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public schools is in the nation itself. Despite anarchists, society is not yet to be despaired of ; and if we can rightly say, as we may, that our age and our nation are making for higher ideals, and purer living, for all that we mean by righteousness, then not only cannot the great public system be a corrupting influence, but it must be an active, powerful moral agent, whose best results are yet to be seen. And in spite of its yet being perfectable, in spite of its offering many hard problems for solution, a great moral agent many believe it to be.

H. Buchanan Ryley

Late Senior Scholar, Exeter Coll., Oxford: Teacher of Anct. Langs. and Hist., Colo. Springs High School, Colo.

THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL

PART I

The thoughtful man looks upon the past with respect, upon the present with both satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and toward the future, as the case may be, with hope or with despair.

In the past, the American high school has been not a product of the college reaching downward, but of the public schools reaching upward. In many States the public system of education has reached still farther upward, and we find the State University an integral part of a grand system, extending from the primary grades through the secondary school—the high school—to higher institutions of learning. Yet in the past the independence of every intermediate system of schools in this great whole was as unquestioned as that of the most advanced institution. Each system did its best for intellectual development on the broadest lines, and no right of the more advanced to dominate the less advanced was either asserted or voluntarily admitted. The gloriously Greek, the great American, idea of free development, as contradistinct to the European or Ro-

* Paper read before the Secondary Department of the N. E. A., Asbury Park, July 12th. 1894.

man idea of autocratic regulation of the entire educational system, ruled with practically no opposition.

In the present there is found a new influence at work, which with, I hope, no likelihood of giving offence, I may call the trans-oceanic influence. Many of our educators who abroad or at home, have studied the foreign, and more especially the German schools, have become dissatisfied with the American system. These are more and more insistently advocating a complete co-ordination of the free public schools and the corporate pay (often very high pay) schools and colleges. The Report of the Committee of Ten, which I must here reluctantly pass by with mere mention, is by some people considered a partial application of the trans-oceanic idea to our public school system. Before we can intelligently pronounce upon the probable advantage or disadvantage that would result from the adoption of the trans-oceanic system, we must have clearly in view the present status and condition of the American High School.

When it was found that many children would, if public facilities were afforded, continue their school work up to the age of eighteen or nineteen, the high school was established. Preparation of pupils for higher institutions, other than those which would admit on certificate high school graduates of good standing, was an afterthought. There is no trace of this in the original plan : in most high schools preparation for college, adapted to the requirements for admission, is a feature of recent introduction. The main function of the high school never has been, and is not now, to satisfy the arbitrary requirements for admission to particular colleges, nor to conform to the preparation desired less specifically by colleges in general. I believe that the province of the American High School has been, is now, and ought to continue to be, the strengthening and broadening, to the greatest possible degree, of its pupils, irrespective of probable destination in life. High School graduates should be men to vote, and women to vote or influence votes, who have learned those lessons of history and of philosophy which teach

the inevitable conditions of our existence,—who have made that acquaintance with the problems of the past and of the present which alone saves from the pitfall of fanaticism. More of this later, for we are now considering the actual condition of the high school.

The introduction of a college preparatory course, arranged to meet the requirements of the ordinary college, necessarily hampered the freedom of the general course. With a limited number of teachers, a compromise was necessary. Some studies of the general course—Latin, for instance—were confined to the texts and portions of texts required by the college. On the other hand, the “college class” was compelled to study physics, which is not absolutely required by any college, and was also forced to devote to an extensive course in English Literature energy which, in view of the coming college work, might better be given to direct college preparatory work and to much needed reviews. Also, in a more subtle manner, the college preparatory course has tended to limit the scope of work in the high school by creating an assumption that it is not the business of the high school to touch subjects of study claimed by the colleges as their exclusive property. I am inclined to trace to this source the lack of spirit in the work of the general course which has appeared to the public as indicating the decadence of the high school. The restless desire on the part of school officers to change the course of study is a natural consequence of shaken public confidence in the vitality of the schools.

In other words, we have come to an era of change in the history of the American High School. Much depends upon the wisdom or unwisdom which may characterize the changes which will undoubtedly be made. Let us examine the elements which will determine the result.

I may be wrong, but I consider those who would tack technical training to the high school, enemies both of technical and of liberal education. I believe that both schemes of mind moulding are injured by being forced into conjunction when

both have important fields widely sundered in their very nature.

There are at present formed, or at least forming, among those who wish to be friends of the high school of liberal aim, two parties, with principles in their nature antagonistic. The one clings to the idea of the independent high school. It boldly stands for a broad course, which shall lay the foundation—supply the rudimentary data—of the greatest practicable number of liberal studies, defining liberal studies as those which “regard rather intellectual improvement than the necessity of subsistence.” Each subject shall be developed to an extent determined by two requirements,—that a lasting impression shall be made upon the mind, and that other studies of the course shall not be cramped. This party has for its watchword: “The best equipment for living” and “The greatest good to the greatest number.” Preparation for colleges that will not open their doors to high school graduates is relegated to a separate and, so far as possible, distinct department. The broad minded and patriotic members of this party fervently desire that all pupils so endowed and so situated as to make it advisable, should pursue their studies beyond the high school. They feel that as many colleges do now, more still will do hereafter, and that the graduates of good high schools will one day be welcomed without question in all the colleges and universities of the land. Meanwhile they would make the college preparatory course as efficient as the most earnest effort can accomplish. They make their stand upon the interests of that large majority of pupils who have no intention of going beyond the high school. They would provide for the two or three, whose intention might in some way be altered, by special assistance in and out of school hours until they could adapt themselves to the college course. Every pupil, they believe, should be encouraged to aim at the highest degree of culture attainable. They smile at the new notion that all studies are of equal educational value as being from experience false. It is also slyly suggested that, even if this notion were not false, it would be

no argument for the exclusion of political economy and mental and moral philosophy.

In a meeting of the Council, Prof. Wheeler said that the colleges represent great vested interests, and are here to stay; that he is opposed to the German dualism of Gymnasium and University, and in favor of a *trialism*—high school, college, university; that the colleges turn out the men who have been of great value—men of strong purpose grounded upon good training. All this is undoubtedly true of the college, and all honor to that institution; but there is another consideration. Both he and Prof. King dodge the question as to which college or set of colleges shall determine the high school course; for there is a wonderful difference, as every college preparatory teacher knows to his cost, in the requirements of colleges. Would it not be well, say the defenders of the high school independence, for the colleges to come together and co-ordinate themselves before they attempt to co-ordinate the high schools?

The other party—the party of the trans-oceanic idea—would so order the high school as to make it dovetail into a system which, with the jealously exclusive college, should afford a liberal education, and without the college an education absolutely curtailed of certain branches of liberal study. The aggressive members of this party hold that certain subjects *PER SE* belong to the high school work, and that others may be taught incidentally, but must not appear as regular separate studies. “A few things thoroughly” and the “coördination of the high school with the college” are their watchwords. Upon examination, the “few things” are found to be those traditionally required as foundation for college work or gradually being introduced as college requirements. They speak of schools* “called gymnasial in Germany, secondary in France, and preparatory in America,” and would include the high schools in this class. The independently developed American high school has, in their view, no ground for existence, and is simply the product of the necessarily chaotic conditions of a

*Dr. J. C. Mackenzie in *School Review*.

new country. Such, in brief, is the attitude of the two high school parties.

If there is one important change advocated by members of both parties, it is that of the addition of two years to the traditional four years high school course. Supporters of this idea propose that the high school shall receive pupils two years earlier. It is argued that both the languages and the sciences would benefit by this change, which means nothing more than the introduction of certain studies at an earlier stage in the child's school course.

The battle is on between the two high school parties. That deceitful period of proposed compromise, of honeyed, hollow protestations that each party is faithfully considering the interests of the other, will soon pass. In one camp or the other the combatants will face each other "to do or die." It would be foolish to claim that all the right is with the one side or with the other; but I here put myself on record as a private in the ranks of the Independent American High School, preparing pupils for any college, however difficult of entrance, through a college course, and giving to those who are not going to college all the liberal study practicable. I believe that the needed impulse will come through thought-inspiring work, work which will force the teacher to draw out the pupils' minds upon the broad platform of human interests, there to wrestle with them and make them their own in the great cause of religion, patriotism, and humanity. Cut and dried, mere salary earning work, if it exists, will cease, just as the slavish conservatism of a foreign aristocratic government disappears in the free air of America. The signs are appearing. Mr. Morgan, superintendent of the Cincinnati schools, is about to introduce "thought periods" into the course of the lower schools. These periods are to displace mechanical work, and in them it will be the duty of the teachers to induce their pupils to make synthetic use of the material acquired in their formal recitations. It is in the air that mechanical drudgery in preparing for examinations upon lengthy and spiritless courses will give

way for vital work. The demand is for lesser amount of required work, and for enrichment. The exertion of moral force, as well as the skillful employment of drill, must find place in every recitation. It makes no difference whether a course comes under the head of Information Courses or under that of Training Courses, so long as it fits properly into a well rounded whole. Character building is the real object. The ethical element must not be absent from anything taught, and the natural development as to subjects must be allowed. No subject should be excluded as a subject, but simply because it is not reached specifically in the development of the child's mental and moral powers within high school years. The testimony of actual experience is here both sole evidence and conclusive evidence, and no A PRIORI conclusion is of value.

The teachers are ready and willing to make a noble response to this demand that they give greater prominence to the ethical element, and we shall soon find none who are merely drill masters on so many pages of U. S. School regulations, but all will be ministers of light, teaching to the young those things, "the knowledge of which continues in heaven." †

HOW THE HIGH SCHOOL MAY ADVANCE PATRIOTISM

PART II

Alarmists are beginning to cry aloud that patriotism is declining in our precious native land. It is probably true that the era of buoyant, boasting patriotism is forever past, but of calm and, if necessary, obstinately resistant patriotism, there certainly is no lack. Yet the first indication of a decline of patriotism should be watched for as Elizabeth's scout-ships watched for the Spanish Armada, and every resource should be strained to prove that the lion of patriotic love but seemed to drowse. Defeat at the hands of a foreign foe may be borne with fortitude, and prove a blessing in disguise. Curtailed in

†Part of school motto.