



CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL

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STEPPING STONES OR STUMBLING BLOCKS?

TEACHING GEOGRAPHY

AMIDST THE BEDLAM, WILSON SAID A PRAYER

ON CARTS, HORSES, AND IDOLS



FEBRUARY 1967

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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.

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Stepping Stones or Stumbling Blocks?

We teachers are often told what a great impact we have on the lives of our students. We are reminded that we shape their destinies both for time and eternity. We are both flattered and irritated by this: flattered because of the sense of power over others it gives us, and irritated because we know only too well that other forces, like their homes and their peer group shape our students' lives as much as we do. Admitting all this, most of us still are sobered by this awareness that we teachers collectively have had some impact on all and much impact on a few.

Whatever our effect on the TOTAL future of our students, it would seem to be true that we directly and significantly affect their personal choice for or against teaching as a vocation. Considerable research, as well as our common sense, support the belief that teachers themselves are the chief stepping stones or stumbling blocks to those who have an inclination to be a teacher someday.

Some studies made of those who had made a choice for teaching showed that typically the following factors were involved in their choice: he first decided to become a teacher before entering secondary school; another person, either an educator or a relative, first interested him in becoming a teacher; baby-sitting and helping a classroom teacher were the types of experience which crystallized the decision; helping others to learn, especially children, was the most attractive feature of teaching; the student was in the top half of his high school graduating class.

There are a number of clues in the brief profile given above. Much of it suggests that the image we project of our profession has much to do with whether or not our students

in our classes today will ever want to occupy our place. Two of the elements above suggest that effective recruiting for the profession can take place in our own classrooms by letting students try on the role of teachers. Concrete and satisfying experiences in helping others to learn can clinch for some the vague ideal of being a teacher, and convert it into a firmly held objective. Direct suggestion to some that they ought to consider teaching seems also to have its place, especially when it comes from a teacher whom they respect. Future Teacher Clubs in high school and college also will likely be most effective when they give their members organized experience as teacher aides. In sum, a model to admire, specific verbal encouragement, and actual experience in the act of teaching are three key causal factors in getting young people to choose the profession of teaching.

Who of us in the profession has not wished for some magic formula by which the brightest, most idealistic, most emotionally stable young people could be attracted to teaching? We have such means at our disposal every day in our own classrooms. We ourselves have the power to become either stepping stones or stumbling blocks.



No matter what the "dedication" of the teacher might be, the first time he tries to pay his bills or feed his family with "dedication" instead of money, he will realize that something is awry, that he is not properly compensated, despite the teaching of the Church, and, as a result, he is being prevented from performing his basic functions in both teaching and family care.

— E. Seidl, in
CATHOLIC EDUCATORS JOURNAL



HOW DO YOU RATE?

Most teachers are required to engage in regular evaluation of pupil work and to prepare periodic reports to pupils and their parents. Very frequently they are required to assign letter grades which are recorded on a prepared report card. These grades represent the pupil's academic standing and/or his progress in each subject area.

Many teachers dislike assigning and reporting grades. Some are confused about which factors ought to be taken into consideration in assigning a grade and how much weight should be given to each of these factors. Others are concerned about

| ACHIEVEMENT | | EFFORT | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|--------|---|---|---|---|-------|
| A- Excellent | 1. Making Exceptional Effort | | | | | | |
| B- Above Average | 2. Making Satisfactory Effort | | | | | | |
| C- Average | 3. Making Unsatisfactory Effort | | | | | | |
| D- Below Average | 4. Making No Apparent Effort | | | | | | |
| E- Failure | | | | | | | |
| I- Incomplete | | | | | | | |
| SUBJECT | MARKING PERIOD | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | FINAL |
| Bible | | | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | | | | |
| English | | | | | | | |
| Pennmanship | | | | | | | |
| Spelling | | | | | | | |
| Arithmetic | | | | | | | |
| Science | | | | | | | |
| Geography | | | | | | | |
| History | | | | | | | |
| Art | | | | | | | |
| Music | | | | | | | |
| Spanish | | | | | | | |
| Physical Ed. | | | | | | | |
| Attendance Record | | | | | | | |
| Days Absent | | | | | | | |
| Times Tardy | | | | | | | |

†This column is written by or solicted from other administrators by John Naber, principal of Seymour Christian School, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

how the grades they assign compare with those given by other teachers in the school. Still others may be worried because they have observed that, unfortunately, pupils and their parents too often emphasize the negative and unpleasant aspects of grades.

Parents usually want to be informed of their child's performance in school and expect to receive periodic progress reports. Where letter grades are used, they want to know what a given grade means and whether it represents academic standing only or if it also reports growth related to ability, attitudes and initiative. They would like to have some assurance that a grade of "B" given by one teacher means approximately the same as one given by another teacher.

It is commonly accepted that "average" falls around a grade of "C" where the letter grades are used, but it is also quite common to find that it is higher for some teachers and lower for others. When this occurs because of differences in ability and performance between classes there is no cause for concern. However, when certain teachers are significantly higher or lower year after year or when the variation in a given year is very pronounced, special study may be necessary.

Preparation and distribution of a report which indicates the percentage of each grade given by each teacher could be used to initiate a study of grade uniformity. (It may be desirable, at least at first, not to name each teacher on the report but to inform each privately of which line refers to his grades.) This report could also list the average distribution for the school and could include general comments on distribution and averages. A report of this type will help the teacher to see his grades in relationship to those of others, will likely temper extremes in grades, and will stimulate thinking and discussion by the teachers.

Where desired, consideration of grades can continue with a staff meeting or with individual conferences using the above report as a discussion guide.

How do you rate?

Preview of Coming Attractions?

EARLY IN DECEMBER four New York organizations filed suits, one in Federal Court, the other in the courts of New York State, challenging federal support to students in parochial and other religious schools under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Joining in the suits are the American Jewish Congress, the New York Civil Liberties Union, the United Parents Association, and the United Federation of Teachers. These suits test practices that have been attacked on the ground that they violate the prohibitions of the First Amendment to the Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ." Among these practices are the allocation to parochial schools of textbooks and other materials purchased with federal funds, and the assignment of remedial teachers supported by ESEA programs to parochial school classrooms. Although this litigation originates in New York, it may well affect the implementation of federal aid everywhere else; at the same time it reflects the continuing debate about "the church-state issue" in American.

— SATURDAY REVIEW, Jan. 21, 1967

CURRICULUM CURRENTS



FIRST IT WAS NEW MATH,
NOW IT'S NEW ENGLISH!



THAT'S THE
LAST TIME
I'LL USE A
STUDENT
CLASS
EVALUATION
FORM !!



LET'S JUST CHECK THE OL' TEXT BOOK
ON THAT QUESTION



WHAT MAKES STUDENTS CHOOSE TEACHING?

Upon hearing that a study has been done in an area of one's interest, the typical response is: "What are its conclusions?" At the same time, many research projects serve the function of pointing to new issues and problems not foreseen when the study was first undertaken. In fact, this seems particularly true of student research project which are conceived and executed under time pressure imposed by semester deadlines. Such is the status of a study conducted in 1960 of a stratified sample of Calvin College Education students. It is here described to elicit questions which might themselves be checked in future research. Hence, implications and speculations become subject to test rather than regarded as true at the outset.

The initial purpose of this study, to determine the influence that previous attendance in Christian High School (contrasted with Public High School) has on choice of teaching as a career, was not met. In a word, the results were inconclusive. Nevertheless, totally apart from the initial intention of the study, many interesting (though unintended) leads concerning vocational aspirations emerged. For instance, of the 157 education students who completed the questionnaire (82% of the original sample), the vast majority "played down" social and financial needs as significant in making a vocational choice. On the other hand, a heavy emphasis on altruism, broadly defined, is evident. Responses to seven specified options (listed below as percentage of total responses) to the question: "Which two of the following factors would you particularly stress if advising a younger person in the choice of a career?" are as follows:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Opportunity for Kingdom Service | 42% |
| Personal Interest | 42% |
| Needs of the Community | 11% |
| Financial rewards, job security, Prestige, and Other (collapsed) | 5% |

Stating the question in terms of advice to a friend was an attempt to tap the respondent's hierarchy of values actually

†This column is provided by the staff of the Sociology Department of Calvin College. The contribution in this issue is by Dr. Theodore Rottman.

used in making his own choice without making explicit reference to his own vocational commitment. These responses raise a host of questions. For instance:

1. What is the range of orientations concealed in the category "Personal Interest?"
2. Do these reasons given for choosing teaching as a career get beyond superficial answers expected of those who have committed themselves to a field? Are they rationalizations or valid determinants?
3. Assuming that valid reasons can be obtained, how would differences in e.g. sex, class standing in college, determinants leading to the decision of teaching as career choice, affect the responses?
4. Does idealism vanish as experience in teaching increases? Does minimization of financial and social rewards reduce the dissonance between vocational commitment and contemporary American values? To what extent does this deemphasis persist as teaching experience increases?

When the respondents were asked to speculate what their choice of occupation would have been IF IT HAD NOT BEEN TEACHING, the following concentrations emerged:

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Social Work | 34% |
| Nurse | 27% |
| Office worker | 12% |
| Missionary | 8% |
| All others | 19% |

The preponderance of altruism is again evident. This is confirmed when answers are given as to why they made their second choice:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Opportunity for Kingdom Service | 15% |
| Personal Interest | 50% |
| Needs of the Community | 31% |
| Financial rewards, etc. | 4% |

The discrepancy in concentration on "Opportunity for Kingdom Service" between present aspiration and second choice is unexplained, but is certainly of significance in any study of Christian students' career selection. Note that financial and social need fulfillment remains low.

Finally, the respondents were asked to rank teachers on three dimensions (esteem in community, time and energy demands, and amount of service rendered) relative to four other occupations (engineer, journalist, physician, and social



worker). As the following percentages indicate, the image that aspiring teachers have of their chosen profession is more elevated when it comes to services rendered than it is in terms of either time-energy demands or community esteem):

Percentage of Respondents

| who Believe Teaching Profession Ranks: | Esteem Given | Time-Energy Demands | Service Rendered |
|---|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1st | 8% | 15% | 44% |
| 2nd | 46% | 48% | 36% |
| 3rd | 25% | 29% | 17% |
| 4th | 15% | 6% | 1% |
| 5th | 6% | 2% | 2% |

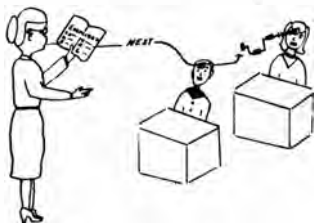
Questions for further investigation here, might include: On the matter of the teacher image as compared with other vocations, does the imbalance in ranking between image of "Esteem Given" and "Service Rendered" increase or decrease with later teaching experience? Is it a valid assessment of an actual state of affairs? What consequences does it have for relations between teachers and parents?

Questions such as the foregoing, prompted by tentative information already available, suggest that an intensive study of career patterns of teachers, from initial selection processes through years of teaching experience, will provide a valuable bit of information of importance in any discussion of professionalization among Christian school teachers.

PEDAGOGICAL PROTOTYPES: Ways of Making Points



"The Sartorial Shouter"



"The Shriill Driller"

Sex and the Schoolmaster

"Does the teacher seem to know her subject field?"

"Every teacher should be able to apply these principles in her classroom."

THIS use of the feminine pronoun is common not only in messages from administrators to their staffs but also in educational journals. It has about the same effect on the male teacher as henbane in the ears of Hamlet's father. He is paralyzed with self-doubt when not suffocated with pity for administrators and old boys in education departments who have not looked above the first three grades to see how many marms are really men.

Naturally, this confusing practice is not so widespread as it was, say, in 1939, but it occurs often enough to spur me on in behalf of men in teaching. May I offer some suggestions for the improvement of education as well as the preservation of English prose?

To begin with, I would reject on political and social grounds the standard dodge, that is, the use of the masculine pronoun for mixed groups. This spells a defeat for the "second sex," and no right or left thinking man can endorse a usage containing, however faintly, overtones of Little Evaism.

Instead, I would suggest the following:

1. The immediate development of an epicene pronoun, certainly no problem in a field in which terms have sprouted like ragweed. One suggestion is heshe.

Or:

2. An agreement among editors to proscribe the singular teacher (as in "The teacher should lead her children . . ."), not only because it leads to problems of gender and sex but also because it results in Neo-Platonic fuzziness of thought.

Or:

3. A moratorium on all writing about education by writers who cannot tell a man from a woman. And that, as the teacher would say deep in hiser heart, would be a step in the right direction.

— R. T. Taylor, PHI DELTA KAPPA,
September, 1966

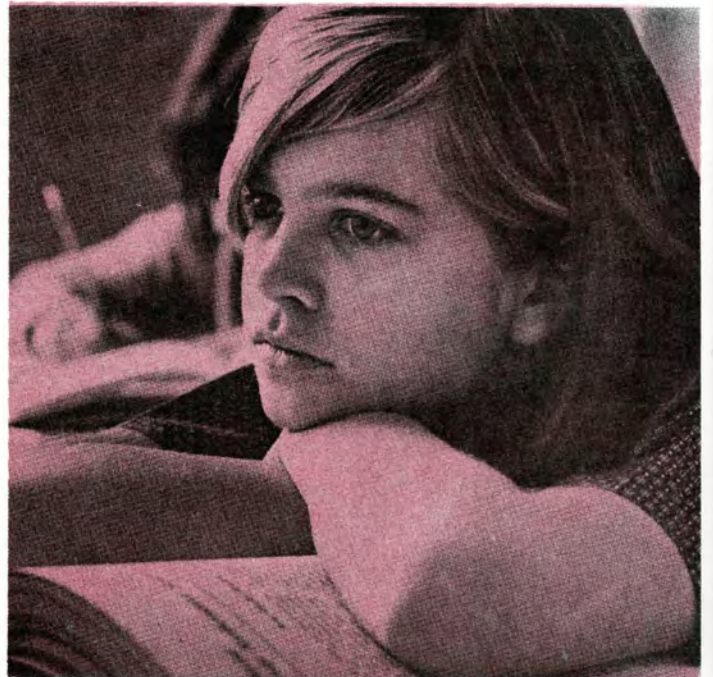


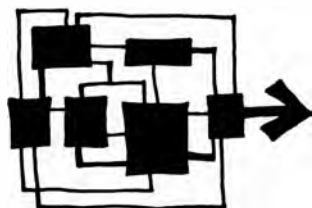
Graduation

Marie J. Post

It was just yesterday I carefully pressed
Her pinafore and brushed her sun-lit curls
Then took her by a small reluctant hand
To bring her to these other boys and girls.

School starting for my first! I couldn't believe
That kindergarten days were here so soon.
It was just yesterday—it must have been. . . .
How can my daughter graduate **this** June?





PROFESSION-WIDE

Sheri Haan, Department Editor

Dare we call this Prayer?

Sister M. Fides Gough†

THE SETTING is any Catholic high school. The bell rings for change of classes. For a few moments, there is confusion, although somewhat organized confusion. One student rushes to a locker to retrieve a forgotten pen; another pushes his way through the corridor, against the current of humanity, to turn in an overdue paper; a teacher is delayed at a classroom door by a student's question. Everyone is going somewhere. Anyone who tries to stand still is carried along with the tide.

By the time the second bell rings, students and teachers, by a near miracle, have reached their appointed rooms. Before class begins, a moment or two is allotted to prayer. The conscientious teacher waits until students have assumed at least the appearance of readiness for prayer before giving the signal to begin. If a teacher is honest, she will admit that she has one eye on the clock and the other patrolling the restless members of the class. At least half her attention is anticipating the approaching lesson. True, a small part of her attention is directed to offering all that is done to God, and she realizes that the class about to begin is part of this offering.

Students, too, even the best-intentioned, are prey to distractions during classroom prayers. Can the class beauty ignore the fact that the football hero is sitting directly opposite her? Although she realizes the importance of offering all to God, at the moment, the question of how her hair looks is more important to her than prayer. There is unavoidable confusion as a student's books slip to the floor with a thud and are replaced on the desk. Further detail is not necessary. Every Catholic high school teacher observes such scenes several times a day.

Do classroom prayers as customarily said really constitute an offering? One teacher, who had questioned this custom of classroom prayer for many years, had the practice of asking a new class if they wished to pray at the beginning of the class period. Student reaction to this question was usually shock or apathy. Some were shocked because they had been taught well,

if without much meaning, that "one must pray always" and that even class can be a prayer if one directs it to the honor of God. They wondered why the teacher should even question the desirability of prayer. Of course, she was not questioning the desirability of offering all that is done to God, only the manner in which it is done.

It was difficult to get a decisive answer from a class. After a bit of prodding, one or two members might volunteer that they usually say a Hail Mary or some other particular prayer. If the decision were left to the class, they did not seem to care what was decided.

One day, after the customary prayer had been said in the usual manner, students were asked to write down their thoughts during the prayer and hand in their papers to the teacher -- unsigned, of course.



Results were enlightening, but not unexpected. The following are samples of student response:

"What prayer? While we were standing there I was wondering how I could talk my mother out of punishment for all the phone calls I've made. I wasn't even conscious a prayer was being said."

"I thought how beautiful Rosemarie looks since she had her hair done."

"...about the good time I had yesterday with the guy I'm going with--wondering what he is doing

†Sister M. Fides Gough, O.P., teaches at the Holy Rosary Academy, Louisville, Kentucky. This article is reprinted with permission from the CATHOLIC SCHOOL JOURNAL, January, 1967.

now as I begin the last period of the school day."

"I was reading the quotation on the board about green cheese."

"I was thinking about a girl friend of mine who is all mixed up with her boy friend."

"...my baby brother who was born last Tuesday."

"...how short I should cut my hair."

"...the boy I danced with last night."

"...the parent-teacher conference."

"...about not bowling any gutter balls this afternoon."

Some of these comments were read to the class and they were asked to analyze the situation. Again, their comments were enlightening.

"We say our prayers out of habit. The teacher says 'Hail Mary' and we join in. We say prayers but we don't pray. Usually my mind is on something else."

"As for this formality, I get tired of it, and maybe God does too."

"Every class, just about, starts with a Hail Mary. It's gotten to the point where we don't really know if we've prayed or not. It's a reflex." Many of the students wrote of "words rattled off without thought."

Sufficient evidence had indeed been assembled to condemn our practice of classroom prayer as frequently implemented. Students accepted the challenge to do something constructive. They were quick to assert that prayer is "talking to God," and



that God is most pleased when they talk in their own language, speaking of their doubts and difficulties, and asking for His help in everyday problems of any nature. They were reassured by being reminded that God loves them, listens to them and is interested in what interests them.

After this groundwork had been done, each student was asked to write and submit a prayer suitable for use before class. When papers had been turned in, a committee was appointed from the class to compile, from the ideas submitted, a class prayer to be said each day. The following are samples of these composite prayers for algebra and geometry classes:

STUDENT PRAYERS

O, God, please listen to what I have to say. You are kind and good, Because of this I ask You to help me during this algebra class to understand clearly all that is taught. Enlighten our teacher that she may be a true guide and leader; help each member of the class to do her best and to be satisfied with results. Amen.

Dear Holy Spirit, help me through this hour of class. Enlighten my feeble mind that I may understand the language of algebra. Guide my hand to the right use of signs and symbols and help me see through the details of complicated problems.



Help our teacher and all in this class and extend your guidance to all students of Algebra. Amen.

Dear God, we acknowledge the infinite power shown in your works. You made shape and form, balance and symmetry, beauty and grace out of nothing. Please help me to understand these wonders of creation through the manmade science of mathematics. Send the Holy Spirit to help me understand, to keep my mind on my work and to prevent me from making careless errors. Thank You! Amen.

After the math classes which composed the above prayers had used them over a period of time, students were again asked for their reactions. Remarks made by them were most gratifying; especially pleasing were some constructive criticisms which they offered. Following are some of their reactions to "home-made" prayers.

"I think we should say the prayer (one of the above) occasionally. The rest of the time we should perhaps say a silent prayer. I believe both would have more meaning to each of us."

"I have never before had the experience of helping to compose a prayer to be said before class. To me this is great!"

"It convinces me that God will listen to plain simple language."

"It's great having your own prayer made up just for algebra. I wish more of the teachers had their own prayer for each class."

"It is a good way to pray. It is really like talking to God as a friend, which prayer is supposed to be anyway."

"Boy, I like the way we pray in our geometry class. Every word means something to me; it's not just a lot of gibberish and pious words. When we ask God to keep our minds on the work in front of us and prevent our careless errors it really 'hits the spot'."

"These are our own words, not those of someone else who lived long before us."

"When we say this prayer I feel that God isn't so far away but right beside me ready to help."

"This prayer shows we pray to God not just about small, unimportant things."

"I like this form of prayer; thank you for showing us this great method."

A number of students expressed the idea that student-written prayer could also become meaningless if used so long that it became routine. Many suggested changing often to avoid this temptation. Accordingly, each student was asked to write another prayer. These were collected and one was read by the



teacher each day before class. When it was suggested that each member of the class read her own prayer, the class vetoed the idea. Teen-agers are reticent about expressing such personal thoughts publicly; however, the response was very good when the teacher read the prayer without attaching any name. Recently, after such a prayer had been read, one student remarked, "That prayer really hits the spot."

When asking the class members to compose their own prayers, it might be well to point out that the Our Father is a perfect prayer, having been composed by Our Divine Lord, and that the Hail Mary came from the lips of the Angel Gabriel with a portion added by the Church. Personal prayers cannot be better than these words of divine origin, but they may have more meaning for the individual because they are said with more attention. Also it should be pointed out that such prayers are personal and private in nature and have no recognition by the Church unless they are submitted to the bishop for his approval.

One advantage of this method of prayer is that it can be adapted to any subject or grade level to make both the prayer and the subject matter more meaningful. The following, composed by a homemaking class, may not rank high as poetry, but it does have the merit of petition:

PRAYER FOR A HOMEMAKER

Come, Holy Spirit,
Bring Your Gifts,
Teach me to apply them,
To all things--ironing shifts.
Making beds, getting meals,
To coiffing hair;
Teach me to know these things
When done for God
Become a prayer.
Make me be loved--to love
All God's creation--Him above.
Thank You, Amen.

Prayer as routinely said in many classrooms is worse than no prayer at all. In defense of some form of prayer before classes, witness the many students who visit their Catholic high schools after enrolling in state (or other nonsectarian) colleges. Almost without exception, they say what they miss most in a non-Catholic milieu is the lack of prayer before class. Without doubt, this is a case of missing the privilege only after it is withdrawn. Perhaps these same students prayed without much thought while in a Catholic school, but they missed prayer when there was none.

On Carts, Horses, and Idols

Benjamin De Wit†

The time rarely comes when the rethinking of basic questions becomes unimportant. This article is an inquiry into one reason why teaching in the Christian schools is a vocation that many serious students, in particular the more talented ones, pass over in favor of another career. I say it is only one reason among many, but it is one rarely or never heard mentioned explicitly, and it is one which questions something basic to the philosophy of Christian education.

It is a fact that Christian school teachers are not in general believers in the principle of free inquiry. There is perhaps an unhealthy stigma attached to the word "indoctrination", but the Christian schools have carried indoctrination into areas where it is not proper, where it has an unhealthy effect on the inquisitiveness and intellectual honesty of the student. A Christian school society is made up of parents who feel that they have established certain things to be beyond dispute. These things are a moral code, a system of Christian values, and certain answers to the great primary problems of human life and its place in the Universe. The answers to these questions and a certain attitude toward things are felt to be true and therefore proper to be given to their children without the child having to go through the great unsettling experience of finding these things out for himself, that is, by indoctrination. So far, so good. Indoctrination is recognized for what it is, it is called by its true name, and its necessity is proclaimed without hesitation. But indoctrination has been carried beyond this recognized use into areas where its legitimacy

is not at all as clear. This has the effect of making the learning experience a caricature of the catechism class, of emasculating the important business of inquiry, of closing minds which need to be opened.

None of us when reading Plato were favorably impressed by the role of education in his proposed republic. Once the philosopher had decided what was the proper form of society, it was no longer necessary to inquire into that question. The solution had been found and could henceforth be taught as fact. The necessity was seen for rigid conformity to the master plan in order for this society to be maintained, and so nothing could be given the child which would in any way cause him to doubt, inquire, or hold any other view but that necessary to make him the sort of person in society which wise men had determined. We feel sorry for the children in the republic, and we note the deep irony which is the criticism of Plato's social thought, namely that the republic he proposed could never produce another Plato.

It is easy to sympathize with Plato, because after all he was a thinker and a reformer who had the interests of men foremost in his mind. It is more difficult to sympathize with the educators of today who practice the education of the republic without having made the inquiries to establish its value and truth. Christian schools, too, are guilty. The society in which our schools stand, the values of this society, its fears and prejudices — these are things which should not be foisted on students through the agency of a Christian school. We do not of course parrot the pragmatists' "adjustment to environment" in so many words, but we still conceive of the school as preparing a person to take a place

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in our society, and we are using the word "society" too often to mean conservative politics, "Christian" patriotism, capitalist opportunism, etc.

There is something in the student that withers under our way of teaching. The state of society is not fixed. If history teaches anything, it teaches that things will not be the same in a decade or two as they are now. Christians must have an effective hand in directing the future course of society. This entails a different approach in the schools. The best way to prepare young minds for such a role in society is to encourage a free inquiry into all things which relate to politics, economics, comparative religions, the cultures and values of other peoples. Let us have students question OUR way of life so that they may become the kind of people to whom the quest for a better life is a vital concern. Encourage students to greater intellectual sympathy with thinkers who both defend and assail what we hold. Prosperity in this country has led to an apathy among our people in regard to questioning a particular sanctified way of life. It is not in this way that life is to be lived.

It is possible to give a kind of lip service to the principle of free inquiry. This involves questioning things only to the point where the questioner will snap back into the accepted idea. Be as objective in your presentation of communism or syndicalism as possible, but by all means make sure capitalism wins out in the end. This is a caricature of free inquiry. It is commonly practiced by our more informed teachers, but it is more diabolical than indoctrination, because it pretends to be something it is not. When we venture to teach TRUTHS outside of the area of religion, we do more than can be done honestly. All of the great questions of the sort: is our Christian community pursuing worthwhile goals in everyday affairs, both individually and communally; what kind of society should we work toward, etc. do not have a settled factual answer. The business of living in any sort of society involves in a large measure the pondering of just these sorts of questions.

Failure to honor free inquiry in the Christian schools has deprived us of numbers of excellent teachers. The true teacher is one whose life is wrapped up in these inquiries and if in his teaching he becomes the agent of any sort of "establishment" he betrays himself. Let us honor free inquiry and restore to education the ingredient that is its life that makes it look forward instead of backward, that



makes it a fearful force to the vested interests of ignorance and falsehood. In honoring free inquiry we proclaim our faith in the truth, our faith that in a fair contest, truth will win.

Finally, a word on the unique urgency which a Calvinist point of view renders to this problem. We hear so much these days of the giant steps which the church must take to remain or become "relevant" to society that we are likely to forget that the church must have a hand in forming (or reforming) the society it is to be "relevant" to. A Calvinistic philosophy in particular brings this dimension to light. This mandate entails more than an inquiry into how things are; it further entails an inquiry into how things are to be. It is not often that these two things coincide. A Christian school cannot in any case so arrange the equation by juggling either side so that the outcome is a relation of identity. The way to prevent such a disaster is to honor the principle of free inquiry.

Amidst the Bedlam, Wilson Said a Prayer

Philip Elve†

Underneath the concrete grandstand of Huntsville Stadium, a stampede of sweaty blue-shirted football players swarmed into the Lee High dressing room.

They screamed and yelled and slapped one another deliriously and they tossed helmets into the air.

"We're No. 1" they shouted. "We're No. 1!"

The grandiose claim had considerable basis for fact since the Generals had just whipped previously unbeaten Butler, 13-7.

Then in the midst of all the fury, a shrill whistle sounded and a sudden silence descended on the cramped little room.

Lee Coach Keith Wilson lowered the whistle which hung from his neck.

"We're going to do like we always do after a game, boys," said Wilson, his voice choked with emotion. "I

†Mr. Elve, M.A. University of Michigan, is administrator of school relations, National Union of Christian Schools.

want you to bow your heads and thank the Good Lord for the opportunity of playing football. And thank Him also for the opportunity of playing against a tremendous opponent like Butler."

The Lee Generals gathered in a circle around their coach and they bowed their heads. Then Wilson said "Amen" and the boys in blue filed boisterously from the dressing room toward their waiting bus.

After they had all left, Keith Wilson sat on a wooden bench and put his head in his hands and he cried.

Later, Wilson -- one of the genuine gentlemen in the coaching profession -- stood in the cool air outside the stadium and analyzed his team's victory.

The above story appeared in the Huntsville TIMES and was sent to me by Mr. Harland Navis of Huntsville. After reading it I wondered whether Christian school coaches pray with their teams before or after ball games. I decided to ask some of them. The limited research I conducted indicates that most Christian school coaches do not pray with their teams. However, there are some that do.

How appropriate is it to begin or end an athletic contest with prayer? You will notice in the news story above that Mr. Wilson, a public school coach, called upon his team to pray, but apparently did not lead them in prayer. Each player could bring his own needs to God in his own way. Since sports are intended to develop the whole personality of a student and not merely his physique, it seems to me that Keith Wilson's boys have an edge over many athletes in this development.

What are some of the reasons Christian school coaches have for not offering prayer or the opportunity for prayer prior to a game? High on the list seems to be the setting. A locker room is not conducive to a prayerful atmosphere. (I suppose in this respect it is almost as unconducive as a battlefield, but soldiers pray -- at least some do.) The boys are generally loud and boisterous and their mind is on the game. One cannot really pray thoughtfully when one is in such an emotional state. If one does insert prayer into the picture, it becomes artificial and almost meaningless -- it borders on taking God's name in vain. Then, too, in a sports contest the spirit of the players is so essential to the success of the team. Picture a team high in spirits, raring to go, tuned to a high pitch of awareness, and then the coach says, "Boys, let us pray." The "Amen" is said and the spirit is dampened as the boys file out of the locker room. This is hardly a fitting way to begin an athletic contest.

Yet there is another side to prayer in athletics. We of the Christian school usually ask God's blessing on all important activities of the school: band concerts, plays, PTA, school programs, and others. We do this because we believe that we are dependent upon God in all things and all that we do must be in accordance with His will. One might ask whether an athletic contest is so far removed from the primary purposes of a Christian school that prayer seems inappropriate. Do sports fit into the scheme for the molding of a Christian young man or young woman? If a case can be made that they do, and I'm sure one can be made, then it seems that a case can also be made that prayer is always appropriate before and after a sports contest.

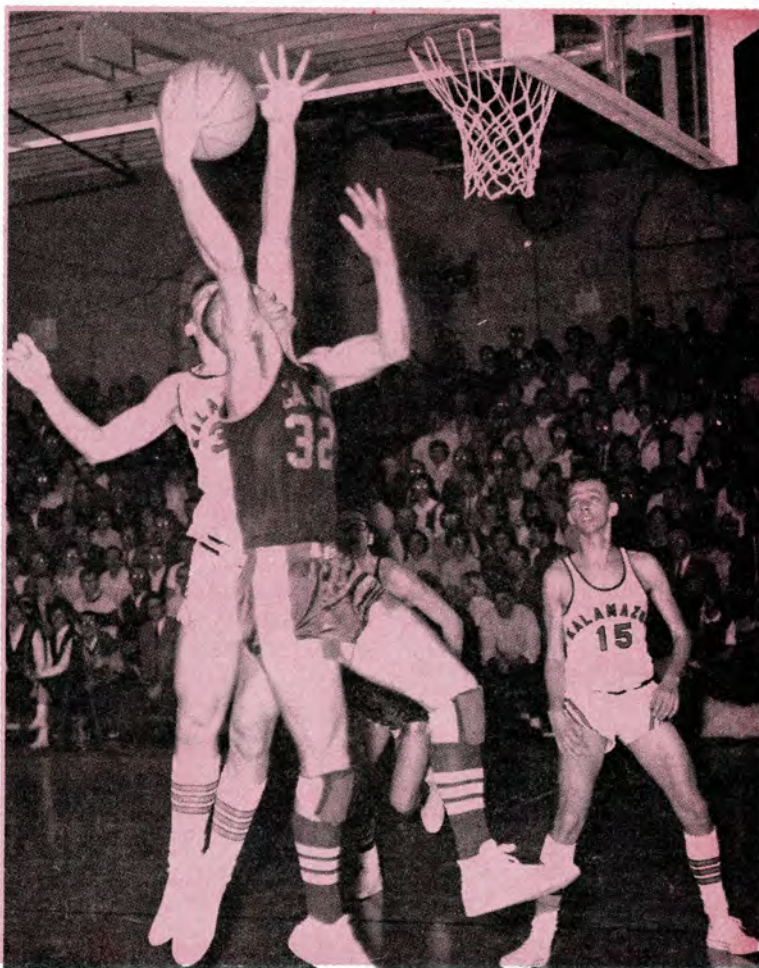
Why should a team pray together? Most importantly, it helps the players recognize their dependence upon God. God has given strong bodies and good minds and players must use them in a way that pleases Him. The athletic contest cannot

have any true meaning unless the player recognizes that it serves a purpose beyond his own pleasure and enjoyment. Prayer before a contest can once more bring him face to face with the important purposes of life and particularly of the contest itself.

The Christian always stands before men as a reflector of the faith that is in him. The Christian athlete must ask God to help him to reflect God in him while he is on the field of play. He and his school bear the name Christian and any action which does dishonor to this name is detrimental to the kingdom of God. This is a tremendous responsibility that is placed on the Christian athlete. In the heat of the contest he must reflect Christ in him, so that others may see and recognize God in him. It seems that prayer before a contest would bring him closer to God and enable him to better carry this responsibility.

Perhaps it is unfortunate that prayer cannot be offered before the spectators at sport contests also. I know one must be careful in casting pearls before swine, and I suppose that in some cases such public prayer would not be conducive to God's glory. I do feel, however, that often the Christian school spectator needs to be reminded of his image-bearing responsibilities as well as the athletes do. I have seen Christian school supporters in some very unchristian public manifestations of wrath. These situations are indeed unfortunate because the name Christian is dirtied and degraded.

In times of trouble, in times of peace, in times of emotion, in times of tranquility, at all times the Christian prays to God so God will be near to him and direct his ways. This direction is needed as much at an athletic contest as it is needed in most of life's other activities.





BOOK REVIEW

EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM AND THE CASE FOR GOVERNMENT AID TO STUDENTS IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS, edited by Daniel D. McGarry and Leo Ward, 208 pp. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company \$6.50. Reviewed by James De Borst, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The issue of government aid to private and parochial schools is of vital importance to teachers in these schools. Non-public school teachers need to be fully informed if they are to reach valid conclusions on this question. This issue is no longer academic in light of recent legislation at both the national and state levels and the continuing efforts of large numbers within our community to obtain a fair share of educational tax money for non-public school children. This issue has, and will continue to arouse ancient animosities and latent fears.

A group of qualified authorities of various persuasions contribute their ideas about the problem of educational freedom in this book. First, the book establishes the historical background and philosophical basis of the problem. It then describes the varied experiences of a large number of other countries in dealing with this problem. Motivation and ways to aid independent schools are next presented. The general contributions of independent education are discussed as well as the economic advantages of providing public aid to non-public schools and the legality and practicability of such aid. Finally, a first-hand account is given of "Citizens for Educational Freedom," a "grass-roots," parents' rights movement in favor of aid to independent schools.

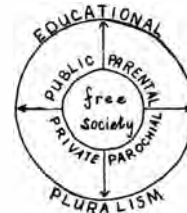
The major theme of the book is that to ensure the maintenance of the plural system of American education, it is necessary to make certain that private schools keep open their doors. Parents and children who are devoted to religious values or have special wants or desires should have the freedom to choose the kind of education they prefer, and to follow their conscience without undue fiscal penalization. The elimination of the private religious schools on account of financial crises, brought about in part by growing government aid to public schools and increased educational taxation, may coerce parents into enrolling their children in public schools where they may be exposed to the teaching of values they cannot accept. The contributors of this book feel that this must be avoided in the interests of freedom and progress.

The need for independent schools in a free society is forcefully and capably presented. The defense of this claim centers on the need for pluralism in education. Pluralism results when freedom exists. Or to turn the terms around: where men have freedom to be different and freedom of

belief, pluralism, and particularly educational pluralism will be present. The conclusion is that a plural system of education represents and strengthens the principle of freedom within our society. A survey of eleven communist countries attempts to sustain this conclusion by pointing out that in each of these countries independent education has been stifled rather than encouraged.

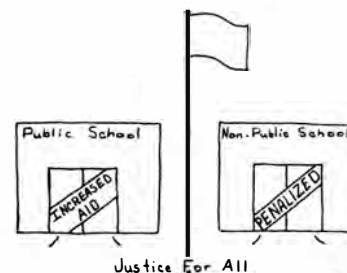
J. Marion Snapper supports the claim for the need of independent schools in his chapter "Contributions of Independent Education." He cogently argues that historically and currently the independent school has made significant contributions to American education. It provides healthy competition, valid experimentation and needed cross-fertilization. He effectively contends that the independent schools constitute a necessary safeguard from democracy against any potential tyranny of the mind resulting from a monistic state educational system.

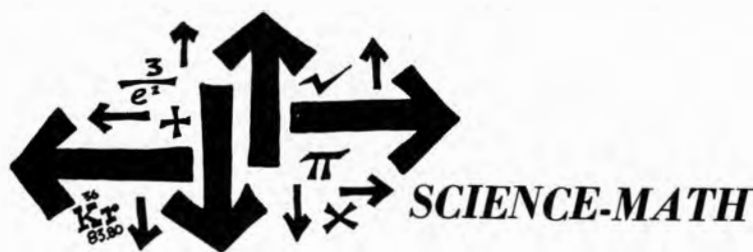
The question of the constitutionality of government aid to independent schools is carefully analyzed. Virgil C. Blum argues for the proposition that independent schools serve a legitimate public purpose. Under the U. S. Constitution the government can legislate for such public purposes as are served by independent schools and this power to legislate is not paralyzed by incidental legislation. Using the U.S. Constitution and Supreme Court decisions, Blum constructs a convincing argument for the contention that parents' civil rights in education are violated when government denies



a fair and equitable share of educational tax funds to children attending non-public schools. The mere fact that some parents can pay the penalty imposed by the state for exercising their constitutional rights does not alter the fact that freedom of choice in education is meaningless when a heavy penalty is imposed for attending private or parochial schools.

Of special interest to readers of this Journal will be the chapter titled "Freedom and Equity in Dutch Education," by Edwin H. Palmer. He relates the story of that country's century-long struggle for legal existence and material freedom. The striking parallels between the struggle in the Netherlands for actual freedom based on financial support and the fight going on in this country for the same freedom is highly informative. He contends that the record of how the Dutch system of full financial support has worked out in practice supports the conclusion that equality and freedom go hand in hand and that it is possible to have financial equality for all schools without the undesirable by-products of governmental interference and control.





William Selles, Department Editor

EDITORIAL

Does your school have a science program? In answering this question many elementary teachers will reply, "Oh yes, we use the series from some certain publishing company." But do you really have a coordinated science program? At a P.T.A. meeting of one of our Christian schools a few years ago parents were informed of the new series of science books which had been purchased for grades one through six. Later in the evening one of the teachers was asked if she and the students enjoyed the new books. Her reply was something like this: "We don't study much science in this grade. We don't have time for it, and I don't know much about it. Really, I never was very much interested in science." How many of our Christian schools have similar situations in one or more grades, where the books are there, but the subject is not taught, poorly taught, or not coordinated with the material in the preceding or following grades?

This problem tends to accumulate until the student reaching the junior or senior high school has studied a variety of topics put together in a disjointed way with varying emphasis depending upon which elementary school he attended. Whereas the high school mathematics teacher can assume that each student has some background in the fundamental operations of arithmetic, manipulation of fractions, etc., the high school science teacher can assume no similar foundation on which to build. Even though one school may teach the so-called modern math and another uses the traditional approach, they never the less both use basically the same teaching method of problem solving.

In science the student is not so fortunate. In one grade he is subjected to the lecture method of instruction, in another he uses the laboratory method of student experimentation, in a third grade he is allowed to solve scientific problems posed by the teacher, himself, or his classmates. In still another grade the teacher may skillfully correlate science with other subjects by means of report writing, arithmetic word problems, book reports, speeches, etc. Students from one elementary school may have a good background in biology but know nothing about chemistry, while others may be well versed in levers and pulleys but incapable of locating the Big Dipper in the night sky. Most of them know very little about the methods of science or the development of this body of knowledge. Some grow to like the subject and would like to make it a career, but they have only a vague idea of the kind of work a scientist does, and even less knowledge of the variety of fields of specialization which are possible. Other students are so con-

fused that they are happy to complete the minimum requirements in science, and hope they never hear the word again.

This problem is not unique for the student making the transition from elementary to secondary schools, but undoubtedly repeats as he moves on to college a few years later. As teachers we do not want to be bound by a set curriculum imposed upon us, such as the syllabus to which a teacher must adhere in some states; however, we also realize that a coordinated program from kindergarten through college is a more effective way of educating than the chaotic situation in which we often find ourselves.

Last year the chemistry department of Calvin College invited the high school chemistry teachers of the area to a curriculum conference. At this meeting some of the minimum requirements for a high school college preparatory chemistry course were discussed. Similar meetings have been held at Calvin in the field of biology with reportedly good results. Meetings of this type would undoubtedly be profitable on an elementary-junior high-senior high level also. Their purpose should be not to dictate what should be taught at each grade level, but rather to agree to a minimum curriculum for each year and discuss approaches and methods of teaching various topics.

Many schools, especially high schools, have equipment which could be borrowed by others; thus, more experimenting and demonstrating could be done without increasing costs. Most large public school systems employ science curriculum coordinators to guide programs of this type, but this probably is not necessary with the limited size of most of our schools.

To find time for meetings of this type is, of course, a problem in a busy schedule. Perhaps some of the time we already spend in professional meetings discussing generalities which frequently develop into nothing could be redirected into curriculum-building sessions with greater profit. Some of this work could be done at the individual school level, but also in a broader way at the M.C.T.A. convention. This section of the CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL is also ready to publish any suggestions which would be helpful to other teachers to improve their science curriculum.





From Pebble-Pups to Weather-Watchers: YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES IN FOURTH GRADE SCIENCE

Hermine Bos†

The hills swarmed with energetic fourth-graders intent on finding a variety of rocks. The scene was an abandoned gravel pit. The resource person from the museum who accompanied us had set up a table of specimens. Now there were excited cries of, "Look! She says this is gneiss," "Look at all the shale I found!" or a rather disgusted, "another piece of quartzite!"

The pupils had been given a background for this field trip. It all began one morning when we passed around specimens of sedimentary rock. By seeing, feeling, and smelling we had discovered what these rocks are made of and where they had probably formed. Then we posed the question: If sand, clay, and pebbles were mixed together in a stream as it flowed into a lake, would the various kinds of soil form in layers, and, if so, what could settle first? second? third? Children volunteered to bring in the various kinds of soil. At a later session we arranged the soil in jars (putting the layers in a different order in each), added water,

shook the jars, and let the contents settle. Afterward we wrote a class report on our experiment. We included materials used, procedure, and results. We drew a picture to illustrate the results.

A demonstration with a tube of toothpaste had shown what happens when magma moves beneath the earth's surface and when it pours through an opening in the earth's crust. Thus the children were introduced to igneous and metamorphic rock. We used a hand lens to discover the kinds of minerals found in some of these rocks.

Our study of rocks and minerals made us more appreciative of God's creation. We stopped to marvel as we read about the formation of canyons and great limestone caverns.

The unit was concluded with a study of crystals. Many of the children made alum crystals. Together we made coral-like crystals. We read Revelation 21 to see how God used the beauty of gems to describe the beauties of the New Jerusalem.

* * *

One day I asked a child to move the piano. Although he expended considerable energy he was not able to budge the heavy object. This led to many questions: Although

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John expended a lot of energy, did he do any work? What is work? Why couldn't John move the piano? Is it easier to move an object on wheels? Why?

Through a pursuit of questions like these we found out about the scientist's definition of work, about friction, the laws of motion. We saw that God has given man an inventive mind so that he can invent tools and machines to make his work easier, and He has provided us with sources of energy.

A committee studied each of the six simple machines. Each group found examples of their machine, wrote reports, made charts, and conducted demonstrations. Children with manual skills constructed "machines". We tried to find out how each type of machine works and how it makes work easier: Does it increase force? increase speed? change the direction of force?



After the Christmas holidays we studied the heavens. The stars that led the Wise Men was a good opening for a discussion. At this time of the year the winter constellations are especially beautiful and easy to find. Some children like to make "telescopes" out of round cartons or to prick star patterns on paper to be used on the overhead projector. Bible references to Orion and the Pleiades point out the greatness of God and the frailty of man. GOD'S STARS is a helpful book to use with this unit. We also used Sara Teasdale's "Stars" for she reminds us that we are

--"honored to be
Witness of so much majesty."

We studied the solar system. The many articles about our moon, appearing in newspapers these days, made news reporting a natural part of this study. A trip to the Planetarium was a highlight of the unit.

* * *

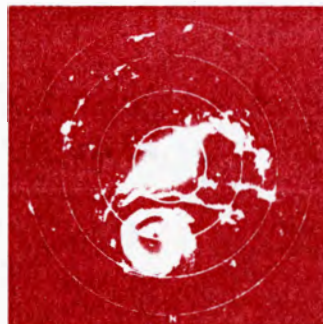
Spring is the time for much weather activity. There are tornadoes and other storms. This is a good time to introduce a weather unit. Again the topics to be studied lend themselves to group work: air, the water cycle, clouds, forms of precipitations, the Weather Bureau, weather instruments. As each group reports it is the teacher's responsibility to stress basic concepts. As with units previously studied, there are many excellent film-strips which help to drive home these concepts.

What does the weather tell us about God? Children respond to this question with many ideas. They can also cite examples from the Bible of how God used the weather as a special blessing or as a form of punishment.

Many poems have been written about weather. "Rainbow" and "God Is Like This" are especially appropriate.

* * *

We have the Singer Science Series but utilize many source books to teach the four major units assigned to



A meteorologist's view
of the eye of a hurricane
as seen on weather radar

fourth grade in our course of study. We also study Living Things. This gives the teacher freedom to utilize the slugs brought in after a rainy night or the toad brought along on the rock field trip to originate studies in nature.

Conservation should be stressed throughout the year. This summer I enjoyed a week at Conservation Camp on Higgins Lake. (Michigan teachers may apply to the Conservation Department for a scholarship.) Many dedicated people presented lectures and conducted field trips on the various phases of conservation. We were given teaching materials and suggestions. It was agreed that, although units on conservation may prove worthwhile, the most important way of teaching conservation is to make use of every opportunity that presents itself. We believe in Christian stewardship. How important that we teach our pupils the wisest use of our resources so that these resources will benefit the greatest number of people for the longest possible time.



¹ Fritz A. Callies, *GOD'S STARS*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1960.

Observing, Recording, Generalizing:

A METHOD OF TEACHING SCIENCE

Johanna Last†

USE AND ABUSE OF TEXTBOOK

Science is one subject which will not lend itself to text book teaching if the teaching is to stimulate anything other than recall on the part of the students. Is this the reason we hear so much complaint among elementary teachers about this science text and about that one, whether it be the most recent publication or one in use for the last five years? Perhaps science texts are not meant to be used in the same way as, let us say, the arithmetic text. Have we tried to use them for something they were not intended, and therefore have found them "inadequate"? Since the science text, at least for the elementary grades, does not supply all the answers and does not tell the teacher exactly what to say and when, it seems to me it is not meant to be regarded as a master which says, "Follow me, page by page, step by step." It is possible that the science text would serve better as an AID to help us construct our program for the year.

Not one but several texts will figure in the teacher's long-range planning. If the teacher knows the topics he is expected to teach during the year, the various texts will be of great help to him in formulating the skeleton of his program. When he has perused them for problems, questions, experiments, and teaching aids available, they become part of the classroom library to be used when students are involved in research. Needless to say, the teacher and the students will need other reference books, in spite of the fact that classroom texts have been carefully written for the particular age group. Having four to six copies of various recommended texts will eliminate the method of requesting the students to read a chapter silently or orally, assigning the questions at the end of the chapter, and testing on the facts learned. We recognize that this method of teaching causes stagnation of real learning, dulls the teacher's enthusiasm, not to mention that of the student, and can scarcely be worthy of a Christian teacher's objectives in teaching science. So much for the use and abuse of science texts.

LEARNING BY OBSERVING

Are there other and better ways to teach science? God gave us eyes to see and fingers to touch, ears to listen, and noses with which to smell. Wouldn't this indicate that observation, the use of our senses, could play a larger part

in our science periods for intermediates? Did you ever bring a live crayfish into your room and ask each child or pair of children to write down everything they observed? Did you ever observe the construction of a spider's web? Have you taken your students outside on a morning when big flakes of snow fell silently on their jackets, while with magnifying glasses in hand they tried to see the design of a snowflake and capture a bit of its rare beauty? Observing, using our senses, coupled with recording and generalizing can make for profitable learning.

Does this kind of teaching, often known as the project method, scare you? I would be less than truthful if I said that it is easy. Instead, it must be said that the teacher's knowledge of the subject background must go beyond that of the pupil's. Added to this, there must be careful preparation before a project is launched, and once the initial stages are past, the teacher must remain in complete control of all that takes place. The teacher is indispensable because he is really the mainspring of the learning situations provided. There is no withdrawing or leaving it up to the students. The teacher should make sure that these children are observing, learning to find material relative to the subject from reference books and other sources, learning to read simple graphs and maps (and at times making their own-not copying), and learning to follow printed and oral directions. We all recognize these study skills and their value in the pursuit of knowledge.

PROJECTS WHICH POINT TO GOD

For the Christian teacher there must be preparation beyond the horizontal level. This cannot be accomplished without knowledge of the Scripture and the Word who said, "I am the truth." Always to be God centered-always consciously desiring that my students will not see me but that my message, "Behold your God!", will by the Spirit be written on their consciousness - this is my task!

Thinking about some of the topics which have elicited good response from fifth graders, I remember the project on "Weather" and another concerning conservation which we called, "Using and Preserving God's Gifts". I realize these both have to do with the world around us, but they offer much opportunity for observation, they are both projects in which the child of every ability level in the classroom can participate, and the Christian teacher will find the emphasis in each project points to God, His intricate and masterful creation, His laws whereby today we can probe

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the outer space, His beauty expressed in color, design and formation, His generosity in the abundance of water, trees, soil, level land, metals, precious stones, etc. Added to the above advantages, is the wide range of possibilities for exploring or observing. The teacher can use her creative ability in structuring the program for her particular group, and the students will have latitude of expression in various ways.

A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE

Perhaps I can illustrate by mentioning a few of the observations and recordings which a group of fifth graders carried out in a study of "Weather" during the month of April. These are some of the recordings:

1. Barometer readings were observed and recorded at 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. each day.
2. Wind direction and velocity were recorded at 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. each school day.
3. Weather reports from the daily paper were clipped and posted for each day of the month.
4. Two outdoor thermometers at different locations were read and recorded each day at 9:00 A.M., 12:00 noon, and 3:00 P.M.
5. The time of sunrise and sunset for each day was recorded on a chart. From this we learned to subtract problems involving hours and minutes. Increase in the minutes of daylight for each day and the total for the entire month was recorded.
6. The highest and lowest temperatures in the U.S. were recorded.

The barometer became a kind of forecaster, and all students observed frequently during the month that a rising barometer brought clearing weather and a falling barometer warned of change and a possibility of indoor recess tomorrow!

The boys made weather vanes, and placed them on the school. Standing outside facing the wind one April morning we thought the thermometer must be mistaken. It wasn't. We learned that there is such a thing as the wind chill factor. Observing the passing of low and high pressure cells from the daily weather reports was not easy, but we noted that they generally moved from west to east.

We decided that weather is a big subject. It took an infinite God to think and execute the intricacies of what we so simply call weather.

The foregoing is only a partial sketch of this project. It was not my purpose to outline it completely, rather I cite it in order to serve as an illustration of the value and use of observation, recording, and generalizing in the teaching of science. Such teaching cannot be dull. Every year different things happen, different things are learned.

A CONSERVATION PROJECT

"Using and Preserving God's Gifts" is something fifth graders can appreciate if the teacher is "letting her light shine" in regard to this important topic of conservation whether this be in the subject of science, geography, history, or reading. What a topic to use in the spring of the year! Water, soil, lumber, scenic beauty, natural resources, may come in for consideration. You can't teach it all, but teach you must. This is a wonderful topic to help children see the Christian's responsibility in the use and the preserving of God's gifts in nature. Some very practical discussions ought to take place in the classroom in regard to that camping trip planned for this summer. Do we sometimes take too much for granted? Do our children know how to respect the Creator's creation.

Children seem to know so little about what is so near to them. In the spring we spend a little time, in connection

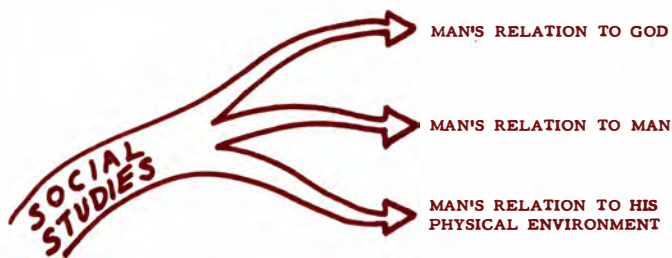
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John Bronsema, Department Editor

THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES



Paul Mulder†

This short resume is not written to extol the virtues of a social studies fused program versus the discipline of history, geography, etc., but to get some basic thinking on the social studies of our schools. The following emphases could apply to both the fused and the discipline concepts of social studies.

It is our duty as teachers to help the student realize his responsibilities to his God, family, neighborhood, community, nation, and world so that he knows he has a role to play, now and forever. Our first goal or aim is NOT NECESSARILY teaching facts with reference to our community, our nation, or our world, but to prepare our pupils to accept the responsibility of their hometown, U.S.A., Canada, and the world. (By stating this principle we are not denying the importance of factual instruction. However, factual instruction does not necessarily develop a sense of responsibility.) A concerned citizen on the other hand would certainly feel the need for facts. Thus these facts are remembered best when they are learned in relationship to one's responsibilities as a citizen.

Our professional leadership, combined with child interest and child needs, should be the main determiners of our emphases, so that by the time our young people enter high school they have the best possible background for knowledge, cultural opportunity, and social living. Of course we realize

that the school is but one of the agencies responsible for the education of and the development of the student into a well-informed citizen of this life and the next.

Other important considerations in the teaching of social studies are the following:

1. Instruction should always begin with life in relation to the community in which you are teaching. Teachers should be familiar with local history.
2. To be effective we should gear our instruction so that it begins again and again with the well known and moves back and forth from that area to the new or more distant things in time and space.
3. In our teaching we should be WELL ORGANIZED with our instruction centering in units around topics that are meaningful; organizations takes place not only as teachers but complete school systems. (Every teacher in an elementary school should not have a unit on Indiana.)
4. Social studies can also be used as the focal point to focus our attention on social situations which can be used for planned social education in our schools. Beginning in the grades and continuing through all the years of formal schooling, much emphasis should be given to SOCIAL LIVING as well as to SOCIAL STUDIES.

Many different methods and techniques can be used to develop and maintain social understandings, habits, and attitudes. A few suggestions that may make your year of social studies teaching more profitable are:

1. Use the social studies program as the core of your curriculum so that you can embody all of life's situations into your complete program.
2. Put an emphasis on living in God's world in your instruction.
3. Always be flexible in your instruction so that you can provide for special needs of individuals or groups.
4. Always be willing to pass along to other teachers and principals ideas that will enhance a school's program so that all students may benefit.

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Teaching Geography with Textbook as Complement

Henry Otte†

Iraq is very similar to Iran. Denmark is very much like the Netherlands. Should students spend time reading an assignment in a geography textbook about Iraq, after they have studied Iran?

The minerals of Austria are zinc, magnesite, manganese, and copper. Czechoslovakia has the same resources. Should students spend time memorizing these facts?

Japan's agricultural products are wheat, barley, potatoes, vegetables, fruits, tea, and mulberry trees. Should students be asked to remember this list or should they be encouraged to study the topographical and climate conditions?

Junior high students are interested in geography. Their curiosity has been aroused by magazines, newspapers, television, and the activity of missionaries. Geography teachers have succeeded in subduing this interest by insisting that the student memorize the natural resources, agricultural products, manufactured products, and other isolated facts.

We have a textbook of four-hundred and fifty pages which must be read and the students must answer ten questions a week. This schedule leaves no time for students to ask questions that are important to them. The pupil is required to read and memorize, but is not required to apply the known facts to a new situation.

INDEPENDENT THINKING

In an attempt to get the student to do more independent thinking and less memorizing of isolated facts, I used the following plan. The objectives of teaching about God's creation to God's creatures remain consistent.

The geography class should have the following aids to develop their learning. Each student should receive the Junior Scholastic magazine, or a paper similar to it. Each pupil needs a geography textbook. Approximately ten geography textbooks to be used as reference books should be in the room. Individual maps, wall maps, and globes are necessary. Pictures should be used on the bulletin board or on the opaque projector.

The publisher of the Junior Scholastic will, upon request, issue a schedule of the countries to be presented. I suggest the teacher base his unit plans on the magazine schedule. The magazine is a weekly; therefore, one country is presented a week. This schedule allows ample time for discussion of the presented country and countries related to it.

The following general outline can be used for study of any geographical area. Introduce the country by having the

students locate it on maps and globes. If the students clearly understand the legend of a physical map and have a working knowledge of the climate regions of the world, they can learn much about geography without the textbook.

HYPOTHESIS FORMING

On the basis of knowledge the students have and after studying a map the students should be able to form hypotheses or a list of guesses about the conditions of each country. The guesses and the hypotheses should be done individually and recorded by the pupil in order to later check his accuracy.

Continue the study of the country by critically evaluating pictures in the textbook, Junior Scholastic, and ref-



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erence books. Allow the student to make either oral or written observations.

Next assign the reading of the article. The reading assignment must be varied by using study guides and oral reading. Map questions and map study can be included.

After the article is read the students can discuss the accuracy of their hypotheses or guesses. An attempt should be made to explain where and why their reasoning failed.

The pupil should have enough information to now discuss one of the fundamental objectives of geography. That objective is an understanding of how the creature has used the aids and overcome the handicaps in the Creator's creation.

After the pupil has thoroughly studied one country in an area, he should be able to form a new hypothesis and form logical conclusions about the neighboring countries. Again lead each student to list or orally present his hypothesis by simply having the pupil write what he knows about a country. Time spent in this process of reasoning is more valuable than mere reading and answering questions in the textbook. The student is involved in the work because he himself is right or wrong.

Do not require your students to read every page in the textbook. Do not emphasize memorization of lists.

Do obtain conclusions based on facts. Do attempt to have the student relate what he knows to the unknown.

The advantages of using the Junior Scholastic instead of the textbook for most reading assignments are:

1. The pupils are actively involved in the class room work.
2. Repetitious reading is eliminated.
3. Facts must be used, but must be applied rather than merely memorized.
4. Students are required to form conclusions.
5. Independent thinking is encouraged.
6. Poor readers are encouraged because there is much oral work.
7. The pupils obtain a better idea of relationships and location of countries from constant referral to the neighboring countries.
8. There is an opportunity for pupils to ask questions and present opinions.
9. The teacher does not rely on the textbook; instead, he places the subject matter in the Christian perspective.

The disadvantages of this method are:

1. The Junior Scholastic lacks good map exercises; therefore, the textbook must be used.
2. The Junior Scholastic emphasizes political aspects and terms which create a lack of fundamental geographical terms.

A Christian Philosophy of Social Studies

K. Julia Cutler†

Social Studies is that area of the elementary school curriculum which deals with man-man in relationship to other men, both past and present, and man in relationship to his physical environment. While many of man's needs can be supplied by his physical environment, yet virtually all of them are met as he engages in some type of relationship with other men. These relationships range from those proceeding on a man to man basis and extend to those including man to group, and group to group relationships involving nations, races, and the institutions of the society. The manner in which man expresses all of his relationships-both to society and to the physical universe-is determined not only by his background and skills but largely by his system of values.

The term, Social Studies, as it is used today draws upon many fields of knowledge: the traditional subjects of history, geography and civics and other social sciences such as economics, sociology, political science, anthropology,

social psychology and philosophy. Basic concepts from these fields of knowledge are integrated for the purpose of guiding the child so that he will develop the understandings, the attitudes and skills that will help him to be a responsible citizen who makes worthwhile contributions to society.

What then is distinctive about a Christian's philosophy of Social Studies? It is his perspective which results from the vertical relationship-God to man and man to God; and this perspective in turn influences his system of values. As the Christian delves into the "social studies", he not only understands himself and other men as members of the human race, but he respects man because he is made in the image of God. He realizes that fallen man, whose image of God is marred by sin, has been unable to establish proper relationships with other men and that he has too often sought to exploit the natural resources of the world. But he appreciates also how God has controlled the lives of men and has overruled men's mistakes to bring good out of them.

When the Christian beholds the natural world, he sees it as God's creation which reflects His nature and design. Thus the order and pattern evidenced in the seasons, the planetary wind system and the climatic regions are more than the laws of nature; they are the laws of God who made them and controls them. Finally the Christian realizes that as he, by the help of God, controls his physical environment and applies the ethical standards of the Bible to his varied

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relationships among men to the end that he lives to the glory of God, he is fulfilling the cultural mandate which God gave to the first man, Adam.

It is expected in the teaching of Social Studies, as in the instruction of other subjects, that the teacher will guide the child so that he makes his own commitment in terms of real life; and the laws of learning will be adapted to the child's level of understanding. The respect for man, who is made in the image of God, demands that pedagogical techniques be consistent with the philosophy of the subject of Social Studies.

References which have influenced my thinking are as follows: The Holy Bible; Doll, Ronald C., CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENT: DECISION-MAKING AND PROCESS. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1964; Jarolimek, John, SOCIAL STUDIES IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959; LeBar, Lois E., EDUCATION THAT IS CHRISTIAN. Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1958; National Union of Christian Schools, COURSE OF STUDY FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS. Grand Rapids, Michigan: National Union of Christian Schools. 1953; Ragan, Wm. B. and McAulay, John D., SOCIAL STUDIES FOR TODAY'S CHILDREN. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964; Taba, Hilda, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT: THEORY AND PRACTICE. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962; Zylstra, Henry, TESTAMENT OF VISION. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.



Dear Sir:

In the December CEJ, Bob Swierenga suggests that "Book Burning Is Not the Answer" to the many propagandistic and otherwise error-infested high school history texts. Mr. Swierenga also illustrates some of the "discredited legends and outworn viewpoints" that would give reason to disqualify a text. For such careful and worthwhile scholarship, thank you, Bob.

But Dr. Swierenga answers the "what-CRITERIA" question thus: "The primary consideration, I believe, should rather be the extent to which a text reflects the latest and best scholarship." A bit later he asks, "How do the texts now used

in Christian high schools measure up to modern scholarship?" Again, one text is labeled "less than objective" and another "far above average in its scholarship and objectivity."

Mr. Swierenga rightly anticipates the assertion that the objectivity of the historian is a delusion--that the selection and interpretation of events depends on one's theology, one's philosophy, one's sphere of human culture, the antithesis exists and determines: the historian is either FOR Christ or AGAINST Him, either true to God's Biblical revelation of the Fall, sin, Christ as the crux of history in His death and bodily resurrection, God as Sovereign Creator and Provider, ruling and shaping all things according to His eternal plan, and regenerating and sanctifying His chosen by the Holy Spirit, OR the historian repudiates--by scorn or silence--these cardinal truths and posits a sham reality, holding (down) the truth of God in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18).

"Christian idealism," continues Mr. Swierenga, "is again being restored to its rightful place in our nation's history ... in the newer high school textbooks." And he supports his conclusion with the excerpted phrase: "the spread of evangelical religion such as Methodism." But neither this quotation nor a reference to President Woodrow Wilson's prayer for God's help (mentioned in two history texts) even BEGINS to satisfy the epistemologically self-conscious demand of Christian teachers and students for historical truth: for a Biblically based philosophy of history in which the fear of the Lord (and that

means specifically the Triune God as presented in His inspired, infallible, inerrant Word) is the beginning--or essence--of wisdom.

The "Christian idealism" that Dr. Swierenga cites, however, is insidiously and radically opposed to the bloody Offense of the Cross--Christ as the legally-murdered Sin-bearer and the ONLY Way, Truth, and Life for depraved men who acknowledge their sin by the grace of God. Today's "Christian idealism" is humanism, secularism, neutralism, humanitarianism, moral evolutionism--all slightly variant forms of anthropocentric heart-allegiance to the idol (and damning folly) of autonomous man.

"As teachers of excellence" we must choose our texts carefully, concludes Mr. Swierenga. I agree, but excellence is not, first of all, "modern scholarship" or "objectivity." The essential and ultimate excellence is our Christian commitment as it gives the only true interpretation to history; for, though it will be sin-flawed in some details, in its fundamentals the Christian explanation of temporal events will be based on the unshakeable doctrines taught by the Scriptures (for example, no facts are brute facts or neutral facts, but all facts are God created and ordained facts)--"That they may know the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (Col. 2:2-3). See also I Cor. 1:18-24; I Cor. 3:11-14; and Col. 1:16-20.

As a student said to me recently: "If you don't have a CHRISTIAN philosophy of history, you CAN'T SAY A THING about history! And if you don't have a CHRISTIAN philosophy of literature, you CAN'T SAY A THING about literature!" He's right of course. And, just as certainly, the same is true of EVERY subject.

Therefore, I challenge Christian scholars all to take a sabbatical from their preoccupation with the relative superficialities of supposedly objective facts and presumably innocuous secular theories: empirical, pragmatic, existential, whatever. Let us dedicatedly rediscover the principal teachings of Scripture, the law structures of God in our various fields of study, and the essentiality of our Re-formationally Biblical theology as we begin to formulate and apply our Christian philosophies in each subject of God's curriculum. Then, with men like Bill Hendricks, we all can begin to write unashamedly Christian textbooks addressed to the hearts and souls of our students, rather than merely to their abstracted intellects.

"For by Him were all things created...: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Col. 1:16-17).

Merle Meeter
Sioux Center, Iowa



Dear Merle,

Your call to arms is well taken. We as Christian educators should attempt always to relate our religious commitment to our individual disciplines. To do this in an explicit and effective way is no easy task, as any teacher reading this journal can attest. Whether or not Christian textbooks at the secondary level are essential is a moot point. Presumably the teacher is in the classroom to cast the facts in a Christian perspective. A Christian textbook might be a valuable aid, provided (1) that it would not supplant or stifle the initiative and creativity of the individual teacher to grapple with the subject matter as a Christian, and (2) that an adequate text could be written. Past experience is hardly encouraging on this point, at least in the area of American history. The frequent attempts to formulate Christian, and more recently, "theological" interpretations of our nation's past have been most unsatisfactory, in my opinion. Readers wishing to judge for themselves can begin with C. Gregg Singer, A THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF AMERICAN HISTORY (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1964); Tim J. Campbell, CENTRAL THEMES IN AMERICAN LIFE (Eerdmans, 1959); R. J. Rushdoony, THE NATURE OF THE AMERICAN SYSTEM (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1965) and THIS INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1964); and the older work of Garrett Heyns and Gerritt E. Roelofs, CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION OF AMERICAN HISTORY: A manual for History teachers (NUCS, 1928), which was designed specifically for high school use.

My article, of course, was not directed either to the subject of a Christian interpretation of American history or the writing of a Christian text at the secondary level. No such book is presently in prospect. We must choose, therefore, from among the current crop of commercial texts. That these vary considerably in quality and the incorporation of contemporary scholarship, we all recognize. In my article I simply tried to illustrate to my colleagues in the high schools one method of reevaluating their present text. The fact that nine N.U.C.S. schools last year were still using the antiquated Muzzey text is proof enough that some reassessment is necessary. The Christian scholar, after all, should be interested in excellence, and in the context in which I was writing--the evaluation of secular texts--excellence is first of all the latest and best scholarship. When you demur at this and declare that "the essential and ultimate excellence is our Christian commitment" you raise an issue with which I was not dealing and also one on which we already agree. Your comments are nonetheless appreciated and may stimulate others to voice their opinions on these vital issues.

Robert P. Swierenga
Grand Rapids, Michigan



Grace Huitsing, Department Editor

The Point of Urgency: the Seed-Idea

D. Gordon Rohman†

"Is it possible to get real involvement of students with their writing and teachers with their students' writing, and if so, would this sort of involvement make possible the writing of better essays?" Dr. D. Gordon Rohman and his associates at Michigan State University made these questions the basis for an experimental course in composition under a grant by the Cooperative Research Program of H.E.W. (1964) "By putting into the hands of the student the means to participate in the very process and experience of the activity called 'writing,' we hoped to make this involvement real and his writing better."† In the early weeks of the course, models were used to aid students in re-structuring their commonplace perspectives, in helping them to see what happens when they deliberately alter their angle of vision toward a subject. Then there comes a point of urgency to write. The following paper discusses work which can lead to the organically developing essay, personally conceived. — Editor

In our continuing discussion of the principle of re-structuring, we dealt with this question: which of the many perspectives a writer can discover should he use for the production of an essay? This question led us to our notion of "the point of urgency"--that point in the pre-writing stages where a subject is suddenly seen through a personally compelling perspective, where in the light of such a perspective a writer finds himself wanting to say things about his subject, and where, as his inner motivation grows it becomes crucially important for him not to be

misunderstood. From a more external point of view, the "point of urgency" occurs when a writer has discovered his "seed-idea"--that fusion of subject and perspective which seems to make the essay "go", that single idea which calls forth other ideas and seems to promise a way of organizing the essay into a coherent whole. "The Archtype of the Plant" summarized from Abrams' discussion of the organic theory of composition in his *MIRROR AND THE LAMP*, provided us with a theoretical paradigm useful for a discussion of how a "seed-idea" can grow into a whole essay. The essay is not to be seen in external fashion: as an aggregate of materials, as an outline of general topics somehow filled out with illustrating detail. Instead, the essay should be seen as an expression of the mind's act of consequential thinking. The "seed-idea" is that idea which has sufficient potency to beget other ideas, each idea then having the power to develop inevitably (and not necessarily logically) into additional ideas, some of which may have the power, like a plant, of assimilating to their "own substance alien and diverse elements," of revealing surprising areas of statement that can be included in the total organism of the essay. Moreover, and most importantly, the "achieved structure" of the essay is to be regarded as an "organic unity": the whole of the essay, though owing "its being to the coexistence of parts," is still prior and primary." No single idea in such an essay is sufficient for meaning in itself; each both contributes to, and is dependent upon, the total meaning the essay is striving to establish in words. The student, therefore, should never regard the mere accumulation of words into sentences, of sentences into paragraphs, as the way in which an essay is written. He must, first of all, discover that single compelling insight, that "seed-idea," that organizing concept which will



†From *PRE-WRITING, THE CONSTRUCTION AND APPLICATION OF MODELS FOR CONCEPT FORMATION IN WRITING*, D. Gordon Rohman, Albert O. Wlecke, C.R.P., No. 2174. Director of an NDEA Institute at Michigan State University in 1965 and participant in 1966, Dr. Rohman has addressed Michigan English teachers and the Language Arts Workshop at Calvin College. He is now head of the Justin Morrill College, a new resident college at Michigan State University.

then "grow into" language, be realized in the extended sentences and paragraphs of a developing essay.

We then analyzed Bacon's "Of Studies" as an illustration of an organically developed essay. While there was obviously no way of recovering the particular psychological "events" which went into the production of this work, it did seem possible to analyze the statements and progression of the realized essay from the point of view of organic form. We showed our students that while Bacon's subject is "studies," his perspective upon it, that angle of vision which compels his subject into development, is the question of the USE of studies. From this "seed-idea," this fusion of subject and perspective in the opening words of the essay ("Studies serve"), everything else in the essay follows; everything else is subservient to the growth in meaning of this opening statement. This was illustrated through an elaborate diagram.



According to what we know of Bacon's life and other writings, he was intensely concerned with the practical application of theoretical speculations, and especially with the question of how man might exert his power, gained from knowledge, upon his environment. This personally urgent concern, we suggested, colored his entire treatment of his subject; and was perhaps the general matrix out of which came the particular "point of urgency" behind this essay.

THE MEDITATION EMBODIES THE SEED-IDEA

Our students were then directed into the discipline of the meditation as a way both of finding for themselves a "seed-idea" and of possibly producing an organically coherent essay. As an introduction to this discipline, we analyzed Donne's "Devotion XVII" from his DEVOTIONS UPON EMERGENT OCCASIONS. We first showed how Donne effects his composition of place: he is lying ill in bed and he hears the tolling of a funeral bell. This "place" is converted into a situation charged with rhetorical energy by the question Donne raises: for whom does this bell toll? And this question, in turn, leads Donne into a consideration of the problems of the meaning of death, suffering, salvation, the church, and the relation among men in the church. Throughout his treatment of these problems, Donne implicitly reverts to a description of the nature of the church derived from St. Paul: that the church is the "mystical body" of Christ, and all men who belong to the church are "members of this body". From this essential visualization of the church's nature, Donne drew parallel analogies ("No man is an island...every man is a piece of the continent," etc.); and he also extracts the answer to his opening question: as all men share in a common identity as members of the "universal" church, so any funeral bell, no matter for whom it may specifically be tolling, tolls for all men. We characterize this meditation as beginning in a dramatic situation, as then posing a personal question about the meaning of this situation, and as exploring answers to this question by the use of structuring analogies derived from theological premises. The meditation begins in a composition

of place, proceeds through analysis, and concludes with Donne's personal resolution of "making my resource to God, who is our only security."

Students were directed to write a 500-word meditation on the subject of "Loneliness." They were told to resist the immediate temptation, succumbed to by so many undergraduate writers, to begin with a conceptual analysis of the subject. Instead, they were directed to begin their approach by asking personally relevant questions: "How is it when I am lonely?" "What do I see, hear, taste, when I am lonely?" "What situation stands out in my memory as the loneliest of my life?" "What physical sensations did I have at that time?" In short, they were directed to use their memories in a construction of a dramatic scene embodying their experience, not their concept, of loneliness. After this composition of place, they were told to apply their understanding in an attempt to analyze the meaning of this experience...They were directed to ask leading, not concluding questions of themselves: "What were some of the causes of the loneliness which I experienced?" "How is it that at some times I can be alone and not really be lonely, and at this time I was lonely, even though (perhaps) a member of a group?" ...We also suggested that the students, following the model of Donne, take some concrete thing from the composed scene and use it as a point of reference around which to organize their analysis, or even as a structuring image whereby they might visualize the pattern of their more abstract analysis. (Thus one student used the room in which she was lonely as an image of the way she had shut off her thoughts and feelings from an active concern with others.) Finally, students were told to make an act of the will, to form some resolution concerning their behavior, this resolution to be based upon what they had discovered about themselves in their analysis.

We hoped by this method to insure that the perspective which a student might finally take upon the subject of loneliness would be genuinely his perspective, genuinely involved in a personal "point of urgency." We also hoped that the method might provoke a student into writing what we have described as an organically developing essay.



—Carroll in Ohio Farm Bureau News

"YOU MEANT 'WHOM,' DIDN'T YOU?"

DISCERNMENT, NOT CENSORSHIP

Greta Rey†



Each week brings new concerns to the educator -- grading, updating the curriculum, intra-school relationships, and communicating with parents. A recurring problem is the one of censorship.

"Well," the elementary teacher may say, "at least that one doesn't worry me. I'm busy with the basal readers and texts, and am safe if I stick with the books in our school library."

Censorship is NOT her immediate concern. Further, she lives in an age when complete censorship has become impossible; and she may feel that censorship is an unacceptable answer for the mature Christian. Yet if each Christian is required to be his own critic, choosing and evaluating books, the elementary teacher must accept a responsibility greater than that of being a censor. She must initiate a continuing process of helping children become critical Christian readers.

CRITICAL READING BEGINS EARLY

The idea of teaching to read critically is not new; most basal readers mention it, although few fully develop it. It should indeed be part of a comprehensive program that requires more planning and positive action than most elementary teachers attempt. Keep in mind in considering

the proposals here presented that critical reading does not mean avoiding everything non-Christian; rather it means applying criteria which are his as a thoughtful and sensitive Christian. Guiding a child's development toward the emergence of an independent mature Christian reader is the goal of a spiraling program begun by the elementary teacher.

A necessary beginning of the program is teaching the basic reading skills so that the child derives meaning from what he reads based on his own experiences, is further able to stretch his imagination, increases his experience vicariously, and gains new facts. Concurrent with these, one can teach the child to distinguish various forms of writing -- factual accounts, realistic fiction, fantasy, humor, poetry, mood pieces. In the intermediate grades teaching to read with a purpose gains prominence -- reading for entertainment, information, direction in the world of ideas.

Then, in too many instances, the elementary program stops at this point. We have exposed children to good literature and have inspired a love for it, but too often the children think of it as entertainment which comes during the last weary moments of the day, or as something they can pick up in their spare time. When such children are thrust into junior high where they are expected to interpret literature, they are likely in frustration to reject it.

STORY TIME COUNTS

To teach children to read in depth calls for teacher guidance. The teacher should choose books for the purpose of discovering the theme, for studying motives of characters and solutions to their problems. Reading in depth calls



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for making references, discovering the author's purpose --perhaps his bias-- and the subtleties of style he uses to affect the reader. But one cannot stop here.

With teacher guidance in the lower grades and increasing independence in the upper grades, the child learns to read more critically. He chooses whether or not to identify with the characters or the author, and determines whether the author accomplished his purpose. He learns to look into his own heart as well as into the hearts of others, to compare his own values and experiences with those in books. And he judges the ideas of the story or poem against his own set of criteria.

A group of third graders completing a study of Christ's parables discovered the theme "Love thy neighbor." They followed this by reading several Aesop's Fables. But the themes of the fables are quite different. In them, might is right, the clever one gains at the expense of the stupid who is either exploited or punished, the individual is usually greedy and non-sharing, and is helpful only to be rewarded. When the children compared the fables with the parables, they concluded that Aesop's morals were not in keeping with the spirit of love. They saw that a Christian reads differently from others.

Teaching critical reading is a spiraling program, rather than sequential. From the primary grades on, all aspects are present in some form. In the lower grades we rely on reading aloud to children, soon moving into questioning, group discussion, dramatizing. In making reports, writing reviews, comparing books and poems, we move from group work to guided independent work until the reader asks himself the questions and is critical and discriminating on his own.

While little work has been done to devise a graded program for teaching critical reading through children's literature on the elementary level, most teachers have the talent, time and resources to work on it. Although it is only one of many means, group discussion of a story or poem is one of the most effective and enjoyable ways of teaching it. *PAVO AND THE PRINCESS* by Eveline Ness (New York: Scribners, 1964) was a favorite with one third-grade class. The teacher who asks leading questions, allows the discussion to be student-centered, and lets the children search for answers while feeling safe in telling their ideas, is well on the way to teaching critical reading.

LITERATURE DEMANDS DISCERNMENT

If literature study is treated as a way of thinking, teachers and students through the years will develop a usable set of criteria, thereby experiencing the essence of Christian education. What are some of the criteria of a Christian reader? As one reads, he asks himself: "As a Christian, whose purpose for existing is to glorify God and my neighbor, can I accept the author's premise or argument or resolving of the problem? What are my arguments against it? Is the self-centeredness or immorality presented by direct statement or inference as something destructive or undesirable, or is sin merely presented for its own sake or the reader's self-indulgence -- something that would smear his mind? Is the interpretation of life one I can accept? If I accept it, does it change me, spur me to action? Does it reinforce my basic beliefs? Does it expand my knowledge about myself, my God or my neighbor?"

Ultimately, the mature Christian reader will be a discriminating reader. He will choose on the basis of his critical powers those books which will broaden him personally without violating his standards. Acting as his own book

censor, he will, more importantly choose to either censor or assimilate ideas.

Elementary teachers, do not deny yourself the fun and tremendous satisfaction there is in teaching children to think, as Christians.



OBSERVING, RECORDING, GENERALIZING

(cont'd from page 19)

with the conservation project, learning about wild flowers. The bulletin board, my own slides, wild flower books and pictures, serve to tell us that hidden in the woods is beauty no one can afford to miss. If any wild flowers are brought into the room, they must be brought in large containers with the entire root system so that they can be replanted. Some beautiful day we will leave the school carrying our lunch bags, pencils, and paper. We head for the woods to see for ourselves what beauty God has made in the little things we neglect to see. We eat our lunch on a little knoll beneath a big oak tree, and after that begins our search. What excitement as we try to identify and record our findings. Teacher is much in demand as marsh marigolds, Dutchman's breeches, hepatica, ginger, blood root, various kind of violets, trillium, etc. are discovered. There are the mosses too, and to climax it all a scarlet tanager shows off his colors and remains nearby while we whisper about his dashing beauty. God must love colors; He was so generous in bestowing them.

Are we concerned about the learning taking place? Yes, we are. Not all students have profited in the same degree, but they have taken a step in the direction of more God-consciousness, and more concern for the little blue-bird, the tiny creeper, and the stately oak.

Our hope is that in the following grades these children will again visit the woods, study weather, ponder the problems of conservation in greater depth, in order that as citizens of the heavenly kingdom they may serve God on earth as thoughtful citizens in the community, state, and country, to help men make the best possible use of all God's wonderful gifts.



THE ARTS

Robert Achterhof, Department Editor

SCHOOL MUSIC: SOLID OR VAPOR?

Howard Slenk†

All college teachers have an interest in the teaching of their specialty at the secondary and elementary levels. In this article I wish to express my thoughts on music education in our Christian schools. These thoughts will take the form of answers to four questions:

1. What are the goals of music education, and have we met them?
2. If we have not achieved some of our goals, why not?
3. How could these goals best be met?
4. Why must they be met?

One of the goals in all music education is the preparation of professional musicians. In the liberal arts context that our colleges, grade and high schools, foster, this goal is not one of the most important, nor should it be. Nevertheless, a certain percentage of our students will choose music as a career, and we have a duty to them. Most of these students will enter college as music majors. In no other field is the gap between high school and college education as wide as it is in music. Any person with teaching experience in music theory or literature at the college level can testify that most high school graduates lack adequate preparation for the concepts they meet in Elementary Theory and in Introduction to Music Literature. Yet these courses, especially the first semester of theory, are so basic that they could easily be taught in the eighth grade. Instead, the teacher of first-year college theory has learned that he may assume nothing, not even the most rudimentary theoretical concepts, such as the pulse in six-eight time, or the minor key with a signature of two flats.

BOTH LISTENING TO AND MAKING MUSIC

Another goal in music education is the training of musically intelligent amateurs. To most of the students in our programs, music will be an avocation they will share with other members of the community. This avocation involves two main types of activity: listening to music at home or in concert, and making music, at home, in the church, and in community organizations. What skills and knowledge should our music program give students to prepare them for these activities?

In order to listen to music intelligently, a person must develop an understanding of the literature. This means an

analytical and historical grasp of what occurs in great music, and the ability to listen perceptively. Yet how many of our graduates are really able to follow a train of musical thought? One of the most subtle yet telling indictments of us as music teachers, is that so many of our products enjoy studying with soft classical music as a background. For these individuals, music has no meaning of its own, but is merely a background to conversation, homework, or daydreaming.

The second important community activity involves the making of music. Although we do not place much importance on the teaching of listening, certainly we do teach a lot of music making in our bands and choirs. But the question here is: how much of this training equips the student for a vital role in music once he has left the school? The band programs in some of our high schools and colleges are capable of turning out highly skilled instrumentalists. But where can these well-trained youngsters go with their ability once they leave the school band? A tradition of chamber wind ensembles is, unfortunately, not prevalent in modern society. One reason for this is that these ensembles are not encouraged by the colleges and high schools, which want big bands for display purposes. The playing of winds in ensemble that does go on outside the school systems is oriented toward the combination of winds with strings, in orchestras and in chamber groups. It is really quite selfish that schools have been so uninterested in preparing their instrumentalists for this kind of activity, aside from the fact that the repertoire is so vastly superior to that of the band.

The choral program in our school system has an advantage over the band in the availability of a better repertoire, although this advantage is not always exercised. Unlike the band, however, the choral program rarely turns out highly skilled musicians. Since sight singing is not taught

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¹ This is a condensation of a paper read on November 4 at the 1966 convention of the Midwest Christian Teachers Association. Copies of the complete paper can be obtained by writing the Department of Music, Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, Illinois 60463.



in most schools, choir members just do not learn how to read music well, but depend instead on rote teaching from the director. A student graduating from such a program cannot even become a strong member of a church choir because he cannot sight read. For that reason, good church choirs composed of amateurs are rare. The strongest members will probably be products of the band program, where music reading is a necessity. One simply cannot teach all those parts by rote. The member of the band is told to go home and learn his part, while the choir director teaches 4, 6, or 8 parts by rote, and the members never look at their music outside the rehearsal.

We can sum up our preparation of students for making music after they leave the schools with these words: We give our instrumentalists a skill on an instrument that they can rarely use later; and we fail to give our singers a skill that they could well use later.

MUSIC MUST PARTICIPATE IN INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

We have examined two goals of music education so far: the preparation for college music; and the preparation for musical activity in the community. There is, however, more to education than the preparation of individuals for specific roles in life. True education is relevant to the lives of intelligent men, no matter what career they choose. Consequently, we must do more than prepare students for the social situations examined in goals one and two. Our third goal must be the teaching of music not merely to reflect the human condition, but to influence it. Education in music must change people, not only by making them better players or singers, not only by giving them a wide range of historical facts. But music in education, like the six other liberal arts, must widen our humanness, give us keener insights into ourselves and into others, greater minds, and by this process, give us a deeper awareness of God and of His creation. In short, music must participate in intellectual formation -- that forming of a man's thinking as the result of contact with important ideas.

Under present conditions in our colleges and lower schools, music does not play a prominent part in the intellectual formation of the student. In the minds of most administrators, parents, and (alas) students, music is classified with cookery, shop, and driver's training, in the limbo between the so-called solids and the extra-curricular activities. I have chosen to call these in-between courses "vapors." Hence the title of this article. I believe that since almost all of the exposure to music that young people receive in our schools occurs outside of an academic atmosphere, that which we have taught them disappears like a vapor after they leave us.

REASONS FOR OUR FAILINGS

This is one of my answers to the second question posed in the opening paragraph: If we have not achieved

our goals, why not? The main reason is that in our Christian school systems, the emphasis is on the teaching of music in a performance situation. Most music programs consist of the rehearsal and performance of ensemble music, and very little else.

Someone will protest: "Isn't active participation in music part of one's intellectual development? Isn't it much more important for a student to make living music than to read about it in a book and listen to it on records?" This is a valid protest. An exclusively classroom-oriented approach to any art is unsatisfactory; it must be supplemented with practical experience, which in music is the development of musicianship through playing and singing. Playing and singing, however, are going to develop the intellect (that faculty in us that struggles with ideas) only if the student has first been exposed to the history of ideas in music and to the rudiments of musical construction. Musical performance can indeed find a place among humanistic studies, if in the rehearsal the student is exposed to the historical and technical ideas underlying the music. This is not being done in our elementary and secondary schools (and colleges, for that matter) because the students in our performing groups do not possess the technical skills or historical background to grasp the abstract ideas of music. The point is, therefore, that in our choirs and bands we are merely training the intelligence, not developing the intellect. And since our music programs consist of choirs and bands for the most part, music remains an outsider in schools where emphasis is laid primarily, and with justice, on intellectual develop-



ment. This is regrettable, for no other discipline can offer such a rich challenge to the mind in terms of its history, technical procedures, aesthetic import, and performance skills. No one should misunderstand here; performance is important. The point is that our students are severely limited in their performance ability because they lack training in the basic skills of music making, tools that would increase the efficiency of the school ensemble not only, but make its members vital participants in ensembles they join after leaving school. (A special weakness here is that choir members are not taught sight singing before they are allowed in the choir.) Furthermore, our students are limited in their ability to grasp the historical and aesthetic ideas in the music they perform because they have had no education in the ideas of music. Training in basic skills, and education in the ideas of music can best take place in an academic (classroom) situation. This our schools, and particularly the high schools, have largely ignored. Indeed, rather than move toward the creation of an academic atmosphere for music, parents and administrators seem bent on increasing the already imbalanced role that entertainment and public relations plays in the life of the performing organizations, especially the bands.

Many American musicians feel the need for a reappraisal of the repertoire and status of the college, high school, and grade school band. The College Music Society has expressed its views in the following resolution.

. . . .under present conditions school bands do not contribute with maximum effectiveness to the purpose of liberal education. . . . The Society recognizes the need for reappraisal of the status of bands and their repertoire. If a band is to contribute effectively to liberal education, all persons in authority need to distinguish between its inter-related functions of providing cultural experience for student members and audiences and of providing entertainment for large public masses. For the first function, there exists a limited body of music



for wind instruments, study and performance of which may become an effective part of liberal education. The activities of marching bands and similar units, on the other hand, are primarily an adjunct to public sports and spectacles, and should not in themselves become the essence of a band's achievement. To the extent that spectacular band formations and similar productions represent school music in the minds of a great many people, to that extent bands are undermining the best efforts of education in America today. The College Music Society believes that, because of the importance of the cultural and educational influences of the band, and the inevitability of the public entertainment phases, bands should be guided by competent, thoroughly trained members of music faculties, with authority to maintain a proper balance of the bands' interrelated activities.

As a footnote to this resolution, one could add that an administration that allows school hours for the drill of a marching band is cheating its charges in two ways. First of all, it is robbing the student by making him play inferior music. Secondly, it is wasting his time by teaching him a meaningless skill for the entertainment of large public audiences. The teaching of meaningless skills for display to large audiences is the rightful job of a zookeeper, and music educators who assist in the perpetration of this crime cannot call themselves either educators or musicians. For an educator is a person whose work has a direct and crucial impact on the human condition, not one who merely amplifies the attitudes of a commercial society. And a musician worthy of the name will insist that his work be with art -- the expression, no matter how simple, of a significant mind.

This leads us into the vast wasteland of our repertoire, another area in which we have failed our students. To realize this, one has only to look at the programs of the choirs and bands of our grade schools, high schools, and, alas, colleges. They present a dreary succession of arrangements, transcriptions, hymns, and medleys, lightly sprinkled with the original works of fourth-rate composers. In our country, unfortunately, the market is flooded with thousands of pieces for band or choir that are published in many various arrangements, each for a different-sized ensemble, and in simplified form for less advanced groups. Often the piece is a transcription in the first place. How can artistic standards be involved in a repertoire that is geared completely to the existing performance situation? The standards here are mere convenience and, on the part of the publishers, the desire to make money. How can we even pretend that we are exposing our students to art -- to important musical ideas -- if this is the music they perform. Few institutions in our Christian school system are innocent of this misdemeanor of convenience, of believing that what students perform must be watered down, transcribed, simplified, meddled, arrangified, and audiencified to meet our needs. A parallel situation might be an English Department that exposes its students to English literature by thrice weekly choral readings of Bible verses and the poems of Edgar Guest, monthly book reports on the novels of Grace Livingston Hill, and classroom recitations using comic books.

We are even cheating our music students if we give them only the likes of F. Melius Christiansen, Carl F. Mueller, Sousa, Goldman, and Zingarelli. For these are, at best, third-rate composers. If our schools require Shakespeare, why not Beethoven? If Robert Frost, why not Aaron Copland? Does Silas Marner loom larger in the history of ideas than Don Giovanni?

The objection that high school students cannot play Beethoven symphonies and sing Mozart operas will not do here. Of course they cannot. At least not under existing conditions. There is, however, a mass of significant repertoire other than operas and symphonies, and much of it not beyond well-trained youngsters. The American band has barely tapped the wind repertoire of such masters as Gabrieli, Telemann, and Schein, to mention only a few. The anthems of Purcell, Byrd, and Vaughan Williams are not that much harder than those of Zingarelli and Christiansen. I make a plea for monuments.

If for some reason the student cannot be exposed to them in the performance situation, then he certainly must hear them in the classroom. In most of our schools, however, there is no graded listening program by which the student can be exposed to the monuments of Western music. If the elementary student receives his training in music in the self-contained classroom, his listening experiences may

very well be limited to "Peter and the Wolf" and "Tubby the Tuba." Once he is in high school, his growth as a listener may or may not be furthered by attending a class in general music. This course, moreover, is usually only one semester long, so that any comprehensive listening program that might have been started in the grades comes to a silent halt. In such a situation, how can we expect any high school graduate to really listen to music? And in grades where listening is taught, how can we present listening projects realistically if there exists no opportunity for the student to listen to the music outside the classroom? With present facilities, how can anyone even remotely dream of making listening assignments? And yet, isn't this exactly the goal we are striving for -- to teach our students to be able to listen to music intelligently on their own? How can we expect them to do it later if we cannot even demand it of them while they are under our tutelage?

As to the third question on the agenda, that concerning improvement, teachers of music face a choice. We can either be content to offer courses that are not respected academically, or we can move our courses out of the vaporous realm of home economics and driver training into the kingdom of the solid subjects.

A BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE

A blueprint for change involves a thorough revision of the music curriculum. The grades are off to a flying start with Wilma Vander Baan's excellent MUSIC CURRICULUM GUIDE. The high schools, as far as I know, have no similar integrated curriculum guide, so the following applies particularly to them.

The curricular blueprint has three major floor plans:

1. The establishment of academic courses in music, like those in science, English, and mathematics. Music is in the fortunate position of belonging both to the arts and to the humanities, two excellent reasons for including music in the curriculum. Because music is one of the humanities, our schools may not neglect music as a humanistic discipline. If they do, they are depriving the students of a body of knowledge and insight that, like history or poetry, shapes one's underlying attitude toward life. Therefore, the balanced music program will contain academic courses, with homework, courses that will make music truly relevant to our students by teaching them the history of it, the devices employed in it, and how one listens to it.

2. The second floor involves the construction of basic skill courses in music that precede membership in performing groups. In these courses the student would be taught such useful skills as sight singing, ear training, rhythmic development, and rudimentary theoretical knowledge. These skills he would have for his entire life. Instead of treating symptoms, which is all we have time for in a rehearsal, such courses would diagnose the symptoms, and like all real education, aim for the causal and alter it.

Someone will object here: "We just cannot fit all this history and theory into a normal schedule. The administration would never stand for so much music in the curriculum." The answer is: If we are going to have school music at all, and we have quite a bit of it, then that slice of the curriculum already occupied by music, be it large or small, must strike a balance between idea courses, skill courses, and performance courses. The existing situation, in which courses in basic musicianship are offered only in college, after the student has had extensive applied training, must be changed so that background in fundamentals precedes membership in choir and band, or at least coincides with it. Such a program would

insure a higher level of performance ability, and there would no longer be any excuse for not exposing youngsters to Bach and Stravinsky.

3. The third floor is a stringent improvement of the repertoire for performance. Because music is one of the arts, we may not neglect performance, and in the well-balanced curriculum, one third of the time should be devoted to the rehearsal of significant works. There are ways whereby the study of music can proceed from the daily practice of special technical detail to a broad and deep understanding, especially if the student brings to the rehearsal skills that will help him learn the notes quickly, and an intellectual background that will enable him to recognize the ideas behind the music. But what is the use of even bothering if the music is not important? I repeat a vital point. The use of arrangements and transcriptions reflects an unsound educational and artistic principle -- that the repertoire exists for the performer. The use of marches and medleys reflects an even worse principle -- that the repertoire must serve the audience. These false philosophies must be turned about face. The performers and the audience exist for the repertoire. We are the servants of Handel and Schumann and Bartok.

In order to serve the repertoire, some changes will have to be made in the make-up and skills of our performing organizations. Choirs will have to learn sight singing, and improve in intonation and rhythmic accuracy. Bands will have to change their present structure if they wish to perform wind music representative of the artistic heritage of Western man, perhaps even to the point of frequently dividing into separate woodwind and brass choirs. Orchestras, alas, will have to be created.

In conclusion, there are the reasons why we should improve. First there is a very practical reason -- to save our skins. Instruction in the sciences has been up-graded in recent years, thanks to the efforts of the National Science Foundation. This up-grading has strengthened the hold of science on the minds of young people. The humanities will be next, if the recently created National Foundation for the Humanities has its way. Music is one of the humanities, and should participate in this renewal. If not, it will be reduced in status even more, or pushed out of the curriculum altogether.

But far more important than this practical reason is our duty to the students. It is for them that we should insist that music be an instrument of liberal education, and that education in music not perpetuate the attitudes of a commercial society, but change them. We study music because art changes us; because great art makes us suddenly yet lastingly aware of our humanness; because a symphony, a poem, a painting alters our deepest attitudes toward life. And then, having shared in a limited way the dazzling insight of a gifted mind, we can as greater, fuller human beings adore and serve God.

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