

The Bankruptcy of Education.

By FREDERIC BURK (President of the San Francisco State Normal School).

With the abandonment of the dogma of faculty discipline, which assured us that all the powers of mind could be acquired by formal exercises in dead languages, school mathematics, etc., there clearly remains but one alternative—to train the pupils for the specific goal it is desirable to reach. This alternative permits no compromise. The exercises which prepare for life are the duties, knowledge, and emotional attitudes of existing life itself, which the world's workers are currently using. The alternative recognizes that like produces only like, and, therefore, repudiates those exercises such as Latin or algebra, which in themselves are acknowledged to be unused, except as mental trapezes of the schoolroom. It requires that the pupil's energy shall be centred upon the mastery of those things which existing world life requires of its active and productive journeymen; anything less is insufficient, and anything of a different character is irrelevant.

How shall we obtain such a course of study, and who shall systematize it? Manifestly, the first step in the task is to catalogue the essential duties, items of knowledge, and emotional attitudes current in the world's usage. This material must then be set up and arranged in the schools as goals of instruction, and the business of the pedagogue will be to enable the pupil to acquire these world-used materials to an effective degree as readily as possible. We must not interpret the term "world-use" in any narrow sense, as the ascetic pedagogue of the past, with his inherent prejudice against worldly affairs, has been prone to do. The world uses vocations as a means of breadwinning, but the world also uses music, art, literature, the drama, social conveniences, just as intensely, just as essentially, just as relevantly. We may, indeed, say that preparation for the social activities of life is equally as essential and necessary as for that of breadwinning, since in the average man's life they are approximately equal factors. Because the world uses religion, art, music, the drama, literature, civic ideals, etc., these are as legitimate and important goals of education as breadwinning. Each item of life must be given place in the school, proportionate to the currency of the role it plays upon the world's stage. Scholarly prejudice has been especially vindictive toward the recognition of any interpretation of the word "use," since its recognition would lead to a prompt indictment of most of the subjects and materials of the present dumb-bell curriculum, because these never were, in any sense, used.

The principle of current world-use, as a canon of selection of the material to be taught in school, at once reduces pedagogy to extreme simplicity. We are not called upon to enter upon hair-splitting questions to determine what should be taught. The simple fact that the world currently uses the multiplication tables, but does not currently use the apothecaries' weights, is sufficient and complete justification for teaching the former and omitting the latter. Similarly, upon the same ground, the schools should teach the story of Julius Caesar and neglect the Kings of Madagascar; should teach the civic ideals of the twentieth century and should dwell upon those of the sixteenth century only to the extent that the intelligent world currently knows them; should teach the used applications of electricity and should deal cursorily with the question of what electricity is, etc. The intensity and time devoted to any subject in the school will be determined by the degree of currency it obtains in intelligent world usage. For example, geography, unquestionably, is a most important subject if we regard it from the standpoint of world usage, and it covers an immense amount of territory. The knowledge of it in the world's workshop is the chief insignia by which we may distinguish the truly intelligent from the unintelligent. Yet, while both the world and the school consume a great deal of geographical know-

ledge, it is singular that the school type of geography and the world type are so different. While the school graduate is notorious for his ignorance of world geography when he goes into life, nevertheless our most intelligent citizens can easily be floored by a seventh grade examination in school geography and relegated to the class of unfortunates who must repeat the subject with the next class. This sort of thing should not and must not be. We must go through our school courses with a pruning-knife and a shovel, cutting out fruitless limbs and filling in earth to give them some resemblance to world knowledge. Our geography is just escaping from the vocationalist—the sailor, who insisted on having all land children know the capes and channels of his journeys. It becomes the modern schoolmaster's business to make these adjustments of school work to life work in accordance with the law of relative proportion.

We cannot travel very far upon this principle before the fact is forced upon our realization that, while all pupils need education in some affairs of life (such as those of the social, civic, family, moral, artistic, and poetic phases of world civilization), other phases, such as vocation, are special only to individuals, and need occupy the attention of the few who propose to follow each special pursuit. There are, therefore, in general, two classes of world-used materials

fund of human civilization, fails as readily as the man of general intelligence who is without a vocation. Therefore, in addition to a common school for all, the school system should include special departments, corresponding to the diversity of vocations and special pursuits, among which, for a portion of the school time, the pupils shall be distributed.

This would bring us to a discussion of the case of the technical schools. The common schools have had for their aim the preparation of pupils for the affairs of life which men have in common. The technical schools have for their avowed aim the preparation of the youth in the vocations of life. Both historically and theoretically the technical schools, with the exception of theology and medicine, have an altogether different origin from our common schools. Vocational preparation by means of schools is new. The technical school is clearly the legitimate child of the modern demand for direct world preparation. The last half-century has seen prodigious development and growth in this field. The technical school has been driven into our educational system by a force more or less unconscious of itself. There is a real feeling that, however axiomatic the theoretic arguments for the established pedagogic dogmas, there is nevertheless something wrong with the output. The demand for technical schools by the modern world really struck a blow at the foundation principle of the established schools.

Under the psychological dogma of our established theory, this specific preparation for each of life's varied situations was not necessary; for the theory contended that faculties, sharpened by algebra, Latin, grammar, etc., were quali-

tute manhood and womanhood and without which the world will not give place to them to work as specialists. If we take the intelligent and successful men from all the various vocations, we shall find that they possess, by the necessities of modern life's requirements, a certain common body of knowledge and sentiments which, though comparatively limited, are nevertheless indispensable. All, for example, can read, write, and use the common operation of figures. They know certain common facts of business life, of social and political ideas and customs. The landmen do not know all that the sailor knows of the sea, nor do the sailors know all that the landmen know of the land; but the intelligent landmen's knowledge of the sea and the intelligent sailors' knowledge of the land are necessary in order that they may sail their ships and plow their furrows in the direction of one another's ports of entry.

Therefore do I believe in a school system which shall be like a tree with roots, trunk, and branches. The roots shall reach into the soil of common humanity and draw up from its common sentiments of husband, father, neighbor, and citizen, training the child to love those specific acts or events which our civilization has declared to be good, right, and true; and to hate those specific things which our civilization has declared to be false and wrong; a trunk which shall give that body of knowledge which all intelligent men find necessary, regardless of vocation. Finally, we must have a series of parallel schools which shall prepare our pupils for the varieties of vocational life as specialists. Ideally, this system could be carried out by a common school surrounded by the various special vocational schools. For a portion of the schoolday, of the month, or of the year, all pupils would attend the common school, receiving instruction and training in that knowledge and those sentiments which constitute the common life, and for another portion of the school time they would be instructed in that knowledge and trained in the skill pertaining to some one of the vocations or special pursuits. The vocational training would run in parallel lines to the common courses. All vocational training would not begin at the same common school. Some such as medicine law, etc., it would probably not be advisable to begin until late, probably the



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—(1) those things which are used by all world workers in common and (2) those which are special to vocation or individual pursuit. Two types of schools in conformity with world condition follow as a logical necessity—one to furnish that education which all world workers in common possess; and a second to provide training in at least one of the special vocations or pursuits of life which the individual proposes to pursue.

A large part of the lives of all is spent in one common field of living. We all live in homes under the customs and laws of the family; all live in the state with certain civic duties and customs which, for the well-being and safety of each, all must obey; all live in social relations one with another; and for our social intercourse certain other customs, conventions, laws, and amusements are essential. Moreover, there are certain general fields of knowledge, covering history, geography, science, industries, inventions, art, literature, government, etc., which all persons of intelligence, regardless of vocation, possess in common. Because this field of knowledge is held in common, it would seem to be necessary, and persons lacking it, though possessing vocational specialization, fail to be world workers. Nor can we overlook the fact, as we too often have overlooked it, of this common fund of ideals, knowledge, and sentiments of the vocation itself. The man, skilled in his vocation, but essentially lacking in this common

fied to meet any situation or problem. Consequently our schools have tenaciously resisted the demand for differentiation of courses. With the overthrow of this dogma, we must face the other alternative of specific preparation. In our educational reconstruction, a clear relation is, therefore, necessary that, if vocational training is to be undertaken by the school system, we must provide separate schools or departments into which pupils may be segregated for a part of the time according to vocational goal. Into each will be consigned all the knowledge and training special to these pursuits, and pupils of one pursuit will not thus waste time in learning the knowledge belonging to other pursuits. But all persons, regardless of sex, vocation, or class, have much, if not the principal part, of their lives in common with all other persons. Our common school course should, therefore, be practically identical for all persons, regardless of social class, wealth, or previous condition. Vocations are merely the clothes we wear, and into the wearer of these clothes must be breathed, if life is to be successful, the breath of human life, its general human intelligence, its human sentiments for the home, society, and the state. Men are not only specialists but, if they take men's places as men in civilization's progress, they must have a certain body of common intelligence, common ideals, and common sentiments which consti-

eighteenth year; others, such as certain commercial or mechanical trades, might easily begin in the eighth or ninth school year. The common education would cover a long period; for much that is common knowledge, such as the comprehension of duties of citizenship, the study of science, etc., requires a certain degree of maturity. The important requirements would be that all students should complete this common course, regardless of vocation. The boys who began trades or those pursuing business courses or those preparing for law or medicine would have the same general training in common intelligence. The pupils whose parents belong to the more well-to-do class must have no advantages over those whose parents are less well off. All must have the same common education; for all alike are to have homes, all are to be citizens, and no domestic, social, or civic ambition within the realization of this proud democracy must be denied anyone because he lacks the common elements of civilization; nor can our Government safely exist if all voters are not reasonably intelligent and guided by the same common sentiments toward the home, society, and the state.

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