

Books listed

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Teachers, Schools and Schoolers

There can be no room for doubt as to the superiority of the public schools of to-day over the schools of a generation ago. Probably in no other one thing has this country made greater progress in the last quarter of a century than in the matter and in the methods of education. The graded schools found in all our large cities, and in many of the smaller towns, are marvels of system, and the results of the work in them command the admiration of the civilized world. And yet we find Oscar Chrisman, Ph. D., writing in the "Arena," saying: "We must change front and recognize that the school is made for the child and not for the teacher. At present only the appurtenances of the teacher are placed in it, and whatever may be done for the children is done only because the teacher's interests can be best served by such."

Possibly Professor Chrisman knows just what he is writing about, and doubtless he means just what he says. We would not for a minute take issue with so renowned and so profound an authority on the subject of education. Still, standing down among the "common" people, we can't help thinking that he is viewing education as too many people view life—"from upper windows." A little honest thought, after a little careful consideration of the methods of the public school systems, which are practically the same in most of the large cities, must lead to the belief that men who argue as Professor Chrisman argues, take an "upper air and solar walk" survey of education and form their views without getting right down amongst the working machinery of the common schools. Has Professor Chrisman ever spent a day or even an hour in the kindergarten department of any of the great public schools? Hardly, else we do not see how he could possibly say that "only appurtenances of the teacher are placed in the school room." The very basis of the Froebel system of "child gardening" is that the "garden" belongs to and must be cultivated by the child, the teacher being simply the guide and leader.

Coming up higher in the system of education, through the grammar and into the high schools, the scholars are taught first and all the time that they are chiefly concerned, and that without their interest in the work in hand—active, alert and earnest interest—nothing can be accomplished, work the teacher ever so hard. Things are not taught by rote now, as in the days when public education was in its infancy—in its experimental stage. The pupils, when they lay down their books or leave the class room know what they know, and they know that they know it. Literary, musical, social, athletic and even military organizations clubs and societies are all of them adjuncts to the school system especially calculated to arouse and hold the interest of the pupils. Contests and competitions, excursions to historic and otherwise interesting places; lectures and familiar talks by men of prominence in walks of life not connected with the schools—all these are drawn upon for contributions to the general fund of instruction and education. The one thing kept in view in ev-

ery step and at every stage of the journey in pursuit of knowledge is that nothing can be accomplished without effort and interest on the part of the pupils.

For convincing illustration of this, pay a visit to the manual training department of the public schools, and note how the interest of the scholar is caught and held. Attend some morning or some afternoon the cooking or the sewing or the house keeping classes, and give a little attention to the way in which the girls are lead to understand and to eagerly accept the spirit as well as the letter of all the things taught. In all these things will be found evidence that those in charge of the work of education thoroughly understand that the schools are for the scholars, and not for the teachers only. Still, the teachers have their rights, and these should be kept in view equally with the rights of the scholars. No workman, no matter what his calling, can do good work with poor tools. The best of results in any profession are secured where the surroundings and the environments are most in harmony with the work to be done and the achievements sought. The appurtenances of the teacher are as important as those of the scholar; the convenience and the comfort of the instructor are equally entitled to consideration as those of the child to be instructed. The interests of teacher and pupil are mutual—they are identical. It is only when this is recognized that satisfactory work can be done. That there is full recognition of it is shown by the results obtained in the public schools of America. No better proof that these results are obtained can be offered than the fact that England has sent five hundred teachers from her schools to travel in this country and study our school system, with a view to incorporating the best features thereof in the English system. Surely that fact alone is sufficient to answer to such critics as Prof. Oscar Chrisman, Ph. D.—The Woman's National Daily.

A Short Duration On \$400

When Maud and Theodore got married, four months ago, nobody in the world could have made either of them believe that the \$400 that was given them by Maud's foster father would ever be gone. It looked like a million and then some. It started out in Kansas—a sort of sunflower romance, he was 23 and she was 20. Her friends didn't think she ought to marry the young fellow, who had neither money nor a trade, but she insisted that his good reputation and absolute freedom from any sort of bad habits more than offset any disadvantages, never stopping to think that poverty is in itself one of the worst habits. They got married in spite of opposition and with the \$400 given Maud they set up housekeeping in just the dearest little love of a flat in Milwaukee, Wis., and snapped their fingers at fate and the future. It took fate and the future less than four months to get even, and now Maud has gone home to live with her foster folks in Kansas, and Theodore is ordered to pay, her \$3 a week. They found that

his wages of \$10 a week in a restaurant wouldn't go very far after they paid \$22 a month flat rent, and they found also that when poverty came stalking in the door it was awfully hard to keep the windows barred against the flight of love, even if Theodore didn't have any bad habits, and was "willing to do his best." Maud wants to be allowed to resume the name of McDowell, which she bore before swapping it for Wendtland when she became Theodore's wife. It was all because they didn't stop to think, as Maud herself told the court. She didn't have a word to say against Theodore, but she was hungry, and she had to have clothes, and Theodore's good habits and irreproachable manners would neither feed her nor keep her warm. But that was certainly a cosy little nest of a flat as long as they could pay the rent.

Implying Conceit

Many years ago Daniel Lord, Jr., as he always signed his name, then one of the shining lights of the bar in New York, was arguing a case before the Court of Appeals, when a country lawyer asked Charles O'Connor the name of the gentleman who was speaking.

"That," said Mr. O'Connor, who was rather nettled at something Lord had said, "that, sir, is Daniel Lord, Jr., and he puts the 'junior' after his name so that he may not be mistaken for the 'Almighty.'"

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