

# PRINCIPLES OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

*A Textbook for Students of Education*

BASED UPON WRITINGS OF REPRESENTATIVE EDUCATORS

BY

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## PREFACE

This volume has been compiled for use as a textbook in secondary education. The need for such a textbook has grown out of the impossibility of otherwise making accessible the best articles which have appeared in periodicals. In view of the fact that much of the best educational literature appears in magazines, the inability to employ this literature for instructional purposes has amounted to a severe handicap.

This volume makes four distinct contributions: first, it presents an organized collection of superior readings in secondary education; second, it presents comprehensive lists of principles of secondary education based upon the best writings of the present time; third, it presents a sufficient variety of education literature to enable teachers, if they choose, to approach each chapter by the problem method; and, fourth, it presents supplementary discussions which are designed to guide students successfully through a large body of professional reading.

In the use of this textbook, the principles which are stated at the close of each chapter can be proposed to students as theses or challenges to be defended or criticized by any evidence which students can adduce from the readings or from any other sources. In the employment of the problem method, the organization of Chapter I is suggestive of a suitable method to pursue in the study of the later chapters. At the close of each chapter are suggestions for study and discussion based largely upon the readings. These suggestions can of course be supplemented by the use of such subjects for topics as those catalogued at the close of the book. The bibliographies are intended for use in connection with this work.

Deep gratitude is here expressed to the authors of this

volume. It is a pleasure to record that not a single refusal to grant permission to quote articles or passages was encountered in the compilation of these readings. As many abridgments and adaptations have been made of certain articles, the compiler is responsible for any apparent ineffectiveness or unclearness in the passages. Gratitude is expressed to the editors of magazines who have been no less liberal than the original writers themselves. Appreciation is also acknowledged of the generosity and courtesy of publishing companies in permitting the reproduction of passages selected from their books.

Finally, the author acknowledges the material assistance rendered by his colleagues who read the manuscript as a whole or in part: to Professor A. S. Barr and Professor John Guy Fowlkes for their constructive criticisms of the manuscript as a whole, to Professor V. A. C. Henmon for his aid in the preparation of the chapters on the mental equipment of secondary school pupils, and to Professor A. H. Edgerton for his suggestions in the preparation of the chapter on the guidance of secondary school pupils.

If the passages reproduced in this volume continue to be read with as great profit as they have been in their original settings, and are read by greater numbers of students than could otherwise have had access to them, the purposes of this book will have been achieved.

WILLIS L. UHL

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## PART I

# THE AMERICAN PLAN FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

## CHAPTER I

### AMERICA ACCEPTS A CHALLENGE IN SECONDARY EDUCATION; IS HER TASK TOO GREAT?

The challenge which America has accepted in secondary education. In her provisions for secondary education, America is more liberal than any other nation. While other nations commonly exact a tuition fee for higher school privileges, America not only offers freedom of her schools but for certain pupils whose homes are remote from any high school even provides transportation to her schools. For instance, certain states not only open the pathway to secondary education but also compel attendance beyond the elementary school by statutory provisions.<sup>1</sup>

This liberality in the provision of secondary education is the natural and necessary result of the acceptance of a clearly defined challenge. This challenge is a part of American popular philosophy. It lies in the assertion that all persons are entitled to an opportunity to develop themselves in the best manner that they and society together can devise. Advocacy of this educational policy can be found not only among the statements of demagogues but also in the writings of astute administrators. One hundred years ago advocacy of universal education seems to have referred to the universal provision of elementary-school facilities; today, it refers also to the universal provision of high-school facilities.

<sup>1</sup>Chart No. 2 (to accompany Bulletin No. 55). Federal Board for Vocational Education, 1921.

But this policy of generosity does not pass unchallenged. For example, one who frequents college halls during registration days is likely to be informed that both secondary and collegiate education are now attempted by too large a number of persons. This statement is often followed by the assertion that the high school is culpable in granting diplomas too freely. It is even maintained by certain of these critics that too many boys and girls attempt to obtain a high-school education. Occasionally, similar comments are made by high-school teachers who hold that the present high-school practice is incorrect in attempting to provide for the universal distribution of its benefits. All these critics unite in asserting that a school of high standards attended by a carefully selected body of students would yield a far more valuable total product than that of present-day institutions. These critics say also that present-day high schools are conducted for the purpose of giving all high-school students forms of training which are adapted only to the needs of mediocre and inferior students. The implication of these criticisms is that instead of providing for the masses and neglecting the leaders, America should provide for the leaders and allow instruments of selection to eliminate the hindmost.

In addition to unqualified advocacy and adverse criticism of the policy of distributing widely the advantages of higher schools, there is a growing apprehension upon the part of certain critics. This apprehension arises from the belief that indefinite continuance of present policies will lead to a depreciated mental product, if, indeed, it does not bankrupt our exchequers. Persons who hold this view believe that school patrons as well as school officers must be apprized of impending educational dangers. These critics generally advocate further development of the high school, but they favor intensive as well as extensive development, more frequent and more accurate stock-taking of our high-school policies, and the cultivation of greater seriousness of purpose in high-school students. They advocate not retrenchment



or checking; instead, they advocate rational guidance in the administration of high-school policies.

The writings which follow indicate the magnitude of America's task in secondary education by discussions (1) of American policies; (2) of the lines of defense of America's policies; and (3) of the need for earnestly studying these policies to find suitable answers to the question, Is America attempting too great a task in secondary education?

#### THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT OF FREE HIGHER EDUCATION<sup>2</sup>

BY CHARLES H. JUDD

The fact is that America has launched in its program of a tax-supported higher education an experiment of such magnitude that there is some question as to our ability to see it through. This experiment was launched in a small way and without the slightest calculation on the part of communities as to the scope of the experiment. It has been running along for a period of years without encountering any serious obstacles. In recent years it has developed with tremendous rapidity. We have all been fascinated by this rapid growth of higher education, and we have applauded its expansion. Even today one can find no end of general enthusiasm for free high schools and state-supported universities. It seems to be the rankest kind of heresy even to use the word experiment. Yet experiment is the only legitimate descriptive word to apply to this whole series of undertakings.

Europeans have been more keenly aware than native Americans of the experimental character of our program. They have seen also the relation of our free high schools and higher institutions to our general social system. This clearer insight of the Europeans is due to the fact that their institutions corresponding to our higher schools are all tuition schools. There is no tax-supported secondary school in Europe, or for that matter any other continent except North America. Europe has never ventured to consider paying for higher schools out of public taxation. The higher schools abroad are class schools designed to give training only to the upper ranks of society. The upper classes have kept for themselves and their children the right to superior schooling and have never thought of admitting the lower classes

<sup>2</sup> *The School Review*, XXIX, 94-105. February, 1921. Abridged.



to a liberal share in higher learning; much less have they thought of offering it freely to all comers.

Europe has seen clearly in the contrast between American practices and her own the effort of a democracy to make intellectual opportunity as nearly universal as possible. Europe has also been very skeptical as to the success of this effort. Sometimes this skepticism has expressed itself in economic terms, and doubt has been recorded as to the possibility of raising a whole people to a higher level without disrupting industrial society; but more commonly the doubt of Europe has been expressed in social terms. How is America to develop leaders if she spreads her higher training like a thin veneer over the whole population?

We could afford to go on our way without heeding the skepticism of Europe if our experiment were meeting with unqualified success. Frankness with ourselves, however, compels us, in view of many recent happenings, seriously to ask whether the experiment is going on as we should like to have it.

First, let us ask whether we are really able to afford high schools. A short time ago there came to the writer of this article a letter from a town in the northern part of North Dakota containing the following paragraphs:

"Five successive crop failures in this part of the state have so reduced credit that the banks will no longer cash the teachers' salary warrants. The school district does not know where it can obtain funds. Bonds sold within the state could not secure money for at least a year because the school funds of the state are loaned out and come in slowly and a great many schools already have their applications for such funds on file. An attempt has been made to sell bonds but without success.

"The schools will have to be closed if some definite relief cannot be guaranteed soon. The teachers, of course, will not stay under present conditions. The local school board is unable to solve the problem, but is very eager to find a way out.

"The money stringency is general all over the country but is very much worse in the western part of North Dakota on account of low production for several years as stated above."

Perhaps someone will say this is not typical. Fortunately, it is not entirely typical, but unfortunately, on the other hand, it is the last stage of a journey on which many a larger and more

opulent community is well launched. New York City has been arguing about next year's budget, and the responsible officials of the city have repeatedly said that it is impossible to supply for the schools the funds said by the board of education to be indispensable. Chicago has a deficit in its school accounts of several millions of dollars and no sinking fund in sight with which to meet this deficit. Nor is this a temporary situation resulting from the war. The deficit is of long standing and has increased steadily for a number of years.

The same story can be told of cities large and small all over the country. The post-war economic stress has greatly accelerated the climax, but we have for some time been steadily approaching the point where the people of this country cannot find in ordinary taxes adequate funds for schools. For about a generation the schools have been steadily absorbing a larger fraction of the public revenue, and they have been increasing at an enormous rate their demands for equipment and support of every type.

The school deficits of the present day are not attributable in equal degree to the lower and higher schools. The higher schools are the ones which have shown the largest proportionate increase, and they are more expensive than the lower schools in every respect. The Bureau of Education reports that there were in attendance in high schools, public and private, last year 2,000,000 students. This is more than six times as many as there were in 1890. In the same interval the general population of the country has not quite doubled, and elementary schools have increased in a ratio only slightly more than the general population. Between the years 1909 and 1916 the number of teachers in public four-year high schools doubled, while the teachers in elementary schools increased somewhat less than 18 per cent. In short, the most notable expansion in public schools has been in the upper levels of the educational system.

The end is not yet. American communities have set for themselves the goal of a high-school education for every boy and girl. That this idea is seriously entertained appears in the legislation adopted in many states providing for the payment of a student's tuition when the district does not provide a high school of its own. It appears also in the rural high schools which one encounters in traveling through many a sparsely settled rural district. It appears in the laws which are being passed in progressive states raising the age of compulsory schooling from fourteen to sixteen or eighteen.