

Elementary School Prey To Fads, Says Butler

Columbia President Assails Modern Development in Education—Says Emotionalism Has Run Riot.

(New York Evening Post)

"The elementary school, being universal, well organized, and easily accessible, has been seized upon by faddists and enthusiasts of every type as an instrumentality not for better education but for accomplishing their own particular ends."

This direct charge made by President Butler of Columbia University in his annual report, has aroused the friends of education. They are asking Dr. Butler for a bill of particulars.

What Are Fads?

Just what does Dr. Butler mean by fads and faddists? Does he argue for a return to the "three R's," as most of those who clamor about fads do? No, for he says in a passage immediately following the pronouncement printed above:

"The simple business of training young children in good habits of diet, exercise, and conduct; of teaching them the elementary facts of the nature which surrounds them and of the society of which they form a part; of giving them the ability to read understandingly, to write legibly, and to perform quickly and with accuracy; the fundamental operations with numbers, has been pushed into the background by all sorts of enterprises that have their origin in emotionalism, in ignorance, or in mere vanity."

Here, in a few words, Dr. Butler has himself summed up the demands of those who seek progress in education. Diet, exercise, and conduct mean, if they mean anything, health education, home economics, physical education, an moral education—all "fads" to the usual critic of the schools. "The elementary facts of the nature which

surrounds them and of the society of which they form a part" sound simple, doesn't it? Yet in this one sentence the broad fields of nature and of the social sciences are included, so Dr. Butler's own programme is sufficiently comprehensive. What, then, are the fads? Dr. Butler does not mention "vocational training," for which he deserves our gratitude; no one proposes to give "vocational training" to elementary school pupils. In a few advanced schools there are efforts to teach children to know their own world by actually doing things; but these activities all have their goal precisely that set by Dr. Butler.

Secondary Schools, Too.

But the secondary school is even worse than the elementary school, according to President Butler. "Through lack of knowledge of educational value," he says, "and their fear of an unformed public opinion the secondary schools and the colleges have very largely abdicated their place as leaders in modern life and have become the plaything of whatever temporary and passing influences may operate upon them. In the hope of becoming popular they have thrown overboard principle. Throughout elementary school, high school, and college teachers are too often not teachers at all, but preachers or propagandists for some doctrine of their own liking. One would think that the business of teaching was sufficiently simple and sufficiently important to be kept unconfused with other forms of influence; but such has not been the case. Very many teachers are preachers or propagandists first and teachers afterward."

One wonders what teachers Dr. Butler has known—especially in elementary schools.

And what is President Butler's cure for all this? Well, Columbia College has provided a course entitled "Introduction to Contemporary Civilization." It is proposed to remedy all the evil that has been done, at least as far as Columbia students are concerned, by five lectures a week. In addition, a special course in reading has been devised providing "a rich feast of reason." With these things, desirable enough, we might agree. Dr. Butler proposes to undo the damage wrought by the real years of education that have gone before.

What Critics Forget.

President Butler and similar critics of American modern education always forget one fundamental fact—that the United States today is trying to educate a much larger proportion of its people than any other nation in the world at any period of history. That is why comparisons of college students with those of England, for instance, are valueless. We give secondary and higher education to so large a proportion of our people that inevitably the process of selection cannot be as rigid.

Another point that the critics of the schools generally forget is that the school, after all, has the child but a fraction of the time. The Chief American educational agency, especially in the early and most impressionable years, is still the home. The organized school can do much, of course, but the unconscious influence and active efforts of parents and others in the home are factors in a child's life that overshadow any formal education he may be getting. Teachers realize this every day of their teaching lives, and some parents realize it; but it is so easy to blame somebody else. And then, when we don't like the results of our bringing up of our own children, how easy it is to charge it to the school, and say that the "failures" are due to sacrifice of the "fundamentals" for the "fads."

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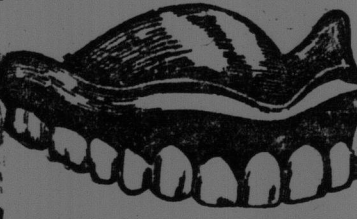


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U. S. EXPORTS TO GERMANY GROW

Washington, Dec. 10.—Great Britain and Japan were the only ones of the larger countries that took fewer goods from the United States in October than during the same month a year ago, while Germany, Canada, Mexico, Chile and the Dutch East Indies were the only countries from which the United States received more goods than during the corresponding period of 1919.

Exports to Germany in October totaled \$82,446,285, an increase of \$12,000,000 over those of October a year ago, while imports from that country were valued at \$8,021,701, an increase of \$6,000,000.

Goods shipped to Great Britain were valued at \$10,047,821, a decrease of \$4,000,000, while shipments from that country to the United States were valued at \$8,017,128, a decrease of \$8,000,000.

France received \$79,092,926 in shipments from the United States, an increase of \$18,000,000, while it shipped to the United States \$11,749,406 in commodities, a decrease of \$3,500,000.

Shipments to Italy were valued at \$85,698,826, an increase of \$4,000,000, while imports from Italy were valued at \$4,355,860, a decrease of \$9,000,000.

Exports from Brazil totaled \$15,143,013, an increase of \$3,000,000, and imports from Brazil were \$14,498,109, a decrease of \$10,000,000.

Chile took \$4,867,920 in American goods, an increase of \$1,000,000, and sent to the United States goods valued at \$7,807,280, an increase of \$2,000,000.

Japan received \$7,000,000 less in goods from this country, the total being \$12,067,012, and shipped to the United States \$22,000,000 less, the total imports from Japan being \$21,028,780.

Exports to Canada of \$86,448,891 showed an increase of \$19,000,000, while imports from Canada were \$71,541,274, a decrease of \$16,000,000.

Exports to Cuba increased \$24,000,000, totaling \$31,884,014, while imports from that country fell off \$26,000,000, totaling only \$11,265,080.

Central America took \$6,978,714 in American goods, an increase of \$2,000,000, and it sent to this country goods valued at \$2,449,150, a decrease of nearly \$1,000,000.

Mexico's imports from the United States increased \$11,000,000, the total being \$20,702,598, while it sent to this country \$12,271,375 in commodities a decrease of \$600,000.

To China the United States shipped \$12,841,739 in goods, an increase of \$5,000,000, while imports from China fell off \$10,000,000, totaling only \$9,518,252.

Shipments to the Dutch East Indies aggregated \$6,113,544, an increase of \$8,000,000, and imports from those islands were valued at \$19,248,750, an increase of \$12,000,000.

GO TO IT BOYS—GOOD LUCK!

That attractive furnishings such as mahogany floor lamps, table lamps, ornate candlesticks, book ends, slimmer stands and various other items of rich wood can be manufactured right in St. John and sold with duties, rates of exchange and wide margins of profit, will be demonstrated by the enterprising firm of Hoyt Bros. at 47 Germain St., who have just opened their store for the Christmas season some of the lines they intend putting on the market. Messrs. Hoyt are retiring from the fancy goods business, but will retain their extensive picture framing, kodak and amateur finishing trade, coupling with it the designing and manufacturing of the art mahogany work above mentioned. These young men have followed that trade for years, as has their father before them, and with new designs and close touch with American and European markets expect to bring about a new state of affairs for the wholesale trade of Eastern Canada. They claim to be able to reduce the cost to the ultimate consumer to a pre-war basis. This announcement should therefore hold much interest to wholesalers as well as retail buyers. One of the special departments in the Hoyt workshops will be a lamp shade room, where expert young women will create the silk, satin and other qualities of art shades for the floor, table and wall lamps. One of the young ladies recently returned from New York, where she gathered up the latest ideas in designs and colorings.

PLAN VOCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR FAIRVILLE

At a largely attended meeting in the Fairville school last night the people of that district passed a resolution approving of the establishment of vocational training, if the matter could be arranged. The meeting was presided over by Frank V. Hamm and was addressed by Fletcher Peacock, director of vocational training for the province. Entire sympathy with the movement was expressed by those present. A committee was appointed to look into the matter and to make all inquiries as to its feasibility. The members of the committee chosen were: L. W. Simms, Mr. Goodspeed, Mrs. J. Boyle Travers, Mrs. Hetherington and Alexander Wilcox.

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Y. M. H. A. FAIR CLOSURE.

Last night was the final night of the Y. M. H. A. fair. The building was filled to capacity and good business was recorded. All the prizes that were left over were auctioned off and were snapped up as quickly as they were put up for sale. Prizes were won last night as follows: Door prizes, first ticket No. 1880, raffle; second prize, 1721, \$10; third, 1820, \$5. Other prizes: Picture, No. 107, G. H. Garson; M. D. Doherty, 61 Mill street, boudoir cap; L. Boyaner, smoking set; M. Friedman, a sweater. The winner of the fancy pillow was Mrs. Fitzburn, of St. John West.

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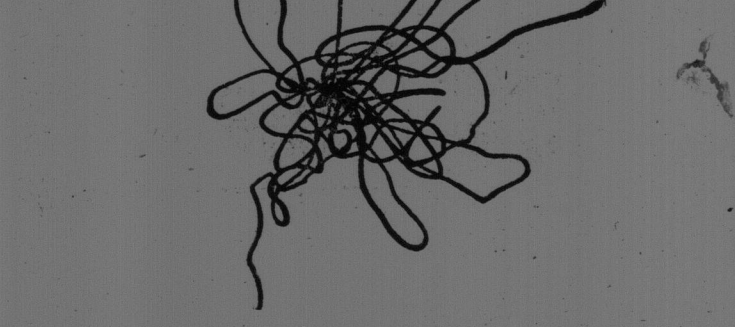
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PROSPERITY IN MEXICO.

Mexico City, Nov. 25.—(A. P. Correspondence.)—Encouraging reports have been received here from the states of Sonora and Sinaloa, where the return of prosperity is noted by the announcement that these states expect to export 15,000 carloads of agricultural products to the United States within the next few available for export. The railroads of the region are making great effort to provide the necessary transportation have at least 2,000 tons of refined sugar facilities.

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