

REMAKERS OF MANKIND

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BY
CARLETON WASHBURNE

co-author of
NEW SCHOOLS IN THE OLD WORLD
BETTER SCHOOLS
etc.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CARLETON WASHBURNE became a teacher shortly after graduating from Stanford University in 1912. After gaining his first experience in rural and village schools he served for five years on the faculty of the San Francisco State Teachers' College. When he had completed his doctorate at the University of California he took the superintendency of the public school system in Winnetka, Illinois. These schools he transformed into an educational laboratory, and his experiments carried forward there have become known around the world.

In addition to running his schools and doing extensive lecturing, Mr. Washburne has found time to write a number of books and to study educational conditions in America and abroad. He made an informal study of European experimental schools in 1922-23, and a study of Russian schools in 1927. The present book is the result of a study under a Fellowship granted by The Julius Rosenwald Fund.

Mr. Washburne besides being Superintendent of the Winnetka schools is Chairman of the Board of Educational Directors of the recently organized Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka, Illinois.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE QUEST

MANKIND to-day is beginning to awaken to the possibility of shaping its own destiny. Startled and sobered by its sudden access of power through control of the forces of nature, it begins to realize the danger that this power may lead to its own destruction. And it begins to seek in education a means for developing character commensurate with its power and for determining the general direction of human evolution.

Mankind is not yet well coördinated in its thinking and strivings. Although close-knit economically it is disparate politically and educationally. Instead of acting as a whole, various parts act independently and often in ignorance of the action of others. Yet if mankind is to control its own destiny, the efforts of its various parts must be coördinated. To this end each part must know the aims toward which the others are striving.

The purblind gropings of the multitude find sight through the eyes of occasional far-seeing individuals who by focusing the efforts of the many toward a clearer visioned goal, become leaders of thought and action. Some of these leaders see only into the near future, others see far ahead. None are all-seeing.

The coördination of human effort must come about, in

part at least, through the coördination of the activities and thought of these leaders. Since to-day education for the first time in the history of mankind gives promise of becoming universal, and since it has the potentialities of reshaping human destiny, the leaders of educational thought in different countries are among those whose efforts, if well co-ordinated, may do much toward helping mankind to use its power for its own growth and development rather than for its destruction.

Are the leaders of educational thinking in different parts of the world conscious of their own goals? What are their goals? Are those of different leaders and different countries antagonistic, complementary and harmonious, or identical?

In an attempt to get at least partial answers to these and kindred questions, I secured a leave of absence from my own schools in Winnetka, Illinois, and a fellowship from the Julius Rosenwald Fund and set out in December, 1930, on a world journey with my family and Florence Brett, principal of one of my schools. We went first to Japan (by way of Hawaii) and there amid picturesque surroundings and Oriental thinking, surprisingly little touched by contact with the Occident, we interviewed statesmen, professors, teachers, heads of normal schools, writers, and even admirals—these last because there had been an attempt to incorporate some Winnetka educational ideas in the naval training school at Etajima.

From Japan we went through Korea, stopping a day at Keijo and sleeping a night on the heated floors of a Korean hotel. Thence we journeyed northward over the South Manchurian railway, where a few months later the hos-

tilities between Japan and China started. We interviewed the Northern War Lord, Chang Hsueh-liang, whom Japan later ousted. We talked with educational leaders—university presidents, commissioners of education, vice-ministers, chancellors, normal school heads, and others—first in Mukden, then in Peiping, Tientsin, Nanking, and Shanghai. Perhaps the most stimulating interview was with Hu Shih, the famous Chinese philosopher.

Sailing from Shanghai we touched Hongkong and the Malay States, and resumed our study in India. For five weeks we journeyed through that seething country, from the southernmost tip to the Vale of Kashmir in the Himalayas, and from Calcutta on the east to Bombay and Karachi on the west. We lived part of the time with Indians, eating their food, learning to know their ways of thinking. We talked, of course, with Christian missionaries, both English and American, and with British officials. But most of our time was spent with the Indians themselves—the poet, Tagore; the philosopher, Radhakrishnan; the theosophist, Bhagavan Das; the president of the great Hindu university, Pandit Malaviya; the great feminist leader, Sarojini Naidu; the young communistically inclined Nationalist, Jawaharlal Nehru; and with Mahatma Gandhi himself.

Then we went up the Persian Gulf to the Shat-el-Arab, a great placid river formed by the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates. We visited a tribe of marsh Arabs there and talked with the head of the schools of Basra, then took the train past Ur of the Chaldees, past the ruins of Babylon, to the fascinating city of Baghdad. We spent over two weeks among the Arabs; had tea with King Faisal, a feast

with an Arab chieftain out in the desert, and interviews with all those most likely to influence Iraqi education.

A somewhat hazardous automobile trip across the Arabian desert was interrupted by our cars being stuck in the mud—there had been heavy rains—until we were reduced to a diet of orange peels, chicken bones, and malted milk tablets. We finally dug our way out, and by scattering ourselves over the desert we gathered enough stones and pebbles to build a short road out of the mud hole. Finally we reached Damascus where we talked with the Minister of Education and with Nationalist leaders, and then drove to Palestine.

Unfortunately the delay in the desert prevented our taking time in Palestine for a study of that interesting country where three civilizations struggle for supremacy, and where there are three official languages, almost wholly unrelated to each other.

In Egypt there were again Nationalist leaders as well as educators, and there was a fiery Syrian exile who finished our picture of the Syrian Nationalist views.

We left Egypt too soon, paused to do obeisance to the Parthenon, and then plunged into Turkey, an amazing example of the westernization of an Oriental country.

A Russian boat took us through the Black Sea to Odessa. Some of the deckhands were trousered girls, two of these being students from the Marine School in Odessa, preparing to be captains! We certainly knew by the atmosphere on this boat that we were approaching the land of the proletariat. There was none of the semi-military regimentation and hierarchy among the crew, so characteristic of most ocean vessels. Deckhands and officers played games in

a common amusement hall, sang and danced on the deck with one another and the passengers. The service, too, was proletarian—no frills, no deference, but the service of an equal by an equal.

In Odessa, the Crimea, and the Ukraine, we traveled without regular guides or interpreters, using the services of chance fellow passengers, or such temporary guides as we could lay our hands on or as were loaned to us by the board of education or the Society for Cultural Relations. Part of the time we simply got along with sign language. By the time we reached Moscow we were glad to get an official guide from Intourist, who could interpret for us and take us to the places we wanted to see. Most of our Russian interviews were in Moscow.

Then came Poland, surprisingly beautiful, unfailingly courteous; then Austria, most charming and friendly of countries; and finally Germany, France, and England.

In each country we sought out those men and women whose thought was most likely to influence the direction and aim of educational thinking in their respective countries during the next two or three decades. The International Institute of Teachers College had given us some suggestions, the New Education Fellowship had given us others, our own friends in the different countries gave us many more, and the persons whom we interviewed checked our lists and added suggestions of their own. Having thus located our quarry we shot questions at it, using more or less standardized ammunition in the form of an interview outline.

The interview outline was often sent ahead and sometimes translated into the language of the person to be inter-

viewed. It was expanded considerably during the course of each discussion and modified somewhat as a succession of interviews showed certain parts to be barren and other parts fruitful. The order of the questions sometimes varied.

One question had to do with the degree to which education should be used in shaping society. As expanded it ran as follows:

“There are at least three different attitudes in regard to the social aim of education:

“There is first the traditional and more or less unconscious aim of education in most countries. This is to fit boys and girls for participation in the already existing kind of society; to make them good citizens and able participants in the social, political, and economic order that now exists in their own country.

“Second there is the attempt, perhaps best illustrated in Russia and Italy to-day, to create a preconceived and fully planned new social order by means of education. The old order is to be uprooted and the new order implanted through the schools of the nation.

“There is, third, the point of view expressed to me several years ago by some of the leaders of the free schools of Hamburg. ‘We do not want to perpetuate existing forms of society by imposing our traditions upon the children,’ they said, ‘nor do we know what the ideal form of human society should be—we ourselves are products of a stultified traditional scheme of education and cannot be counted upon to look wisely into the future. It we develop each child’s individuality as completely as possible, providing a rich environment in which he can grow, and permitting him to select freely from that environment those elements

which he feels he needs, the individual so developed will have far more wisdom with which to remake the social order than we can possibly have.'

"Which of these three viewpoints most nearly expresses your own aims? You need not limit yourself to any one, and you may express an entirely different one. I am merely suggesting these three aims to indicate the scope of my question.

"I don't want your answer in terms of present practice or present official approval, but rather in terms of what you yourself, as an individual, would like to make the aim of education in your country. I want your personal purposes, which through your office or position of leadership you are hoping ultimately to bring about."

The second general question had to do with nationalistic and international aims. It was in several parts. The first part ran somewhat as follows:

"Do you wish so to educate the children of your country that they will put their country's demands first and those of their personal conscience second, or vice versa? In case one's government, for example, should make a definite requirement of the individual with which the individual's conscience did not agree, should the individual lend active support to the government's command or should he follow his personal conception of what is right? During the World War, you may remember, there were persons who felt that participation in that war was morally wrong and that to kill their fellow victims in a world tragedy at the command of what seemed to them a misguided government, was a great evil. Would you so educate the children of your nation that if they felt this way they would follow their convictions

and refuse to fight? Or would you rather educate them to the point of view that the state once having determined upon its course of action it is the duty of every individual within the state to put aside his personal conviction and throw himself loyally and whole-heartedly into carrying out the state's dictates?

"Would you apply the same logic to compliance with laws involving less obvious stress? You undoubtedly know of the Prohibition Law in America. You must have laws in your country which are likewise unpopular among a considerable number of people. Would you so educate your children that they would strictly obey these laws even though they regarded them as an unjust infringement upon their personal rights?"

The second part of the question had to do with the teaching of nationalistic history:

"In teaching the children about the lives of your country's great heroes and in teaching them the history of their nation, should there be an attempt to give a strictly objective and accurate point of view, or should this historical material be so presented that it will implant certain ideals and a veneration for their country and its heroes even at the expense of strict historical accuracy? In telling a child about his country's dealings with another country, for example, should one give quite objectively and impartially the viewpoint of the other country as well as the viewpoint of one's own, or should these dealings be so presented as to convince the child that his country was right and the other wrong? In telling him about his country's heroes, should they be made almost faultless or should their short-

comings and weaknesses be impartially told along with their virtues?"

The third section dealt with freedom of discussion:

"Should children be allowed in school to discuss freely current questions on which there are wide differences of opinion among adults? There are those who feel that such questions should be kept out of the classroom, that children and even high school and college students are too immature for such discussion and are liable to be led into dangerous instability and even disloyalty; that if children are to get practice in discussion, it had better be in matters which are no longer serious bones of contention among their elders. There are others who feel that unless children learn to discuss live current issues intelligently and reasonably in school there is little hope of their being able to do so, unguided, when they get out into the world. Which way do you think is better?"

"If you believe in freedom of discussion of such questions, should the teacher try to influence the children's thinking? If so, should he influence it toward the official or most widely accepted point of view, or toward his own personal viewpoint?"

The final section of this question dealt with internationalism as an aim in education:

"Should it be one of the important conscious aims of education to inculcate in a child a feeling of responsibility not only for his own nation but for the world community of nations? Should he have developed in him a sense of loyalty toward this world community? If so, how would you reconcile the apparent conflict between loyalty to one's own country and this wider loyalty?"

The third general question was somewhat more technical and was asked only of those whose work was likely to have led them into direct thinking upon it. It was in two sections. The first section dealt with the problem which American curriculum makers have been debating so vociferously:

"Should education be centered primarily around the needs of growing individual children, or is there a certain body of knowledge and skill which we are reasonably sure every child will need as an adult and which should, therefore, be given to him while he has the leisure and plasticity of childhood? In making a curriculum should we plan in advance what minimum quantity of knowledge and skill every child should sooner or later possess and then strive to find the best methods and times for teaching him these things, or should we study the growing individual, work out activities from day to day and year to year to meet his growing interests and needs, and give him only such knowledge and skill as he requires for satisfying growth and full living at each stage of his development?"

The second section was hard to explain to some of those whom we interviewed. They had evidently never heard of "mental hygiene," or "integration of personality," and had very little idea of what we meant by "the emotional development of the child." The question was: "Is it a direct function of public school education to try to bring about a satisfactory emotional development of the child? Should an integrated personality, a well-adjusted emotional life, be consciously striven for in school? Is this aim sufficiently important so that if necessary, some of the academic work

of the school should be sacrificed in order to provide the time and money necessary for work in mental hygiene?"

When it came to explaining these terms and expanding this question through interpreters who could not find words equivalent in their own language, the difficulties were so great that the question often had to be abandoned.

There were other questions asked of different educators and there was also much that was volunteered by them as to their purposes, quite independent of our questions. These things will be brought out as each country's aims are considered.

CHAPTER TWO

EDUCATION UNDER THE HEAVENLY RULER—JAPAN

THE spring before we visited Japan, Count and Countess Hayashi and their daughter had visited us in Winnetka. It had been our privilege to have many visitors from Japan at different times, but in Count Hayashi we felt that for the first time we had come in contact with a man who could speak authoritatively for his country. Genial, very courteous, thoughtful, and with a ready humor, he commanded our instant respect and liking. He was on his way back from attending the World Federation of National Education Associations, of which he is vice-president. When we reached Japan we found that he was president not only of the Japanese Education Association, but of about twenty other organizations. He is professor of education in the Imperial University of Tokio and a member of the House of Peers.

While we were in Japan we were recipients over and over again of his personal and official hospitality and kindly thoughtfulness.

Count Hayashi's home is in two sections, one European in style, the other strictly Japanese—where you take off your shoes before entering, sit on the matted floor, and slide open the walls of rooms. Both parts of the house overlook a beautiful garden with brook and lagoon, curved stone