

prove his thesis that "social conservation is obviously pre-requisite to social progress."

But what are the specific findings for educational administration and for pedagogy of Professor Finney's interpretations of contemporary social requirements? One he states very explicitly; liberal education of high-school grade must be greatly extended and made more accessible. Another he implies: pedagogy (in the lower grades?) must be made "hard," must aim chiefly at habituation, must not yield to some curious superstitions entertained by educated people as to the social function of compulsion. We shall hope that Professor Finney, from the excellent vantage point which he has established, will give us other specific proposals to consider. It is highly desirable also that the proponents of "soft pedagogy" (if there are any willing to accept the imputation) shall be heard from in connection with the new issues of moral and civic education which the war has brought to the front.

To the present writer much of existing confusion regarding "hard vs. soft pedagogy" derives from a disposition on the part of educational philosophers as well as from the orator on the street corner and the business man (ready to tell you in five minutes "what is wrong with education") to rely excessively on a few ultra-simple formulae. Man, confronted by complex and imperfectly understood situations, tends of course to seek magic formulae and catchwords of interpretation, incantation, and legislation; he places large hopes in panaceas; he despises and hates the labor of making detailed distinctions and evaluations.

Why should not some pedagogy be "soft" and some "hard," using popular interpretations of these terms? Need a child learn his mother tongue to the extent required to communicate with his playmates by "hard" methods? On the other hand, except for a few gifted spirits, is there any "soft" road to excellence in literary or business English as these may be required by competent reporters and good stenographers?

Why do writers who desire to emphasize the importance of "habituation" associate that comprehensively with "hard" pedagogy? Some kinds of habits, but some kinds only, are so alien to the instinctive nature of men that they can be formed only by prolonged and arduous drill—a foreign language learned in adult years, self-control in the presence of danger, aeroplane steering, speaking to an audience. But a very large variety of habits and habitual attitudes are learned almost "naturally" — stone throwing, tree climbing, the speech of childhood's associates, loyalty to gangfellows, fear of "bogies." Much of that social conservation which depends upon habituation is very largely realized, both in school and out, by a pedagogy that is as "soft" as playing with Teddy bears or eating candy. But there are some elements in it which can only be saved by a "hard" pedagogy at appropriate stages of growth—as hard, perhaps as corporal punishment, military drill, prolonged verbal memorization, or the severe self-discipline of the athlete.

"Habituation precedes thinking and deliberated choice." Is not this too sweeping? Uncritical people may accept it as meaning that the school education of children should be exclusively education through habituation up to some age of reason—twelve, fourteen, sixteen?—after which they are ready for "thinking and deliberated choice." But, of course, Professor Finney does not mean that—and yet it is not exactly clear what he does mean. Are there no areas of reasoning, expression and action normally accessible to children of from four to six years of age in which they are fully ready for "thinking and deliberated choice"? On the other hand, our military and political experience would seem to show that there are other areas in which full-grown men of average ability and education are not ready to be entrusted with authority to "reason why."

Is it not the obligation of educators to seek for the "balanced ration" ap-