EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDES AND POLICIES OF ORGANIZED LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES

BY

PHILIP R. V. CUROE, PH.D.

TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION, No. 201

BUREAU OF PUBLICATIONS
Teachers College, Columbia University
NEW YORK CITY
1926

Printed in the United States of America by
J. J. LITTLE AND IVES COMPANY, NEW YORK

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Edward H. Reisner, Dr. Isaac L. Kandel, and Dr. J. Montgomery Gambrill, to whom the author is grateful for criticism, guidance, and direction.

He wishes to acknowledge the cheerful coöperation of the members of the staff of the Economics Division of the New York Public Library in rendering available the great variety of labor documents and newspapers upon which this study is based.

Upon the secretaries of city central labor bodies, state federations, and the American Federation of Labor, constant demands were made, both for time and material, and in all cases these demands were promptly and willingly met. Not only were official documents, otherwise difficult to obtain, placed at the author's disposal, but also a rich mine of the more ephemeral literature which such bodies are constantly publishing, and which is indispensable for complete documentation. The same spirit of helpfulness was manifested by the secretary of the National Association of Manufacturers, who supplied the materials necessary for the comparative study included in Chapter VI.

Indebtedness to previous studies on particular aspects of the general subject of organized labor's attitudes and policies is evident enough throughout the text, and is specifically acknowledged in the footnotes.

P. R. V. C.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER — PAGE

I. INTRODUCTION 1

Origin of the Investigation. Work Already Done in This Field. *Documentary History of American Industrial Society,* Work of Professor Carlton, Drs. Carroll, Atkins and Laswell. *History of Labour in the United States.* Labor Histories. Official Publications of Labor Organizations. Magnitude of the Task of Recording a Single Aspect of Evolving Labor Development. Guiding Considerations of the Study. Meaning of the Term, Education, As Used in This Investigation. Of the Term, Labor Organization. Labor Leaders vs. the Rank and File. Need of a Proper Perspective. A Large Expert Interest in Education Not To Be Expected. Gompers' Claim.

II. EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDES AND POLICIES FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT TO 1840 8

Beginning of the Labor Movement in the United States. Political Workingmen's Parties, 1828-1832. Divisions of the Labor Movement to 1840. The Philadelphia Movement. Its Educational Philosophy. The Circular to Political Candidates. The 1829 Committee Report. The New York Movement. First Stage, Agrarianism. Second Stage, Minority and Majority Committee Reports. Third Stage, Dissolution. The Movement in Other Cities. The Combined Farmers' and Mechanics' Movement. The Trades' Unions, 1833-1837. Their Nature. The New York General Trades' Union. Its Lack of Interest in Education. The Daily Penny Labor Paper. The Philadelphia General Trades' Union. Agitational Education. Comparison of Political Workingmen's Parties and City Trades' Unions. The National Trades' Union. Education of Members. Formation of Committees to Agitate for Education. Campaign for Juvenile Factory Workers. Attempt to Democratize Education. National Trade Unions. The Printers and Apprenticeship. The Real Labor Contribution to 1840. Specific Labor Attitudes. Private Academies. Vocational versus Literary Education. Lotteries. Child Labor. School Support. Religion. Mechanics' Institutes and Lyceums. Labor Educational Philosophers. Seth Luther. Stephen Simpson.

III. EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDES AND POLICIES OF ORGANIZED LABOR FROM 1840 TO THE CIVIL WAR 48

Divisions of the Labor Movement, 1840-1880. Characteristics of the Labor Movement, 1840-1860. Land Reform. Coöperation. Slave Issue. Associationist Phalanxes and Education. Theory of Association. Connection with Working Men. Educational Theory of Association. Educational

CHAPTER PAGE

Practice. Educational Accomplishment. Horace Greeley and Education. Sporadic Labor Unions, 1842-1846. Lack of Educational Interest. The Mutual Protections. Robert MacFarlane. The New York Industrial Congress. The New York State Industrial Legislature. State Mechanical and Agricultural School. Trade Training in Prisons. "Pure and Simple" Trade Unions. The New England Working Men's Association. The Industrial Congress. Township School Administration. Tax-supported Schools.

IV. Educational Attitudes and Policies of Organized Labor from 1860 to the American Federation of Labor 66

General Labor Conditions. Labor Organizations. Eight-hour Doctrine. Land Problem. Greenbackism. International Labor Movement. National Labor Union and Education. Eight-hour Day and Education. Apprenticeship Control. Mechanics' Institutes, etc. Educating the Negro. Children in Factories. Apprenticeship Again. The Split in 1870. Colored National Labor Union and Education. Education in the Platform of 1869. Coöperation with the Freedman's Bureau. National Industrial Congress and Education. Better Trade Training. Knights of Labor. Development and Decline. General Educational Philosophy. Attitude Towards the High School. Child Labor and Compulsory Attendance. Manual Training and Industrial Education. Blair Education Bill. Naturalization Laws. The Government and Technical Education. Education under Coöperation. Hostility Towards Colleges and Universities. Comparison with Contemporary Workers' Educational Philosophy. Other Educational Attitudes. Attack on Civil Service Educational Test. Recommendation of Military Training in the Schools. The Patrons of Husbandry. Earlier Farmers' Organizations. *The Grange Circular*, 1868. The Declaration of Purposes, 1874. The Morrill Act. The Common Schools. International Workingmen's Association. Activities to 1870. Activities After 1870. The Eight-hour Philosophy and Education. Ira Steward. George Gunton. "Half-time" Schools.

V. Educational Attitudes and Policies of the American Federation of Labor 102

1. History of the Federation. Beginnings of the Federation. The Federation from 1890 to 1896. The Federation Since 1896. The Federation in 1924. 2. Educational Attitudes and Policies of the Federation. Documentary Scope of the Study. (A) Child Labor and Compulsory Attendance. An Evolving Program. Motives. Continuation Schooling. Nature and Purposes. (B) Curriculum. Early References. The Federation and the Social Studies. Part I of the *Report on Social Studies*. Part II of the *Report on Social Studies*. Part III of the *Report on Social Studies*. Conclusions of the *Report on Social Studies*. Recent Interest in the Social Studies. The Federation and Physical Education. Military Training. The Boy Scout Movement. Other Attitudes Towards Physical Education. (C) Educational Administration. Federal Participation in Education. Labor Representation on School Boards. Estimate of This Policy. Unit versus Dual Administration. School Finances.

CHAPTER PAGE

(D) Teachers. Salaries. Unionization of Teachers. American Federation of Teachers. Teachers' Salaries. Right to Organize. Teachers' Tenure. Teacher Representation in School Administration. Academic Freedom.

VI. Educational Attitudes and Policies of the American Federation of Labor (*Continued*) 151

Summary of Points Covered in Chapter V. (E) Private Foundations. President Gompers' Attack. Foundation Charters. Gary Schools. The Junior High School. Intelligence Tests. (F) Industrial Education. Significance of the Federation's Attitude. Points Already Considered. Manual Training in the Schools. Private Vocational Schools. "Coöperative" Schools. Organized Labor and Industrial Apprenticeship. Organized Labor and Vocational School Teachers. Organized Labor and the Product of the Vocational School. (G) Higher Education. Freedom of Expression. Surveillance of Professors. Democracy. University Extension. (H) Workers' Education. Juvenile Workers' Education. Adult Workers' Education. The Workers' Education Bureau of America.

VII. Conclusion 189

Bibliography 195

EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDES AND POLICIES OF ORGANIZED LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

ORIGIN OF THE INVESTIGATION

This investigation grew out of a study of the vigorous movement for education under labor union auspices which has crystallized in the Workers' Education Bureau of America. This movement embodies a criticism from the labor point of view of contemporary public education, as well as a constructive educational program. The query suggested itself: Are there any earlier evidences of organized labor's educational attitudes and policies in this country? Since such evidences appeared in large numbers and sometimes in unexpected forms, a further search was made to determine whether they had ever been investigated and reported.

WORK DONE IN THIS FIELD

The editors of the *Documentary History of American Industrial Society* [1] have gathered together a large number of labor records for the period from 1820 to 1880, and some of these are directly pertinent to the question at hand. But with the exception of the period to 1840, the interpretative chapters give no attention to organized labor's educational policies. Further, the records leave off with 1880, so that the trade union movement of our own time is left untouched. But the following conclusion reached by the editors has often been reiterated by labor spokesmen: "Hitherto our historical knowledge of the free-school movement has ascribed that movement to the great humanitarian leaders with Horace Mann at their head. But Mr. Carlton, after

[1] The *Documentary History* contains ten volumes. Volumes V to X, inclusive, carry the sub-title, *Labor Movement,* and are divided as follows: Two volumes, 1820-40, two volumes, 1840-60, two volumes, 1860-80.

a careful study of the documents herewith presented, concludes that the vitality of the movement for tax-supported schools was derived, not from the humanitarian leaders, but from the growing class of wage-earners." [2]

Professor Carlton in his *Economic Influences Upon Educational Progress in the United States* [3] deals only with the period from 1820 to 1850. His first two chapters are concerned with the educational history of the colonial and early national periods, his other chapters with the economic and humanitarian influences at work in American education. Only three of the total one hundred and twenty-two pages treat of the connections between organized labor groups and education. In another contribution, Professor Carlton has studied in great detail the educational program of one of the labor groups of the late twenties.[4]

In 1923 Dr. Carroll published her *Labor and Politics*.[5] Since the political programs of labor groups have many times concerned themselves with educational legislation, this volume was carefully examined to see to what extent educational policies had been treated. But the volume concerns itself only with the American Federation of Labor, and disposes of its educational policies in four pages.

The title which gave greatest promise of having dealt systematically with labor's educational policies was Atkins and Laswell's *Labor Attitudes and Policies* [6] published in 1924. But the authors deal with education sketchily, and then only in connection with the clothing workers.

Examination of a number of labor histories showed that the treatment of the matter under consideration, when made at all, is of a marginal kind. The most common method is to call attention to the prominent place given to education in the programs of the workingmen's parties from 1828 to 1832, and then to say nothing more about the subject. Professor Commons' *History of Labour in the United States* gives more attention to it than any other work in the field.[7]

The search led finally to the official publications of the labor

[2] *Documentary History*, Vol. V, pp. 27-28.
[3] Carlton, Frank T. University of Wisconsin Doctor's thesis, 1908.
[4] "The New York Workingmen's Party," *Pol. Sci. Quarterly*, Vol. 22, p. 40.
[5] Carroll, Mollie Ray. "Attitude of the American Federation of Labor toward Legislation and Politics," *Labor and Politics*, 1923.
[6] Atkins, W. E., and Laswell, H. D. *Labor Attitudes and Policies*, 1924.
[7] Commons, John R., and others. *History of Labour in the United States*, 2 volumes, 1918.

organizations themselves. Since about 1920, educational reports by special or standing committees of American labor bodies have become more and more numerous.[8] But with the exception of the 1920 pamphlet of the American Federation, "Education for All," this investigation has not unearthed any labor statement which has traced the historical evolution of labor attitudes and policies. Even this report leaves some important matters upon which the Federation has expressed itself educationally, untouched. Besides, it has been compiled from the annual convention proceedings only, and gives no attention to other official sources of information. The conclusion is that very meager work of a historical kind has been done upon the educational attitudes and policies of organized labor in the United States. Only the contemporary movement for workers' education, which has had a mushroom growth since 1921, seems to have attracted attention.

MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK

The task facing any one who sets out to record a single aspect of evolving labor development is enhanced by the present status of labor history per se. Groat, writing in 1917, said:

> To sketch in brief the history of organized labor in America is a difficult task. The time has not yet come when the story may be told in its final form. Some further agreement in definition of terms is necessary. There must also be a clearer limitation of periods. New material is being brought to light that reveals new facts or modifies the truth of what formerly has been regarded as settled. The progress of labor's development, however, lies along a path the high points of which may be indicated though the intervening portions may remain for the present in part unrevealed.[9]

There is a tantalizing lack of continuity in the records, especially of those antedating the Civil War. Carlton ascribes this to the ephemeral nature of the earlier organizations, and this in turn to the abundance of cheap land.[10] An organization flares up, records its grievances and the proposed remedies, and dies out. The editors of the *Documentary History* have ferreted out the

[8] *E.g.*, "Education for All." Official Record of the American Federation of Labor in the Struggle to Bring Knowledge to the Masses, authorized by the 1920 Convention.
"Labor and Education." Report of American Federation of Labor Committee on Education on Social Studies in the Public Schools, 1923.
"The Boy Scout Movement." Report of the Committee on Schools, Illinois State Federation of Labor, 1917.

[9] Groat, G. G. *Organized Labor in America*, p. 21.

[10] Carlton, F. T. *History and Problems of Organized Labor*, p. 41.

traces left by many such fleeting developments and have fixed them in the records. Their work has been used again and again in this investigation. Professor Ely tells how fragmentary are the records upon which even the *Documentary History* is based. "Numbers of pamphlets," he says, "were published between 1827 and 1837 of which only a single copy is known to be preserved, and of others that were circulated by thousands not a single copy remains." [11]

A comprehensive study of the educational attitudes and policies of American labor organizations would be a herculean labor. Countless tracts, pamphlets, proceedings of conventions, labor papers, many of them difficult of access and sterile in their yield, would have to be read. As with the *Documentary History,* only the coöperative efforts of a staff of economists and educators could hopefully face such a staggering task. More than this, the reactions of labor groups to educational problems would have meaning only if placed in a setting of coincident educational history and social conditions. The magnitude of the task is quickly realized if its scope for the American Federation of Labor alone is considered. In 1923 the Federation comprised: 36,534 local unions, 818 local department councils, 901 city central bodies, 49 state federations, 108 national and international unions, 4 departments, and 523 local trade and federal labor unions.[12] Practically all of these units issue literature of some kind, and an exhaustive investigation could ignore none of them. The present study attempts to mark out a thin trail through this fascinating field, by the selection and analysis of representative documents.

GUIDING CONSIDERATIONS

Some important guiding considerations have impressed themselves upon the writer in the course of the investigation, which seem essential to the formation of correct judgments about labor's educational attitudes and policies.

The first is the meaning of the term, education, as here used. Throughout it has been given the narrow connotation; education in the systematic sense,—schooling. The concern of this study is with the attitudes and policies of labor groups in America towards schools and school problems. This, of course, is closely

[11] Preface to the *Documentary History,* by Richard T. Ely.
[12] *Proceedings of 1923 Convention of the American Federation of Labor,* p. 24.

related to education under labor's own auspices, but even here, only when the latter is of the systematic school type has it been noted. A trade union with its constitution, by-laws, parliamentary procedure, discipline, representative government, etc., is an institution with educational by-products, but it is not a school in the sense here used. It is too obvious to require extended statement that faithful membership in a labor organization, like faithful membership in any other organization, is itself an education in principles and methods, ideals and aspirations. This might be called propagandistic or intra-education, and will receive scant attention in this study. Casson [13] gives much emphasis to the work of labor organizations in effecting the social discipline of their members, in developing a sentiment for abolition, child conservation, temperance,[14] the fight on tuberculosis, and the like. This is a significant, and too little known aspect of labor activity, but will have to be taken for granted so far as this study is concerned.

The second consideration concerns the meaning of the term, labor organization, as here used. Wherever workingmen have combined, whether for political, craft or other purposes, and where the cohesion has been sustained enough to lead to conventions or congresses, the documentary records have been considered pertinent to the inquiry. This elastic definition makes it possible to present a truer picture of the educational concerns of labor than one in which the urban worker would be sharply differentiated from the farmer, or the trade unionist from the member of a political workingmen's association. We have become accustomed to regard the trade union movement as synonymous with the labor movement, and, indeed, it is at present to a large extent. But it was not always so. Workingmen have at some periods in our history fought together under other banners. Sometimes it has been a political platform, at other times, Fourierism, land reform, or greenbackism. Even to-day the American Federation of Labor has constantly to combat political unionism and the one-big-union philosophy.[15]

The third consideration is that the educational theories and

[13] Casson, *Organized Self-Help.*

[14] This especially has been a prominent point in the social and moral discipline of some labor groups. The Knights of Labor would admit no saloon-keeper to membership, and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has a constitutional provision providing expulsion of any brother found guilty of using intoxicating liquors (Sec. 52, Constitution and Statutes).

[15] *E.g., Proceedings, A. F. of L.*, 1923, pp. 265-266, 282-284.

principles of labor leaders must not be assumed to permeate the rank and file of workers.[16] Organized labor groups without exception have opposed child labor, but the individual workingman has no doubt sometimes condoned and abetted it. Nevertheless, when an educational resolution is presented and passed without dissent, when an education committee presents a report which is accepted by a convention, it is reasonable to regard these as embodying the educational sentiments or opinions of the labor group in question.

The fourth consideration has to do with maintaining a proper perspective. A culling of educational resolutions, addresses, committee recommendations, etc., and a condensation of these into a running account would convey a very misleading impression. Two educational pronouncements by a labor organization separated by ten years in which the records are silent on education, if put into juxtaposition without explanation of the intervening lack of interest, would bespeak an educational attitude not warranted by the facts. Such fore-shortening of historical perspective is perhaps not entirely avoidable. But as an antidote against it, a brief summary statement of general labor organization activities has been made for each period. Professor Ely has made the following sweeping statement: "At every period in our history, public school questions have been labor questions or labor measures."[17] If this means that such questions have affected those who labor, of course it cannot be gainsaid. If, however, it means that such questions have been initiated by or even officially noticed by organized labor groups, it is in need of qualification. There are silences in the labor records when crucial decisions were being made in our educational history.

The final consideration is that a large expert interest in educational problems should not be expected from labor organizations. Their main objectives are economic; they have to do with the betterment of working and living conditions. It has been surprising to the writer that so much earnest thought and effort has been expended by them upon educational matters. Their resolutions, addresses and other pronouncements are sometimes vaguely aspirational and millennial, but it is to be expected that they

[16] In the *American Review*, Nov.-Dec., 1923, Harap calls special attention to this matter, taking the position that labor leaders themselves make this wrong assumption.

[17] *Labor Movement in America*, p. 122.

would see ends more clearly than the means for their accomplishment. Often they have understood more definitely what they did not want than what they did, but this is not peculiar to labor organizations.

At times labor groups have raised their voices to swell the chorus demanding educational reform. Sometimes that chorus had been intoned by other individuals or groups. It should detract nothing from their contribution that others were on the same quest as they. But labor leaders, probably through absorption in their own movement, have not always noticed that others were pulling with them. While unqualified acceptance cannot be given to Mr. Gompers' claim that "Organized labor has always stood for, aye, has been the pioneer in the demand for free schools, free textbooks, compulsory education in the elementary grades and for the fullest and freest opportunity in all lines of learning, technology included," [18] it contains more truth than the silence of histories of education upon labor's attitudes and policies would indicate.

[18] *American Federationist*, Dec., 1909.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDES AND POLICIES FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT TO 1840

The labor movement in the United States began in the third decade of the nineteenth century. More specifically, it began in 1828 with the organization in Philadelphia of the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations. There had been earlier societies of workers in individual trades, but they were local and not conscious of any common object. Some labor historians have shown associations as old as 1648, the cordwainers and the coopers, while it is possible to list a large number of nineteenth century societies preceding the Philadelphia Union.[1] But when the *Mechanics' Free Press*, the first American labor paper, stated that "This is the first time that the working men have attempted, in public meeting, to inquire whether they possess, as individuals or as a class, any right to say by whom they shall be governed," [2] it was chronicling the real beginning of the labor movement in this country.

THE POLITICAL WORKINGMEN'S PARTIES, 1828-1832

Divisions of the Labor Movement to 1840.—It is customary for writers on labor history in America to divide the period from the beginning of the labor movement to 1840 into two parts.[3] The first extends to about 1832 and is characterized by workingmen's political parties, attempting to use the newly acquired

[1] Groat in *Organized Labor in America*, p. 21, names as among these: New York Society of Journeyman Shipwrights (1803), New York House Carpenters (1806), Society of Tailors (1806), Columbian Charitable Society of Shipwrights and Calkers of Boston and Charlestown (1822).

[2] August 16, 1828.

[3] *E.g.*, the *Documentary History of American Industrial Society* uses this periodization (Vol. V. Introduction). The premise of this work is that labor periods begin and end at the lowest points of the curve of wholesale prices. The graph of such prices (Frontispiece, Vol. V) is an illuminating presentation of the general sweep of the labor movement. Carlton (*History and Problems of Organized Labor*, pp. 32-33) recognizes the same sub-periods. Groat (*Organized Labor in America*), on the other hand, recognizes but one period from 1815 to the Civil War.

suffrage to right their wrongs. The second extends from 1833 to 1837, during which time there is a reaction against political unionism, and a growth of city and finally of a national trades' union, as well as an ephemeral growth of national trade unions. The second sub-period culminates in the crisis of 1837, which was not weathered by most of the labor organizations.

The Philadelphia Movement.—The Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations[4] arose out of a strike of Philadelphia carpenters for a ten-hour day. As a union of trade societies it lasted little more than a year, but as a political union it was active until after the elections of 1831. In the Jackson election of 1828, its local candidates polled an average of but 500 votes to an average of 3,000 for those of the administration and 5,000 for those of Jackson's party. But its campaign attracted such attention that the major parties attached to themselves the tag of "Workingmen's Ticket" and their slogan "6 to 6." We hear no more of it after the elections of 1831. Its disappearance was due to two factors: first, discouragement at failure to attract voting strength, and second, a pledge of neutrality in the presidential contest of 1832.

What was its educational philosophy? The preamble to the Union's constitution does not mention education by name, but it is clearly enough an implied interest. The real object of the Union is to avert "the desolating evils which must inevitably arise from a depreciation of the intrinsic value of human labour; to raise the mechanical and productive classes to that condition of true independence and inequality (*sic*) which their practical skill and ingenuity, their immense utility to the nation and their growing intelligence are beginning imperiously to demand." It aimed also to promote the welfare of the whole community, and to give a due and full proportion of leisure to all society's useful members. That the standard of revolt was being raised against social rather than economic inequalities is evidenced by the final statement of purpose as given in the preamble. The Union pledged itself to assist all similar institutions to "establish a just balance of power, both mental, moral, political and scientific,

[4] The nomenclature of labor organizations has undergone some confusing changes. The original name of an organization within a single trade was *trade association* or *trade society*, while an organization composed of a union of various trades was called a *union of trade associations*, or, a little later, a *general trades' union*. Later the name *trades' union*, usually as *trade union*, was transferred to the primary body of a single trade, and what was formerly a trades' union has sought other names, such as *federation of labor, trades' assembly, trades' council, central labor union*, etc.

between all the various classes and individuals which constitute society at large." [5]

But educational reform was prominent in the practical program of these Philadelphia workingmen. Disappointed because the newly-acquired ballot did not improve their condition, they decided to elect their "friends." A circular was sent by a committee to each candidate whom they proposed to nominate for the state legislature, and the first subject upon which they were desirous of being informed was the candidate's stand on education. They wished most distinctly to understand whether he did or did not consider it essential to the welfare of the rising generation "that an open school and competent teachers for every child from the lowest branch of an infant school to the lecture rooms of practical science, should be established, and those who superintend them to be chosen by the people." [6]

There is here a demand (1) for competent teachers, (2) for an open ladder system of schools, with the infant school on the lowest rung, and (3) for school boards responsible to the people and chosen by them.

What was the background against which this demand projected itself? As to teachers, there were no public normal schools for their training in the United States in 1829; and there were but two private normal schools. The private academies and the monitorial schools were the only sources of teacher supply. Yet the demand for something better was coming from many quarters, quite independent of any pressure from labor organizations. Governor Clinton of New York had, for example, recommended to the legislature a seminary for the education of teachers in the monitorial system of instruction (1826), and the creation of a central school in each county for the education of teachers (1827). In the same year in which the labor movement began he recommended county monitorial high schools, "a measure so well calculated to raise the character of our schoolmasters and to double the power of our artisans by giving them a scientific education." [7]

As to the demand for a ladder system of schools, these early mechanics had caught a vision which has not been completely

[5] *Documentary History*, Vol. V, pp. 89-90.
[6] Cubberley, E. P. "Readings in the History of Education," No. 315. *New York Free Enquirer*, Oct. 7, 1829.
[7] Cubberley, E. P. *Public Education in the United States*, p. 288.

realized even in our own day. When they made this demand, American education had not yet broken completely from the two-class European system which had been its colonial heritage. The ladder was difficult to climb and its upper rungs were prohibitive in cost. The high school development had not begun outside Massachusetts, and the university was out of reach of the workingman's son entirely.

It is a curious fact that the specific reference in the Philadelphia circular to infant schools has been given such great prominence by labor writers. One writer characterizes it as "foreshadowing the modern kindergarten";[8] another as "probably anticipating the kindergarten of later years";[9] while a third concludes that "Labor organizations were among the first to advocate the kindergarten long before it became the popular institution it is to-day."[10]

With no wish to disparage the labor contribution to this part of our educational system, it is necessary to examine the facts of the case. The English infant school had appeared in Boston in 1818, and in New York in 1827. Boston had appropriated $5,000 for such schools in 1818 to make up the deficiency created by the fact that admission to the city-maintained public schools was contingent upon ability to read and write. As many children could not afford the private teacher or the pittance of the dame school, the public school had thus been closed to them, and the new infant school was intended to make good this lack of democracy.[11] Providence made a similar step in the very year of the Philadelphia circular. An Infant School Society was organized in New York City in 1827, and this forthwith proceeded to establish so-called "junior departments" of elementary schools. In Philadelphia three Infant School Societies were founded in 1827-1828, and schools were immediately established there.

What happened in American cities was that the infant school idea of England projected the elementary school downward, so that it took children younger and began "instructing" them earlier in the accessory or tool subjects. The Philadelphia workingmen were joining other groups in demanding this projection

[8] Beard, M. *Short History of the American Labor Movement*, p. 40.
[9] Commons, J. R. *History of Labour in the United States*, Vol. 1, p. 266 (Sumner).
[10] Casson, *Organized Self-Help*, p. 202.
[11] Cubberley, E. P. *History of Education*, pp. 664-665; also Reading No. 313 in *Readings in the History of Education* by the same author.