

**Demand Action on Track Depression Plan**

(Continued from Page 1)

ed that her committee, including Mrs. Burnham and Mrs. Parker, was still engaged in having the pictures, casts, etc. belonging to the association, in the public schools and library, cleaned and put in first class repair. She showed preliminary sketches and models made by Mrs. Coburn and Mrs. Burnham for proposed mural decorations in the new Skokie School and for use in connection with the drinking fountains.

**Music Committee Report**

Mrs. Otis, Music, reported as follows: "This last year the Music Committee ceased to be a sub-committee of the Municipal Art, as it was thought by being a separate group more active work could be undertaken. Consequently, as chairman, I have appointed three members on this committee, who have accepted the position. They are: Mrs. Burton Atwood, Mrs. William Sherman Hay and Mrs. Philemon Kohlsaet. "We will still, of course, take care of the carol singing around the Village Christmas Tree. This last year was the ninth time the carols have been sung, and we have plans for making them a greater success next year.

"Sponsored by the Village Improvement Association, the really important work which the committee hopes to accomplish this year is the organizing of a fine chorus under the direction of a professional conductor, to be started next fall. We should like it to be a second "Apollo Club," and be so good that we will be invited to take part in the North Shore Musical May Festival at Evanston.

"We have been to see Dean Lutkin of the Northwestern School of Music, and he has in mind two competent conductors, either one of whom, could we get to take charge of it, would make it a success. The Woman's Club, which is now equipped with a fine Steinway concert grand piano, will probably give us the opportunity to meet in the Club House once a week, free of rent. Many people have expressed themselves interested in the project. Dean Lutkin said the proportion of sixty women to forty men was a very good one. The chorus, of course, would not be composed of gifted soloists, but of people who love to use their voices in team work to make one fine whole. Many people have said they would be interested in the scheme, and when the final notice is sent out, the committee hopes for a hearty response from those who will pledge themselves to join the chorus. After a certain amount of practice the natural outcome will be the giving of really good concerts, which ought to be as enjoyable for the lover of vocal music, as are the delightful Little Symphony recitals for the lovers of instrumental. So all clear your throats and prepare to sing." Mr. Cobb reported on behalf of the committee on Franchises and Operations that he had presented to the Village Council a report on the electric road situation in connection with the expiration of the present franchise in May. The committee has this matter under observation.

Mr. Robert Wallace urged that upon the expiration of the Illinois Bell Telephone company franchise, steps be taken to have the poles removed from the street and the wires placed in conduits under-ground, these conduits to carry both the telephone and light wires.

Mr. Frank D. Fulton reported for the Membership Committee that they are canvassing a list of 4,000 prospective members of the Association in the Village and that good progress has been made thus far in securing new members. The meeting then adjourned.

**Country Day School Head Studies School Equipment**

Perry Dunlap Smith, principal of the North Shore Country Day school, left Thursday of this week to attend the National Education association convention at Cleveland, Ohio. While away from the village he will visit schools in Cleveland, Detroit and Dayton for the purpose of studying equipment of classrooms, laboratories with a view to obtaining the latest approved equipment for the new school building on the Winnetka campus.

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**Germans Devoid of Hope; Czechs Most Energetic Nation—Washburne**

**Superintendent of Schools Completes Investigation of European Educational Conditions**

Following is the third and final letter of a series dispatched from Europe by Carleton W. Washburne, superintendent of Winnetka schools, where he has been engaged for the past three months in the study and investigation of educational—particularly experimental schools—in the schools of the continent.

The tour is made in the interest of the Winnetka schools, the Illinois State Department of Public Instruction and the United States Bureau of Education.

The accompanying letter reads like a book of travels, giving an intimate insight into the life of the "average" people of the continent.

Mr. Washburne will write other articles for the Talk upon his return from Europe.

**En Route From Rome to Naples**

February 3, 1923

To the readers of the Weekly Talk, Dear People:

Since I last wrote to you from Geneva we have travelled far, have seen some remarkable educational experiments, and have had many interesting experiences. Now we are on the home stretch and as we pass through countries that are doing little educational work we are doing some typical American tourist sight-seeing. We shall be in Winnetka shortly after this letter—about March first.

From Switzerland, where we met Romain Rolland, and visited three interesting schools, we went through Munich and Vienna to Czechoslovakia. This is the liveliest country we have found. It has ancient traditions and an old and fine history, but has the freshness and vigor of a new-born republic. The Czech people are energetic and forward-looking. They look upon America as a sort of older sister—beneficent and wise; but, like most younger members of a family, they think they can improve somewhat upon what their elders have done, and resent too much advice.

We were beautifully entertained in Prague, the Czechoslovak ministry of education, the foreign office, and the Red Cross filling every minute of our time, giving us boxes at the opera, driving us everywhere in official automobiles, furnishing us with guides and interpreters, and generally making our stay both valuable and enjoyable. We were entertained at tea in President Masaryk's castle, by his daughter. And it was in Czechoslovakia that we found two of the most interesting schools of our whole trip.

**Find Remarkable School**

One of these schools was an orphanage, established at the little town of Stranov Krnsko by the Czech Legionaries for the orphans of legionnaires who fell during the war. It was bet-

ter than any boarding school for rich children we have seen—more beautiful in a simple, fine way; more homelike and natural; and as good as the best in educational methods. The art work of this school was the finest we have found, and was developed with complete freedom, the children making beautiful things for the love of it, not because they were forced to do it. They had built a tiny village for themselves off a way from the school, and in the afternoons were free to work or play as they saw fit in their little huts. They cooked the vegetables, they grew in their own gardens, on the stoves of their huts, and each night three of them were allowed to sleep in their home-made houses. We spent Christmas eve and Christmas with these children, and found them remarkably lovable—natural and unrepressed and free, without disorder.

**Genius of Cripples**

The other school in Czechoslovakia that impressed us strongly was one for cripple children in Prague. The director had left an institution where they would not give him freedom to work out his own ideals of education, and twelve little cripples had followed him. By the work of their hands, although several fingers were often missing, or even by the skillful work of the toes of one armless boy, the little group managed to make its own living under the direction of their teacher and leader, Bakule. Some wealthy Americans had learned of their struggles and had given the Czech Junior Red Cross enough money to buy a house for them. And in this house we saw them working and heard them sing. They changed their beds into work benches during the day—they made their own furniture and equipment, they kept their own books and sold the things they made; and through it all they were taught to read and write and calculate, freely and unsystematically, but in the end effectively. They were being trained to earn their own living in spite of their deformities and were being given a bright and wholesome view of life—Nowhere was this more evident than in their singing, which was the loveliest child singing any of us had ever heard. Every child's eyes were fixed on Bakule as he led them; they laughed and rollicked through the gay

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songs, but always with the right musical feeling; they sang the Star Spangled Banner in our honor, with a peculiar Slavic tempo and lilt, and a lisping broken English, but with such a feeling of gratitude to America for having given them their home that it stirred us profoundly; and they sang an old Slavic folk song with such pathos and beauty that no one in the room had dry eyes. And it was all in a dingy kitchen, the little group of deformed children—hunch backed, or armless, or with crippled legs—gathered at one side in the rather dim light, while we sat on kitchen chairs at the other side and listened.

It is possible that these children of Bakule's will come to America on a tour this spring. If they do they have promised to come to Winnetka and sing for all of you in the Jane Kuppenheimer Memorial Hall at Skokie.

(Continued on page 10)

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