struggling against their sinful natures to conduct themselves rightly and honorably, to resist the lure of passion and destroy the idol of intellection in the battle to achieve truth and happiness – or even more frequently, perhaps, mistakenly and rebelliously to seek satisfaction in the passions and the intellect. For most dramatists are not Christians; therefore, they are often confused, shrill, belligerent, desperate, contradictory, arrogant, cynical, and humanistic. But much of the Christian life is admonition – warning; God's child learns many things by contrast, by the anthithetical principle of rejecting the evil while affirming the good. Drama is a human, existential laboratory for such learning; hence, the Christian director's interpretation and counsel should educe godly responses and attitudes.

Choose a play for your students of which as Christian believer and literary critic you need not be ashamed. Adapt it imaginatively to the rhetoric-dramatic abilities of your cast and the moral perceptiveness and cultural maturity of your audience. Stage it somewhat austerely – with elegant simplicity, rather than meretricious and distracting detail. Rehearse it scrupulously and intensively; but be adamant about keeping students in their regular classes – a good discipline for you and the young people, a necessary charity in the faculty fraternity-sorority. And finally, expect detractors to say: "That kiss was too long"; "That skirt was too short"; "Was that real wine in that glass?"; "I go just for belly laughs; don't tryta edjacate me"; "My boy will never be a part of such nonsense again" (The unfortunate scion messed up his lines). Christian directors must be humorous and magnanimous.

Education for freedom in Christ is awesome and often disheartening, but we may not repudiate our mandate out of fear, apathy, ignorance, or frustration. All human culture brought back under the redemptive rule of our King is the goal of Christian education, and also, therefore, of the Christian production of drama.

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Hanukkah scene: DIARY OF ANNE FRANK
Illiana Christian High, Lansing, Illinois

Anne and Helen at the pump: THE MIRACLE WORKER
South Christian High, Cutlerville, Michigan

Anne and Helen at work: THE MIRACLE WORKER
South Christian High, Cutlerville, Michigan

THE ARTS

School Music -- an Overview

When one considers the arts, both fine and manual, which are taught in the Christian school curriculum, it is rather obvious that if one were to be singled out, music is that art which receives the bulk of our attention. In consideration, this issue of the CEJ is devoted to a critical look at some areas in which the music educators and classroom teachers are involved.

When reflecting upon much of our past experience in music, it strikes me that the fine arts in general have been viewed in our circles with some degree of suspicion and "peasant" practicality. Our history and background has shown us to be afraid of the classics and suspicious of culture. In an effort to live pious and Bible-centered lives, we have frequently neglected a search for God walking throughout his creation via the arts. For some time, therefore, our music in the Christian school was – and still is in some cases – limited to the tunes the teacher acquired back in Sunday School days. Our early choir directors even had to apologize to the constituency for singing in English, or for such American contributions as the negro spiritual. Our Calvinistic background also dictated that our singing be unison, unaccompanied settings of the psalms. Considering our austere background then, we have indeed made giant steps forward in view of the choirs and bands which we have developed today in our schools. Further evidence is the high ratings which these groups have earned in competition in state-sponsored music festivals.

PRESENT STAGNATION

It is my opinion, while granting the above, we must also be honest to admit that much of our music teaching today has reached a point of stagnation. Too many music educators are deceived in thinking that they have arrived musically. They then choose to rest on the basis of their festival laurels, audience plaudits, or classroom blastings. Many music educators and classroom teachers at the elementary, secondary, and college levels of Christian education are decades behind some of the exciting happenings in contemporary music education. I believe that we have for much too long entertained ourselves by singing and playing the same old "war-horses" over and over again. For too long our conception of a good music program is one which is enthusiastically received by the parent audience. I for one am more than ready to hear some new works performed, those out of our experiential background; I am just as ready to lay aside for some time our annual, annual, annual presentations of such works as the "Messiah," the "Seven Last Words," the "Battle Hymn," "God of Our Fathers," and "Stars and Stripes Forever." This is not to say that these works have no value, but that they have received too much of our attention at the neglect of a larger repertoire. They have placed a limiting factor on our musical acquaintance, knowledge, enjoyment, and involvement; and we have contented ourselves to a too-specific list of offerings.

I believe that we, as Christian educators, believing and understanding the force and impact of the cultural mandate, should through advanced study, private research, and communal workshops attempt to stay abreast of current developments in music education; and in addition, perhaps through

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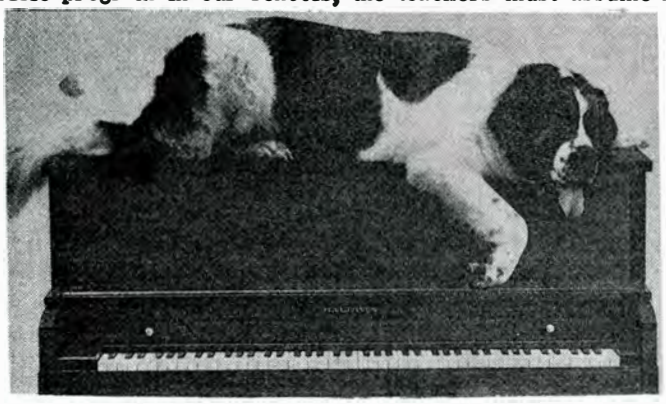
our own investigation and experimentation, lead the way in some areas of musical practice. These pages could serve as an exciting open forum for a discussion and critique of the successes and failures which we have experienced in music education.

SOME FORUM TOPICS

A quick perusal of our efforts in music suggests a consideration of any number of the following topics: creativity, music and public relations, hymns and hymnals, (see this issue), music workshops, music and the classroom teacher, the music supervisor, college offerings and preparedness, strings, the orchestra, vocal techniques and apparatus, music in chapel, special music, football and the band, repertoire, festivals, ensembles, madrigals, the changing voice, the humanities class, the recorder, organ or keyboard class, pep bands, formations, contemporary music, appreciation, music literature, student guidelines for popular music, folk music, the folk sing, stylistic awarness (lines, shape, contour), musicianship, and musical standards.

In order to have an exciting, vibrant, and energetic music program in our schools, the teachers must assume a great degree of willingness to prepare and search for new materials. For the grade teacher this means taking time to learn new songs and new hymns, and not simply relying on the old favorites. It means studying new literature from recordings and explanatory materials, and familiarization with music fundamentals. The secondary and college level instructors will probably have to spend weeks in the summer, researching and digging to find just the "right" materials, in addition to keeping an eye and ear open throughout the year. Teaching demands that we search out the good things, those educationally sound, and reject the third rate, the mediocre, the tawdry. We can no longer amuse or satisfy ourselves with the same old hoopla and sand-box stuff of years back. We should familiarize our students and constituency with such works as the mass, the requiem, the motet, the cantata, the concerto, the symphony, the overture – renaissance as well as contemporary sounds. Let us begin now to move from the confines of the familiar. At the risk of being disliked or of endangering public relations, let us educate, and forget about the size of the audience, or how the "new" sounds happen to hit grandma's ears.



SOME BENEFITS

I believe that if the schools could do this job of educating our students to a wide variety and sound program of music, our problem with a lack of taste in church music would also begin to resolve itself. Our advance in school music will closely parallel or even lead the way to a similar advance of standards in church music. As our students are disciplined, technically advanced, and exposed to a widening vista of the classics, they will surely not be satisfied with "mush" in the divine worship service. God reveals something of his great beauty, perfection, majesty, order, and glory through the great works of art, and we Christians surely should have open ears, eyes, minds, and hearts to behold and receive Him through this revelation.

WHAT! PLAN HYMNS TOO?

VERYLYN SCHULTZ*

> Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Psalm 100:1 and 2.

When the Old Testament Church was assembled for the worship of God, they offered their priase in song. The whole Book of Psalms is a record of the subject matter of their songs: praise, prayer, penitence, salvation, God's mercy and love, His strength and goodness, God's grace, the sinner's hope and trust. Since this time music has been closely associated with religious experience. Music is a gift of God used for the enrichment of man's life and adoration of God. In the worship service of the Christian Church today, music plays an important role in the form of the congregational hymn. In the devotional period which begins each school day, the hymn should also be given a prominent place.

We should be deeply concerned about the kinds of hymns used in our Christian Schools and the manner in which they are being used. Hymns are capable of leaving impressions on

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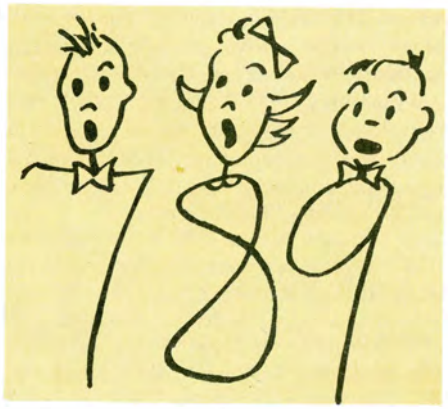
Christian youth and providing them a means for expression of their faith. They impress the teachings of Scripture upon young and old, and they provide the Christian with a language of devotion to express praise and worship to God. Because the hymn has such a great influence upon religious beliefs and practices, teachers should be careful to use only hymns of the best quality.

The hymns we use should be in harmony with the Biblical concept of a triune God, or His attributes, and of man's relationship to Him. The words should be true to the teachings of the church and in keeping with the objectives of the Christian educational program. They should have literary merit and quality. Since a good hymn is praise, or prayer-poetry set to music, it should be good poetry. Ideas and vocabulary used in hymns should have meaning to the pupils – at least after necessary explanation. The hymn-text should express genuine emotion and true sentiment without being trite and mawkish. The melody should be within the pupil's vocal range. The melodic lines and rhythmic accents should match the words and serve to enhance and enrich the meaning and message of the hymn.

Turning to the Book of Psalms once more, we note that both Psalm 96 and Psalm 98 begin with these words: "O sing unto the Lord a new song...." We find here first of all a mandate to sing songs to the Lord in our worship; secondly, to sing new songs (not only the old familiar ones we already know); and thirdly, to sing the old familiar songs in a new way. This does not necessarily mean old words set to new tunes, but with renewed understanding so the words of the hymn take on new meanings for the expression of our faith each time we sing them.

ELEMENTS OF ORGANIZATION

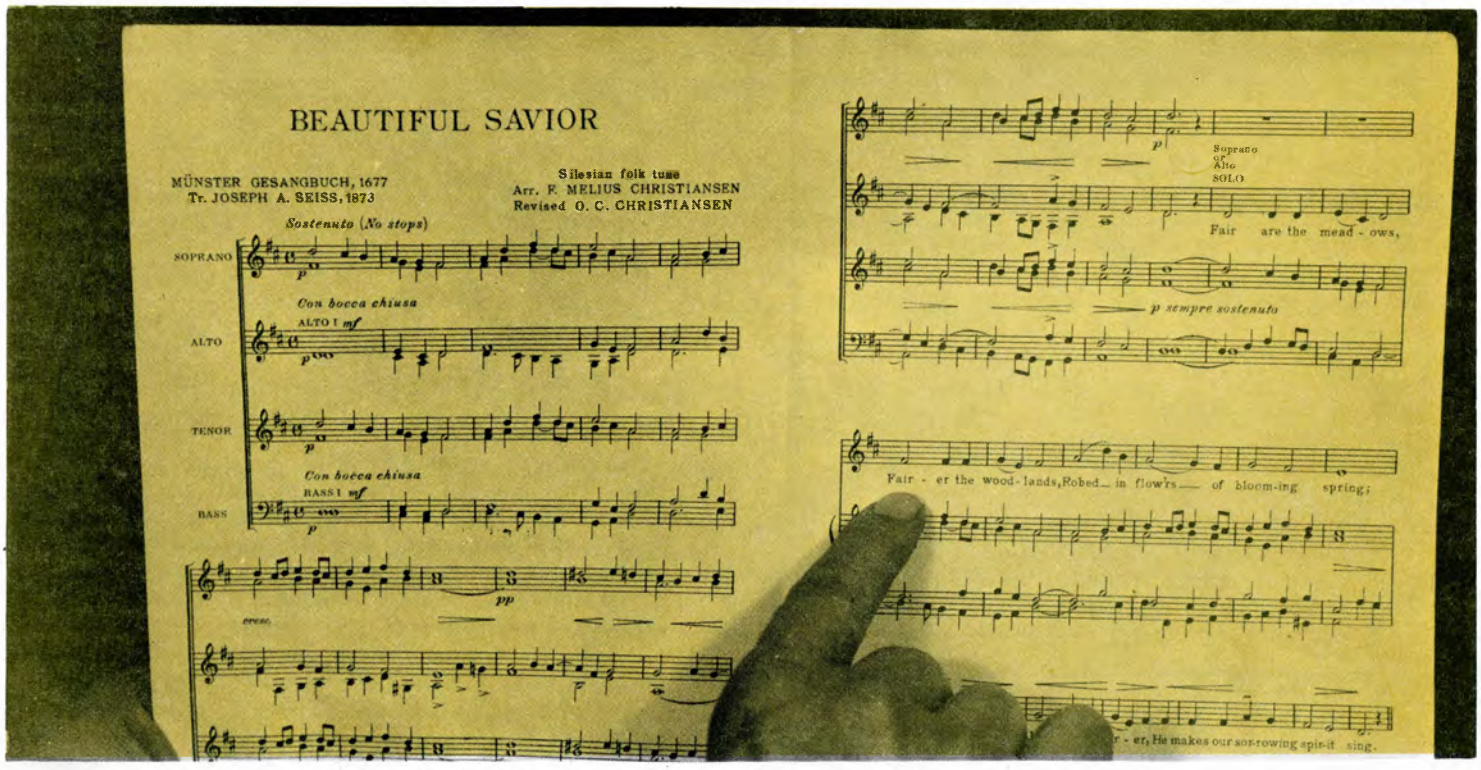
Every teacher in our Christian schools should plan a hymn program for his or her clssroom in keeping with the command given in Psalm 96:1. In order to do this we must be



willing to change from an old routine to a new program. Let's do away with the usual fifteen-minute "Hymns by Request" sessions which opens so many of our devotional periods and inaugurate a program of hymn singing and study with some meaning and purpose. It takes very little work on the part of the teacher to announce "hymn request time" during the devotional period, but after singing eight hymns of various types and subjects, what impressions are left with you or the students? Perhaps only this: "I wish Jimmy would choose some other number besides 326 – I'm getting too sick of that one!"

Also, are your students still singing: "....leads against the fore" in ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS? Have you heard it? Have you stopped to explain that the word is foe, meaning enemy – and enemy of what?

It will take more thought and preparation to launch a hymn program which has some specific goals. It will also take some thought on what constitutes a good hymn. It will mean a search for resource materials on the background of Christian hymnody, hymns, authors and composers. It may mean selecting a good hymnal for your classrooms, or supplementary



hymnals and recorded examples of good hymns as teaching aids. It will mean a willingness on the part of the teacher to search for hymns beyond his or her perhaps limited repertoire, or examining those already known for their musical, literary and scriptural worth. It means looking for new ways to introduce or teach hymns. It means understanding the truths expressed and the vocabulary used in a hymn so you can communicate its meaning to children or young adults, too. Work? Yes! Rewarding? Doubly so!!

A PLANNED PROGRAM

How do we organize a hymn program? First decide upon a theme. It can be built around the seasons of the liturgical or church year: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity, Reformation and Thanksgiving. A program could be based upon the Twelve Articles of Faith, or the Apostles' Creed, the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, divisions of the Heidelberg Catechism, Hymns from Other Lands, etc.

After selecting a theme, decide how frequently a new hymn will be introduced – weekly or bi-weekly – and determine the number of hymns needed. In selecting the hymns for the series keep a balance between new hymns to be learned, and old ones about which you will learn new things. Think of imaginative ways to arouse the pupils' interest in the program and in each hymn. Remember to keep your own interest and enthusiasm high – it is little wonder if the pupils find a hymn dull if the teacher has little enthusiasm for it. Your teaching methods should be varied – avoid routine. Make use of illustrations, information about the background of the hymn or its author or composer, objects of art, Christian symbols, Scripture passages and phonograph records to prepare the way for learning a new hymn. Relating the hymn to the experiences of the pupils may be beneficial. Make the language of the text meaningful to the student. Discuss the hymn as a class and determine its theme. Use it as choral or responsive readings – read it as a prayer if it is a prayer-hymn. If the poetic form of the text results in awkward word order have pupils rewrite some of the stanzas in their own words. Have pupils draw pictures or make posters to illustrate certain truths expressed in the hymn. Have the students memorize selected verses of some of the hymns.

But, you say, all this is taking so much time and we haven't sung the hymn as yet. True, but you will not be using all of the suggested devices with every hymn, or even every day, and there will be some time left for "requests." And after a hymn has been studied, then sung, it will assume a new meaning for the singer, and he will have sung "...unto the Lord a new song," in a new way.

RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR A STUDY OF HYMNS

Suggested hymnals for classroom use:

1. The Childrens' Hymnbook – NUCS
2. Hymns for Youth – NUCS
3. Psalter Hymnal – Chr. Ref. Publishing House
4. Worship and Service Hymnal – Hope Publishing Company
5. The Junior Hymnal (Paper - 75¢) Concordia – 81 hymns for Primary or Intermediate grades.
6. The Hymn of the Week (see Recordings – "A Time For Singing").

Hymnals which include information on the hymn, author or composer:

1. Christian Hymns, ed. by Luther Noss. World Publishing Company, New York. 118 great hymns of the Christian Church. (Paper - $1.95)
2. A Calendar of Hymns 53 hymns of the American-Christian Year – words music, and their stories, compiled by Frederic Fox. Doubleday and Co., Inc., Garden City, N.Y. (Paper - $1.45)
3. We Sing to God Vol. I – Festival Hymns: Advent through Pentecost
   We Sing to God Vol. II – Trinity Season
   Augsburg Publishing House (Paper - 35¢ each)
4. Songs of Joy - through the Church Year. Fortress Press, Philadelphia. 118 hymns. $2.95
5. Church School Hymnal for Children (Leaders Edition) Grades 3-6. The 416 pages include the page from the pupils edition plus facing pages with teaching helps. Includes three 7-inch LP recordings of 14 of the less familiar hymns. Lutheran Church Press, Philadelphia. $4.75. An excellent source of material.

Literature on hymns:

1. Hymn of the Month – series of monthly articles in THE CHURCH HERALD, weekly magazine of the Reformed Church in America. The August issue lists the hymns to be covered each month through September, 1967. This series of monthly articles began October 1, 1965.
2. The Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal, Concordia Publishing House. $6.00.
3. Handbooks to hymnals of other denominations.

Phonograph Recordings:

1. Songs from the Children's Hymnbook – 23 selections – NUCS
2. Hymns by the Dordt College Concert Choir 1964 – 16 hymns from the Psalter Hymnal, 1959 edition.
   Hymns by the Dordt College Concert Choir 1965 (Hymns one side only) Available from Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa. $4.00 each.
3. Great Lutheran Hymns – 23 hymns – 19 of them from "We Sing to God" Vol. I. Lutheran Church Supply Stores. $3.58.
4. Many other fine recordings of hymns available through Lutheran Church Supply Stores.
5. A Time for Singing – an album of three 12-inch LP records selling for only $4.95. Recorded are selected stanzas from all of the 62 hymns found in The Hymn of the Week (paper) hymnal which costs 25¢. (Of these 62 hymns, 15 are from the Psalter Hymnal, 13 from the Worship and Service Hymnal, and 17 from the National Union's new Hymns for Youth.) Also just released is the book: Hymns – How to Sing Them: a guideline for teaching hymns which also includes a chapter on each of the 62 hymns in The Hymn of the Week. $1.75. All three of these tremendous teaching aids are available from Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

editorial

BETTER BIBLE TEACHING

Our schools are called Christian schools. Although this involves much more than the teaching of Bible, there is "Bible teaching" in every grade from kindergarten through senior high.

With such total coverage we would expect wonderful results. Our graduates should not only have good mastery of Bible information, but should be fully committed to the Lord, ready and able to do battle for Him in every area of life.

That this is not the case is obvious. The receipt of four articles - from New Jersey, Iowa, Indiana, and California- shows that concern is widespread.

These articles do more than merly deplore the situation. Suggested improvements range from greater teacher piety to better techniques to total curriculum revision.

Teachers must do more than read the articles and deplore the situation.

But what?

J. B.

The Living Word

HARRY DE BLAEY *

The Bible is not interesting. It is not vital. It doesn't touch practical every day living. It doesn't seem to have life. The Bible is a dead book! The God of the Bible is dead! These are oft-repeated and frequently accepted concepts today. Not only is Bible knowledge at a low ebb – witness the answers to Bible questions on television quizzes – but interest in the Bible, let alone belief in it, is almost at the bottom of the list of modern concern.

"Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light upon my path. Thy Word is Truth." So speaks and believes the true Christian, and so he lives even today. Much is being written about the new approach to mathematics, modern trends in the social studies, and the linguistic approach to the teaching of reading, but how much genuine concern is expressed about energetic, lively and practical teaching of the Bible? How much of our Bible teaching is truly the teaching of the "Living Word"? Is merely reading Bible stories in the classroom from one of the many good Bible story books actual teaching of the Living Word?

Since Bible teaching is the core of the curriculum in our Christian schools, we should be deeply and vitally interested in "feeding the little lambs" so that they will grow up to be "men of God." The teachers of the primary grades, as well as those of the upper grades and secondary schools, have a wonderful opportunity and privilege, nay duty, to make Bible teaching one of the best taught courses in the school, truly interesting to and loved by the pupils. This, of course, cannot be accomplished in our own strength. "Be strong in the Lord," we are admonished in God's Word. Lean heavily upon the heavenly Father. Never fail to ask the Lord of Life to qualify you for teaching His Word as the Living Word.

The first step, then, to successful teaching of the Living Word is to "speak oft with thy Lord." This is the primary source of inspiration. Then, being filled with the Spirit, we can use every means that God gives us to make the Bible lesson a living reality in the lives of the pupils. Certainly, we should prepare ourselves well for such an important and

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sacred mission. Reading to ourselves carefully and prayerfully the Bible passage as well as the Bible story itself, reflecting upon the main thrust and emphasis of the story, and even "practice telling" the story: all can be very helpful in preparing to teach the Bible lesson.

The actual telling of the Bible story plays also a large part in truly presenting it as the Living Word. Usually telling the story instead of reading it allows for more freedom of expression, better eye to eye contact with the pupils, more natural gestures, and greater satisfaction for both pupils and teachers. A catching phrase, a pertinent question, an interesting picture, any of these can help us to lead into the story and to draw the interest and attention of the boys and girls. Relating parts of the Bible story to experiences in the children's lives will help to hold their interest. Tactful application of the Bible lesson so that the children can learn to see how it is related to their own lives and experiences will help to make the lesson a Living Word.

The enthusiasm of the teacher, her tone of voice, her mental attitude, gestures, facial expressions – all aid in making God's Word live in the hearts of her pupils. Give to your pupils the Living Word in such a way that they can learn to see the Word living in you. You will be surprised to find how "great is your reward."

Our Bible Teaching Can Be Improved

ROBERT DE JAGER*

Many times we hear the remark, "Aren't our children overfed on Bible stories? They hear the Scriptures read three times a day; they attend church; they listen to the Sunday School lesson; they have their catechism; and besides all this they attend the Christian school where Bible teaching is a daily occurrence."

It is true that our children are blessed with many opportunities to hear about God and His work, but does this mean they they are overfed? Does this mean that the pupils of our Christian schools are saturated with religious knowledge? I hardly think so.

Many times we are disappointed when we "test" our children (and grown-ups, too) about Bible matters. Certainly, a quiz about a just-studied, previewed, and reviewed Bible lesson brings beautiful results, but in a Bible game where the questions can be taken from any book of the Bible the answers reveal many failures.

On the one hand we have the complaint that our children are receiving too much instruction from the Bible, and on the other hand we are disappointed when we notice how little of what was taught is retained. Recognizing these two facts makes us wonder. What is the reason for the existence of these two seemingly contradictory facts? Are the brains of our pupils like a colander, or, perhaps, could our teaching method be impractical and unsatisfactory? One of my educators (It could have been John Amos Comenius, but I am not sure) taught me, "Whenever there is something wrong in your school, search for the deficiency in you and in your teaching." In view of this advice let us not first of all put the blame on our pupils, but let us examine our way of teaching.

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POSSIBLE PITFALLS

Perhaps a teacher in the lower grades depends too much on her beautiful Bible story books. She just sits down and reads the stories from her Bible story book to her pupils. Many times this teacher assumes that she can never improve the manner of story telling of the author, and that it would be impossible to learn the stories by heart. Therefore, the only thing to do is to read them to the class.

Perhaps a teacher of the middle grades, and the one of the upper grades, too, follows the schedule of the workbooks very faithfully. Every day the assignment is given, and the children have a clear-cut idea of what they have to do: read the exercises, find the answers in the Bible, and fill in the blanks. When the answers have been put in the proper place, the pupil is finished, and he can close his book. However, what did he learn? For how long can he remember what he learned, and what he filled in? I am sure many of us are not too happy about the results of our teaching, and therefore we should try to find some ways of improvement.

VARYING THE APPROACH

First of all, let us vary our ways of teaching as much as we can. One day we may read the Bible to the children (while they follow the reading); some other day the pupils do the

reading. Once in a while the teacher can read the story from one of the Bible story books, but most often the teacher should tell the Bible story in her own words. We should tell the stories not only to the first and second graders, but our seventh and eighth graders love it, too. We should try to tell the stories dramatically, so that the children see what happened. The story has to unfold itself in the classroom.

I remember one day when I told "Samson and the Lion" to my third graders. I just walked in front of the class back and forth, and in the meantime I talked about the bride in Timnath. Suddenly I spotted the lion behind a tree. My desk became the tree, and very cautiously I sneaked around the tree and came closer and closer to the lion. The class was as quiet as could be. Nobody stirred while I approached the king of the beasts. Finally, when I had torn the animal to pieces, we realized that one of the boys had followed me around the tree in pursuit of the lion.

Especially in the lower grades, but also in the intermediate and junior high grades, the telling of the Bible stories is very effective. It is true that our pupils have to learn to do research, but there will be enough time to look up and to fill in blanks.

While the Bible lesson is conducted we should watch the children's posture. Let them sit up straight. When they lie down, when their heads are resting on the desks, they do not show reverence, and we can be sure that the attention is not at a high level.

It is not enough that the children enjoy the Bible lesson, because we are not mere entertainers. We are trying to "Teach for Keeps." Many times we are surprised and also disappointed about the amount of knowledge just plain forgotten. What can be done to avoid too much forgetting?

RETENTION BY REPETITION AND REVIEW

Whenever we meet a name or term we should write it on the blackboard. If the word is quite difficult we should let the class say it in unison, probably about five times. When it is time for spelling, let's give it a try then, too. If we want our children at school to retain that which we teach, we should repeat and review often, and, of course, we should put in as many variations as possible. We might throw in many oral quizzes. We hardly need to take time for preparation, for the questions can be formulated at the spur of the moment. In order to be sure that everyone is thinking hard, make the pupils take a piece of paper, and let them write the answers to the ten questions you are planning to give. These questions can be about a story found in Genesis or a verse learned from the book of Revelation. After the answers are written down, let the children exchange papers. You read the answers, and they check each other's paper. May I give a warning at this point? Please, don't spoil the fun by grading every quiz!

Our pupils of today are our future fathers and mothers, and we pray that they will be Christian fathers and mothers who will read the Bible to their children. We can help by teaching them to read the Bible orally. After the child has passed through the middle grades there is so little time for oral reading, and yet it is so important. We should try to find time for oral Bible reading, no matter how busy our daily schedule is. When Father can read the Bible clearly, interestingly, reverently, and meaningfully, his family will benefit, and God's Word, read in this manner, will give him a greater opportunity to know God and to serve and honor Him.

Do our pupils know the geography of the Bible lands? Do they realize the smallness of the land of Israel? It is amazing to find out that so much happened in such a small area! In order to let the children in on the geography I often draw a map on the blackboard and put in the necessary bodies of water, towns, mountains, etc. It takes just a little time, and yet the Bible events become clearer and are often seen in a different light.

Let me conclude by giving a few remarks about the memorization of Bible verses. Whenever we tell the children to memorize a verse we should explain it thoroughly. A passage well understood is easier to learn by heart than a piece which is quite meaningless to the learner.

Here again: Let us "Teach for Keeps." When a verse has been learned it should be repeated again and again. Even a verse memorized a year or two years ago should be taken up again. You will ask "Where will we find the time?" I have solved this problem by quitting the regular subjects at ten minutes to twelve, and these remaining ten minutes are used for all kinds of purposes. In unison we say the Bible verses, or time tables, or Bible books, or American presidents. Sometimes we play arithmetic games; at other times we take the capitals of the states. I try to put in as many variations as possible. The results are that the children have a good time, and I do "Teach for Keeps."

BIBLE STUDY FOR LITTLE CHILDREN

GERALDINE STEENSMA*

"They surely know their verses. And how eagerly they listened to the story. Wouldn't the seventh grade Bible teacher love to have such response! What can we do to keep that spark, that desire to learn? And Bible of all subjects! Is it at all possible to make it a challenging discipline?"

The supervisor was deep in thought after visiting his primary classes. The teachers were following the Bible outline and he had no doubt that the pupils were learning the material well. But he couldn't shake from his mind the comments of teachers and supervisors serving on upper educational levels. Students were uninterested in and even openly indifferent to their Bible study. This was true even for those who had no learning problems. Oh, they would perform to get the grade they wanted but...was their heart in it?

His thoughts went on: "Is the Bible becoming for them The Book they will never outgrow, which will always contribute new insights into the love, mercy and justice of God, which will comfort and exhort them, which will calm their doubts and fears and which will guide them in every situation and every relationship? Yes, this is quite a goal for which to strive. But may we be satisfied with anything less?

"It isn't lack of knowledge; it's the attitude, the lack of evidence of accepting the Bible truths for themselves and living in obedience to these truths. This is what disturbs us.

"We must work on this, the teachers and myself. And yet there are so many other tasks requiring our attention. But somewhere, somehow we must begin." Begin at the primary level?

Primary pupils are neither uninterested nor indifferent. Teachers encounter a minimum of resistance to learning; it's relatively easy to motivate young children. There are, of course, those who cannot remember as well as others, but they are helped with their memory passages. So why begin in the primary department?

It may just be possible that the seeds for indifference and lack of commitment are sown within this eager, spontaneous learning situation. We often expect young pupils to integrate learnings which seemingly have little significance for their limited experiences. Also, many of the Bible stories are isolated from related ideas both from other stories and the children's lives. Perhaps we take advantage of their eagerness by requiring memory work which is beyond their understanding and which too often degenerates into rote learning. Is there perhaps a cumulative effect of all this, the results of which appear later when our students are at an age when we expect some evidence of a personal Christian commitment?

Bible teaching is difficult at any level. But to teach it effectively can be such a challenge, too.

I should like to propose the following as principles to guide our planning for primary Bible study:

1. That the content selected for kindergarten be topical, that the activities develop these topics, and that these lessons be integrated with the devotional period. The topics selected and developed should help the pupil understand that God is very close to him and cares for his every need, that the Bible teaches us how God wants us to live and what the results are when we obey or disobey. Learning objectives and experiences should be very personal.

2. That beginning in first grade we separate the teaching of Bible from the day's devotional period by placing it in the daily schedule at a point that makes it a distinct study of its own. We have then accepted Bible as an academic discipline (which we have in theory but not in practice). To it we can now apply, as we do to other disciplines, the educational principles by which we select and organize content, its objectives and its experiences. This should help us obtain a clearer focus on

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the logical organization of Biblical concepts and at the same time search for a psychological sequence of learning experiences.

The devotional period will then have its rightful place as a time of praise, thanksgiving and supplication, a time to set the tone for the day's work.

3. That the amount of content be limited. There should be ample time to allow pupils to come to a full understanding of the desired concepts. For each concept a balanced variety of learning experiences is needed to increase capacity to learn, to motivate learning and to provide for individual differences. Teachers can direct their efforts toward the development of pedagogically planned lessons rather than working under pressure to 'cover' outlined material.

Limiting content will also help to provide for cumulative learning. Whatever repetition will take place on upper educational levels should do more than reinforce learning already acquired. There must be provision for enlarging the concept already developed and provision for increasingly more mature mental effort and reaction.

4. That the truths of Scripture be developed through the lives of Bible personalities. Those whose life stories are told in a family setting would be best for first grade. Personalities God used to develop and establish Israel as a nation could be the focus for second grade. For third grade we could select personalities that were important in the life of Christ and the early church.

This may seem to be a meager outline of teaching material, but perhaps it would mean that pupils would come to the intermediate level with more than a nodding acquaintance with the people they will meet again as they continue their Bible study.

5. That beginnings be made in a number of schools. Eager teachers and supervisors are needed as well as eager pupils. Statements of basic principles, broad concepts, learning objectives and content organization can be submitted to specialists for comment. Lessons can be developed and implemented by the classroom teacher. Constructive evaluation of the total effort will be effective if teachers record on lesson plan outlines all the objectives, content, procedure and comments. Necessary changes can then be made as lessons are prepared again. The results of these efforts can be shared with other schools.

Curriculum change can begin in the classroom. Are there teachers who are willing and supervisors who will encourage them?

FACTS WITH FAITH

DICK JOLINK*

Why is it that when many of our students reach college age they feel they are completely saturated with Bible facts? Why does it seem as though the sponge is so completely filled, but when it is pressed, little personal expression comes out?

Answers? Many.

Confessions? Testimonies? A few.

Where does the fault lie? We may easily point to the home. The children act no differently from their parents. Money, prestige, and status in many families seem to be the most important things in life.

We may indicate how the church has not advanced educationally. Much of catechism is still taught in the same manner as years ago. But pointing out faults of others responsible for the education and nurture of the child does not elevate or excuse the school's position.

Inventory and introspection are necessary. Possibly a complete change in the course of study will be needed.

At the NUCS convention in Detroit about 12 years ago the Christian Reformed Church requested the schools to refrain from teaching Reformed doctrine in the schools. This they said should be done by the church. Rightly so. But can it be done there as effectively and completely as in the school? I don't think so. Forty five minutes a week is not a sufficient amount of time or effort by both parties, pastor and the youth of the church, to discuss fully the doctrines of the church and how they apply to the life of the Christian youth in a war-torn, racially-torn, sin-torn world.

But this does not concern us in this discussion. We know that the school is obligated to teach the history of the Church, God's chosen people, as contained in his Word and recorded in the Church's history, the Reformation, etc. This leads us to teaching facts. Facts about people. Facts about places. Facts about events. It is convenient to teach facts. Here I think we make our mistake. Very easily we teach too many facts without faith. We teach them academically.

True, before any discussion or understanding of any subject is possible, knowledge of the facts is of prime necessity.

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But do we need 12 years of facts...committed to memory for a week or two or even a day or two?

Are we striving for mastery of the subject matter when we ask students to be able to:

- spell all the books of the Bible
- know all the good kings and bad kings of Israel and Judah, in their proper order
- remember the left-handed judge
- know the exact location of the nomadic tribes of Israel as they moved through the wilderness?

If so, we are teaching facts without faith.

The late Dr. C. Jaarsma in his book Fundamentals of Christian Education quotes Dr. F. W. Grosheide as follows:

> Not facts but principle gives certainty. This knowledge will prevent our overrating fact. But likewise we must guard against overrating principles...It is well that we hold to our principles, but these principles acquire meaning only when they find ever wider application, when facts are related to them.

Educators today speak of teaching to meet the students' felt needs. The study of the Bible must be thus, that it meets the students' spiritual needs.

In grades seven though twelve why not spend more time discussing, besides facts, real life situations – vices and virtues:

cheating, lying, stealing – honesty
envy, greed – selflessness, sharing
stealing, plagiarism – stewardship
delinquency – obedience
excessive eating and drinking – moderation

just to list a few?

The Bible is replete with examples, stories, incidents, and parables showing that the sins listed on the left have not received the blessing of God, but the virtues listed on the right have.

Why not have a course in comparative religions in the junior year and a course in Christian ethics in the senior year? In this manner students would meet contemporary problems with a Christian classroom teacher. It would aid them in understanding more completely the meaning of, "thirdly, how I am to be thankful to God for such deliverance."

The relationships between the various areas of study in the curriculum seem at times to get rather foggy. How do you relate math to Bible or physical education to Bible?

The late Dr. Henry Zylstra wrote on Christian education as follows:

> Our schools must be schools. They must subject Christian students to as thorough a discipline as he is capable of in the natural, cultural, historical, and spiritual life of man. It is as human beings that we are Christians....Now this humanness of ours in which we must be educated, through which we must express both our opposition to the spirit of the world and our choices for the kingdom of Christ, includes a lot....We are conscious. We have mind. We can think. We are moral. We can make choices. We have creative freedom. We can make things out of things, expressive of high things. You will remember that second chapter of Genesis: 'And God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them.' There lies the human uniqueness, the gift of reason, the expressiveness of language. And it is in this area of our humanity that most subjects lie: science, government, history, mathematics, literature, social studies, and the rest. There are the materials proper of school education. By means of these, religious man enters into scientific man, aesthetic man, social man, practical man, and the rest. All of these are involved in the shaping and maturing of the Christian choice for God. These are the main business of the school as school. Christian schools in which the God behind the reality there explored is the one God. *

So you see there is no one subject that takes precedence over others in the curriculum. All of the curriculum is necessary to educate the whole child. The truths, the beliefs we have, should be relevant to all subjects, but they all are working for the spiritual development. This not only involves the administrator in planning the curriculum, but the teacher in the classroom with the students. Each life must be affected in order that the program may be declared effective. We must strive for meaning in life, and strive to give meaning to life. Just this past August at the NUCS Convention in Grand Rapids, Dr. Nick Wolterstorff stated that all teaching should establish sound relationships to life, the Christian life. We must strive to accomplish this. If we do that, our curriculum will never stand still; the lives of many will be affected positively.

Now, at the beginning of the new school year, is the time to take inventory. Through introspection we will discover whether we are in the rut of facts, facts, facts, without faith. Exercise the faith each student has. Help it grow. Then we help him grow "in grace and righteousness" to be a living, vibrant Christian citizen of the Kingdom of God.

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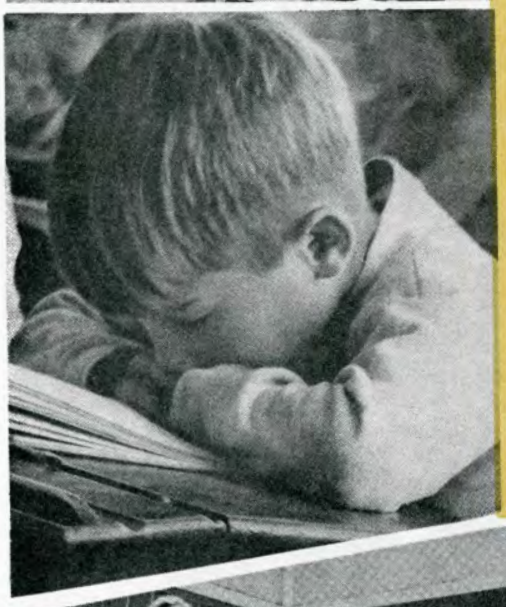
*TESTAMENT OF VISION, HENRY ZYLSTRA, WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO., 1961, P. 96.

THE BIG IDEA, CONT'D FROM 14

living things are dependent upon one another; they capture energy from one another and from their environment. The universe is in constant change. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof."

Each conceptual scheme is built upon smaller concepts which in turn are a synthesis of subconcepts. Considered together these provide the student with a network of inferences. A student who begins to understand the network will be able to fit observations, empirical data, or the general principles he acquires into a meaningful pattern of how his world and his universe works.

A junior high school science program must give a basic foundation in the life sciences, the earth sciences, and the physical sciences. For many students this will be their last basic science course; therefore, it is especially important to teach the "big ideas." The selection of topics and the emphasis placed on each topic are the special province of the teacher. The selections of materials depends on one's outlook. The Christian teacher is most critical in this process. In fact, the selection of the teacher is even more important than the selection of the textbook.



FIRST GLIMPSES

MARIE J. POST*

It's not too easy in September
To know which of them we'll remember,
Who will anticipate the questions
Who will forget to do his lessons;
Who will bring notes from home—excuses,
Apologies, threats, pleas or ruses—
Who'll dawdle and require prodding,
Tne eager ones, the bored and nodding,
The ones we'd like a dozen of,
The others who need the extra love.
It's not too easy in September
To know which of them we'll remember.

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POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 500
Non-profit Org.
Holland, Michigan
49423