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# Ella Flagg Young

And a Half Century of the  
Chicago Public Schools



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ELLA FLAGG YOUNG

AND A HALF-CENTURY OF THE  
CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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ELLA FLAGG YOUNG

*From the portrait by Louis Betts in the Chicago Art Institute.*

# Ella Flagg Young

*And a Half-Century of the  
Chicago Public Schools*

BY

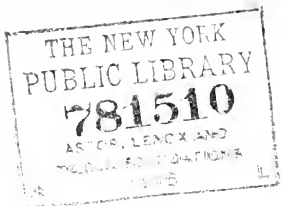
JOHN T. McMANIS, Ph.D.

*PORTRAITS, ETC.*



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1916



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Published September, 1916

## PREFACE

THE difficulties encountered in writing the life of another are more than technical difficulties. To interpret the spirit so as to make it common property requires sympathy, grasp, and insight, balanced with a judgment of values that is rare in all of us. In the case of Mrs. Young the difficulties are particularly great. Almost no help in such an undertaking can be derived directly from her or from her immediate friends. In the one case, her interest is in her work and not in herself, making it impossible to secure personal touches needed to understand the meaning of her acts; in the other, friends are jealous of relationships and guard them closely. Many persons, however, have placed their best efforts into this work and made it possible to write her life. To such I am under the greatest obligation and should like to acknowledge their sympathetic and invaluable help.

It must be evident that the worth of any benefactor of the race is to be found in the principles for which he has stood rather than in merely personal facts and peculiarities. I have endeavored to write of the forces and the interests for which Mrs. Young has labored, and only secondarily of the persons who have worked with her. If I have succeeded, in any measure, in the following pages in showing the strength and the human effectiveness of Ella Flagg Young, it is due more to a sympathy for her efforts for the children of Chicago than to any other qualification. "Institutions are but the length-

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*Preface*

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ened shadows of great men," and it is to the institutions that we must look for the test of the part played by each human being. Judged by this test, Mrs. Young should have a high place among those who have touched the bonds of ignorance and tradition and loosened the spirits of the youth of a great city. Her real biography is written in the hearts of those with whom she has striven to make the public schools democratic in reality and truth.

J. T. McM.

JUNE, 1916.



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### **Mrs. Young's Motto**

Those who live on the mountain have a longer day than those who live in the valley. Sometimes all we need to brighten our day is to climb a little higher.

# ELLA FLAGG YOUNG

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## CHAPTER I

### A HALF-CENTURY OF CHANGE

THE life story of Ella Flagg Young requires its background of events and forces in which she has lived and wrought. The half-century since the Civil War in America is fraught with social, economic, intellectual, and educational transformations. Contemporary with such changes, Mrs. Young has labored in the public schools of Chicago. More than is usually given to one person, she has actively influenced the course of these changes in the Middle West. Since an account of her life that neglected the educational and social history of the time would be unintelligible, a brief survey of conditions which have obtained in American cities and in Chicago in particular must precede the attempt to trace her life or to estimate her achievements as a teacher and educational leader.

Nothing is more significant in all this period than the growth of cities. Chicago has sprung from comparatively a village to a metropolis covering almost an entire county and occupying second position in size among American cities. From east and west, north and south, populations have poured into the close confines of the city. Older lands across the sea have so emptied their people into tenements that some of the centers of foreign populations in our cities are

greater than the capitals of the fatherland. A babel of tongues meets us wherever we turn, and a city school may contain more than two score nationalities and races.

It is difficult to realize the far-reaching significance of a transformation of peoples from rural to urban conditions, especially when this takes place within the lifetime of workers in the fields of public service. Of this growth of Chicago no one has been a keener student than Mrs. Young. It has fascinated her. One question has been in her mind for many years: "How can the school fuse all these diverse elements so as to produce the unity essential to a democracy?" Greater efforts seem to have been made toward coining alluring phrases than toward sober thinking of how to bring about a union into a harmonious whole of this mass of people dwelling in the closest physical proximity, but separated by gulfs of racial traditions, standards, and prejudices, institutional forms and practices, and personal interests. Against the actual difficulties of bringing about an amalgamation, few leaders have been able to fight and still retain their faith in the ultimate triumph of popular control of institutions. To call the public school a "melting pot," for instance, as Mrs. Young unweariedly reiterates, is to miss the essence of the matter in reducing these elements to a democracy. That end can only be attained by spreading intelligence and a sense of responsibility for the control of the social whole.

How few men and women have realized their opportunities of aiding the growth of a social solidarity in cities is shown by the readiness with which they have

been drawn into narrower fields of personal gain and individual aggrandizement. A character, therefore, like that of Mrs. Young stands out conspicuously against this background of individualism and self-seeking.

Connected intimately with this growth of cities has been the revolution in the status of women. Machinery has transformed home life and its surroundings and taken home industries of a couple of generations ago to factories, thus depriving woman of her share in the world's work. Contrary to the accepted belief that woman has followed these industries out into the world, Mrs. Young pointed out in an address before the National Education Association in 1915 that—

The work has been taken from her, but she is not doing it in the world outside the home. We teach girls sewing, we teach them cooking. Do they go out into the world and manage the great restaurants, the kitchens of the great hotels? Certainly not. Men cook in the large establishments. And so with sewing. Girls are taught to sew. But if you or I want a tailor-made dress, we look around and find a man to make it. Even in the exercise of the two occupations which industrial education assigns to woman as hers by unquestionable right, she is not permitted to follow her work out into the world. There are some lines of designing and millinery to which she is admitted, but after all, in the great industrial world woman seems to have nothing to do, excepting to wrap bundles and address them, to make boxes, and to do small things like that.

But occupations are now open to woman not known a half-century ago. When Mrs. Young began her work, teaching was the only profession accessible to woman, and even that was new to her. Freedom of women for self-support in industry and in professions has been developed in this generation.

From scattering agitations by "Blue Stockings" in 1862 for the rights of women to full-fledged voters at the close of a half-century marks a progress of events hardly surpassed in any other period in the history of America. Legal restrictions following social and conventional restrictions have been removed and woman has been given the position of a self-directing person in the state. A life cast within this period of history has been compelled to readjust itself to an ever-shifting social valuation of the place and importance of women, and such has been the history of the life of Mrs. Young.

Not only has the entire fabric of economic and social life undergone a revolution during this period, but the status of children has likewise been transformed. In changing from rural to urban homes, child life met the reverse fate of that of woman. In the country the child was free to come and go and to do his "chores" of farm life, but in the city he has lost the wholesome duties and outdoor activity and has been bound by hard conditions of city life. Servitude in the South, while more spectacular as a principle to fight against, was no more a crime upon the heart of a nation than the rush of industrialism of the city to subjugate childhood to spindle and machine.

During the last half-century the doctrine of "rights of children" has been written in this country. In the fight to free children from early labor and to give them free opportunities for education, one legal act after another was necessary. And the transformation in the legal rights of children has been wrought mainly through a sympathy for childhood and an understand-



ing of its needs that did not exist before. The first swing of the pendulum away from the rod as an educational method carried to a freedom amounting to license. In the meantime, however, an insight into the needs of childhood brought play, constructive work, and motor outlets as food on which children are to grow to strength of manhood and womanhood. We no longer permit "the lash on the tender bodies of growing children," nor do we turn them out to their own devices to run wild at pleasure. Our playground, community garden, and school shop and gymnasium provide for the demands of growing boys and girls.

No pen can picture this growth in democracy, in humanity, and in intelligence of the sentiment for children that has sprung into existence during a brief half-century. Parents doubtless loved their children as much then as now and were often as intelligent in their treatment. But they did not see children as social assets and did not treat them from the point of view of this social relationship. In proportion as the home has been compelled to surrender to the factory its place in the industry of the world, its power over the control and education of children has been surrendered to the school and other agencies of the state. With this surrender of children has come the appreciation of a broader civic view of the individual. He belongs to society, to the state, to humanity, and only indirectly to the narrow bounds of his own individual demands. Emphasis upon bodily health and efficiency, upon order, upon morality and intelligence, has changed from individual health and morality and intelligence to social efficiency and service. "All children must be in the

public schools, the schools provided by society for its own necessities," says Mrs. Young. During her half-century of teaching she learned this lesson from changes wrought by the life of the city.

In the light of the history of the status of children in cities during the past generation it is clear that city life falls most heavily upon the shoulders of the young. The highly technical principles of business and industry on the one hand, and mechanical processes forced upon operatives by modern machinery on the other, crush the child as between an upper and nether millstone. Compulsory school regulations have served mainly to postpone the entrance of the individual into this chaos of occupations and interests. Instead of merely raising the age of turning children loose to become a prey of modern industrialism, the demand is growing for direct and comprehensive training in the processes, the demands, and the possibilities of life.

But a democracy of education and culture that meets the demands of such modern conditions is a recent growth. Fifty years ago it was a vision of the farsighted, written into constitutions and declarations, but unborn in its applications to the needs of all classes and types of children. Unheralded, academic and scholastic ideals of education have been gradually giving place to ideals of caring for and training all classes in all lines of human endeavor. Such a change, commensurate with the upheavals in social and industrial life, is of slow growth. The theory is spreading and becoming fact that the school shall become shop, laboratory, miniature state, agricultural experiment station, office, manufacturing plant, industrial center, social organism,

center of domestic activity, in fact, all things that men and women find it necessary to study and become expert in handling.

Schools can no longer be the silent halls of dark and mysterious book lore for the few, as they were a generation ago, but are to become living, striving social groups where the young learn the parts they are best fitted to play. Avenues are opening to all classes and all degrees of capacities and interests. Recognition that the "Little Red School House" failed to fulfill the mission proclaimed for it is generally, if vaguely, accepted. When children worked alongside their parents in home or field the three R's may have had an excuse for being considered the "fundamentals" in education, but even then, in view of the fact that such methods ruined the soils of farms from one end of the country to another, produced poor farm stock and inadequate methods, and that boys and girls rushed away to cities to take up unskilled or clerical and professional positions, bare academic instruction evidently failed to meet the needs of society.

With the idea that all classes of children should be put to school has come the responsibility of providing facilities and opportunities for crippled, blind, tubercular, anemic, epileptic children, as well as for children with healthy bodies and minds. A comprehensive history of modern education will show the dawn of this appreciation of the right of each to the training that best fits him to live his life in society and the consequent necessity for broadening the work of the school to meet such a condition.

Changes in social and economic life, in the place of

women in society, in the treatment of children, and in the educational institutions of this period are paralleled by a transformation of the status of teachers in the public schools and of the ideal of what teachers should be. Trained teachers, regarded now as essential fixtures in the school, have not always been thought necessary. At the beginning of the period training was regarded as necessary for teachers by only the very few who saw the failures resulting from ignorant and careless teaching.

Through the tireless efforts of this minority of great leaders the city organized a normal school so as to prepare young women to teach. When, at a later time, this school was closed by political influences, the ideal for which it stood was not lost. After the closing of this school, teachers were, for a number of years, selected from high-school graduates who, of course, had not been trained in teaching. Though it was evident that this practice was inadequate, several years intervened before another attempt to train teachers was made by the city. In the history of this movement, therefore, there has been no uniform practice. The result has been that at some times more trained teachers were available than could be used in the schools, while at others the schools were clamoring even for substitutes. The practice of drawing teachers from outside communities through examinations has been a common one, but that, too, has never given an adequate supply. The normal school of recent years has been crowded with young people training for service in the schools, and the professional standard has been continually advancing.

Specialization of work in teaching has been going on increasingly and will doubtless continue. Very recently a plan of selecting men and women from the trades to teach special industrial processes has been practiced. Encouragement of ambitious teachers by offering inducements for further study and preparation is also found in Chicago. Adequate preparation and advancement of teachers in the professional spirit have been questions of great concern to leaders in education. For a half-century Mrs. Young puzzled over this problem. Her special interest always lay in securing the best teaching for the children of the city, and this she realized could only be had where life and energy, backed up by training, found expression in the teacher.

Far from being unorganized individuals as they were fifty years ago, teachers have come to represent a highly organized community. They have come to feel that they have interests in common. With this feeling has come a sense of responsibility to society not felt a few years ago. Furthermore, they are now demanding the standing in society which belongs to them in their important work. Mrs. Young has been so active in both the professional training of teachers and the fostering of community spirit among them that she has involved herself in many fights at great sacrifices to herself. Among the forces controlling the public schools, none is more important than organized teachers. Such organization has made impossible the thrusts aimed at individual teachers in times past. At the same time, teachers' interests have come to be quite clearly identified by the public with the interests of the schools, and attacks on them must be by way of subterfuge.

Through organization and through cooperation and contribution to common causes, the teacher has become a force in determining public policy both inside and outside the schools. It is this change, unrealized by many in the city, that has precipitated the conflict between school management and teachers during the past few years. Such friction will doubtless continue until people generally estimate justly, on the one hand, the genuine allegiance of teachers to the interests of children, and on the other, the sham professions of politicians and representatives of private interests seeking to control the schools through representation on politically constituted school boards.

All these changes in institutions and practices have been wrought through much opposition. Government by the people has not always furnished most effective results. It was fondly hoped by the founders of the public schools that the people should receive in them the rudiments of training necessary for all practical purposes. With the growth of cities and complex modern demands the problems of such training have grown far beyond the conceptions of the founders. Every change in school work and school organization has been so bitterly fought that effectiveness of teaching has been very seriously retarded and even menaced. Educational history for the past half-hundred years, therefore, has been a continuous fight for a broadening of the school, a liberalizing of its methods, and an emancipation of its teachers.

Art, science, and nature study have literally pushed their way into the schools. The graded system, opposed strenuously as an innovation, was, when once adopted,

fought in turn because of its iron grip on school organization. It has already been made clear that professional training of teachers and organization of teachers have met antagonism. In the same way the movement for vocational education has encountered this fire of opposition. "Cultural" and "practical," as applied to education, have been words to conjure with for many a year, and the fight still goes on with parties lined up on two sides demanding concessions of the schools. All sorts of forces are found combined to fight progress or change in any direction, sometimes within and sometimes without the school.

In Illinois, during the past few years, this wrangle has been going merrily on. Vocational schools, modeled on those of Germany, run as separate institutions, are urged upon the people. Opposed to this plan stands the work of the schools as they exist, with a demand for the broadening of their facilities to meet industrial needs. One of these plans is called "dual," undemocratic, and un-American, while the other is proclaimed a "unit" system, and democratic because it keeps all the children in one set of schools. In reference to this scheme, Mrs. Young said in one of her reports:

The difference between the prevocational classes and that proposed by the manufacturers in a bill offered in the state legislature in 1913, lies not in the degree of skill acquired but in the appeal to spirit. When the fourteen to sixteen-year-old children of the working classes are cut off from everything in education except that which bears directly on shop work, the life, the character of the American workman will lose the stimulus that comes through the humanities. All our classes—prevocational, apprentice, and vocational—are breathing the breath of life in schools where skill and science are well taught, not,

however, for personal or trade ends only, but in an atmosphere in which an industrial career is dignified as an element in the social movement of the American people.

A summary of this antagonism to progress will reveal that its forces have been of two sorts: traditionalism on the one hand, and special or political interests on the other. Traditionalism in one form or another has acted as a drag on the wheels of progress. Both within and without the schools this force has thwarted efforts to improve educational practice and discredited suggestions as "theoretical." The most fatal form of traditionalism has been a narrow academic interpretation of education. Advances in work, for example, to improve English teaching, to introduce nature study, art, song-singing, and whatever has given life to children, have met traditional teaching as an almost insurmountable obstacle. Doubtless everyone can recognize the difficulty of bringing a great body of teachers and principals, educated under a past régime of scholastic and academic discipline, to meet the demands of a changing and a scientific age.

Inertia and reactionism of society, and of teachers in particular, are formidable foes to progress; but active special interests, represented by our political system, must be reckoned as more formidable foes. The fight that has been waged over school matters in American education for fifty years has in no small measure come from the demands of special and selfish interests. Intrenched in our political system, they dominate boards of education. Power is placed, either by election or appointment, in the hands of a body of "representative" men and women, and with this body rests the



welfare of the schools. One of the interesting facts in the psychology of the ordinary American is that no public problems are too difficult or too technical for him to undertake. Accordingly, during the past, one board has introduced a number of innovations and the next has swept all these aside with the contemptuous designation of "fads." Lack of training in educational matters on the part of the board is surpassed only by too great expertness in the field of city politics.

Though school boards have grown smaller in size of late years in many cities, in the more cosmopolitan centers they are still far too large for effectiveness, and are composed of representatives of various nationalities powerful in the city, and of various special or institutional interests—business, religious, and political. When such "influences" bring about appointments, it follows that these will serve *first* the forces which put them there, and secondarily, the schools. It is known both within and outside the teaching body that no matter how needful or how beneficial some proposed educational policy may be—a textbook to be adopted, the teaching of some particular subject, the purchase of equipment for a school, the selection of a site for a school building, the fashioning of a school budget, or the appointment of some subordinate administrative officer—it must run the gauntlet of special interests irrespective of its merits for the schools. A board so constituted compels a superintendent to be a politician. He must know when to push matters and when to let them drop; must know which forces are to be appeased and which to be ignored; must, in a word, be able to lead the issues through the agency of men without

special intelligence in respect to schools but at the same time creatures of many interests.

In the light of the tremendous revolution in social and economic life during this period, any weakening of men and women through pressure of tradition and politics is destructive to progress. To keep education abreast of the times, even under the best conditions, requires constructive genius of a high order. In no line of work has it taken greater strength of character, keener intelligence, more adept management, and greater sacrifice of self-interest than it has to teach and administer the public schools of great cities in this country. The same amount of talent and investment in training in any other line of business would doubtless have made many men and women more noted in the community and given them greater ease than that found in teaching. That Mrs. Young has been content to work for the children of the city and devote all her power to that one problem regardless of personal gain, is a mark of a spirit of unselfishness unsurpassed. The great army of men and women with whom she has worked have for the most part sustained the same enduring and far-reaching devotion to the welfare of the young of Chicago and other communities. Their work has gradually brought the dawn of a new day for boys and girls of the city. In the half-century of Mrs. Young's work the world of childhood has gained an importance commensurate with its value to the state, and the life given to this work is worthy a place with the statesmen of the world.

## CHAPTER II

### EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

THAT "life prepares her actors behind the scenes" is peculiarly true of the early life of Ella Flagg Young. Born in Buffalo, New York, January 15, 1845, the daughter of a mechanic, her early years a continual fight for life, Ella Flagg gave little promise of becoming the leading woman educator of her time in America and the world. She was the youngest of three children, of whom one was a boy. The eldest was quickest of wit and a ready observer of everything in her environment. The boy was a healthy, sturdy youth with a remarkable aptitude for sketching and illustrating with the pencil. Ella was a delicate child and grew up knowing little of other children. Her mother said that her chief aim was to make Ella as well and happy as fresh air and sunshine would help to make a delicate little girl.

The home in which she grew up was an inconspicuous American home of the highest type, simple and wholesome, a place where freedom and self-control were practiced and taught. From the beginning she was accustomed to the religious, social, and intellectual advantages that go with the culture and the refinement of such a home. Her people were Presbyterians. But tolerance and liberality found a conspicuous place in this home, where the father refused to accept some of the rigid dogmas of the church, such as that of "predestination." In later years Mrs. Young describes her

home thus: "My mother was a religious woman, but she believed that religion should not be so strict as to drive young or old from the home in order to find amusements." For this reason, card-playing, dancing, theater-going, and reading books of the day were permitted and encouraged by her parents. To the spirit of tolerance thus bred in her, Mrs. Young undoubtedly owes much of her freedom from cant and dogmatism.

"Blood will tell" is a fact that makes lineage the most important clue to the character of men and women. Of Mrs. Young this is conspicuously so. Her father and mother, Theodore and Jane Reed Flagg, were of Scotch descent, though both born in America. They came of a clean, hard-headed race, thrifty and industrious, given to abstract and philosophic thinking. Both of her parents possessed these qualities in remarkable degree, and both were highly individual in their characters.

That her mother came of the Highland clan of Cameron is the one bit of personal pride in her history of which Mrs. Young will converse freely. The mother is described as a handsome woman, with a merry laugh, and a readiness to assist a friend in trouble or sickness. Her skill in caring for the sick was well known and she was often called upon when the illness was not sufficient to demand the care of a physician. Occasionally Mr. Flagg remarked that it would be well for other mothers to learn to care for their children when ill, and so not be obliged to take his wife from her own duties and increase her labors. "There is nothing strange," says Mrs. Young, "in the fact that I have taken so readily to practical affairs and have had ability to manage. My

mother was the manager of our household, and we always looked to her for guidance. She attended to household finances and directed practical matters. Her mind was practical and forceful in business details, and from her I learned to face situations squarely."

The father was a man endowed with a keen and sensitive mind and a thoroughly democratic spirit. An only child, left an orphan in infancy, apprenticed by a cousin to the sheet-metal trades, he received the training common to boys of his time. When the apprenticeship had been completed to within three years, the youth went to his foreman and asked what extra work would be received in lieu of the work of the last two years of an apprenticeship. After a week's consideration, the foreman handed him a list of the things additional to the work of the year then under way. He laughed as if the impossible had been laid down, and walked off. Day and night, out of working hours, the young apprentice labored at the job and completed it, thus freeing himself two years before he otherwise would—a full-fledged mechanic. As a man he was known as the swiftest workman in the sheet metals throughout the cities on the Great Lakes.

Although his life at school closed at the age of ten years, he was well read in history, current affairs, and science. Illustrative of his interest in reading is his advice, in later years, to his daughter, on the occasion of her entrance into the normal school, not to take history, for, he said, she could get this knowledge by her own reading—advice, as we shall see, that bore fruit in one of her most permanent habits. Some of the books which her father found time to read conflicted

with the beliefs of his church, and, as already remarked, formed one of the early recollections of Ella of religious discussions between her father and his friends.

His knowledge of affairs was often sought by men in all lines of business. His chief strength lay in mathematics, a capacity which was transmitted to his daughter. At one time in later years he did a piece of work requiring great exactness in computation and in execution. After it was completed the firm responsible for the contract became uneasy and believed that for its own security the covering should be opened and existing conditions determined. Mr. Flagg told them it was unnecessary but that if they were determined to examine, he wanted them to make note that they would find the work done as indicated in his calculations and drawings, and each part securely supported in its place. His statement was found to be correct.

The sensitiveness of his nature was shown by the effect of an unfortunate business venture. Through an unprincipled partner he lost the business he had spent years in building up, and this experience crushed all desire to enter business again for himself, though on more than one occasion he was urged to do so and at one time was offered a partnership in a large firm of which he had the management in Buffalo.

It was from him that the daughter came by a certain readiness of illustration. The evening of the day when she began the study of geometry, she said to him, "I can't see it, and I said so in class today. The teacher talked, but I couldn't see anything in what he said." She then explained her difficulty, which lay in the fact that every string, or thread, or even a chalk line on the

blackboard had breadth and thickness, though the definition of a line stated that it had length only. Her father asked, "Can you start from where you are and think in a bee-line to the top of the flagstaff on the courthouse?" She then caught the bearing of the later definition of a line—the path of a moving point.

Through a consideration of these strains in the inheritance of Mrs. Young we are enabled to understand some of the dominating traits of her character. The retiring, almost shy, disposition which makes publicity distasteful to her, on the one hand, and the forceful handling of whatever problems meet her, on the other, are characteristics most noticeable in her life. Her Scottish ancestry runs through all the relations of her professional and private life, makes her reticent about herself and her personal affairs, gives her a keen, practical mind filled with a sense of humor, and, at the same time, appears in her serious and relentless pursuit of an idea or an issue.

As a child, she was accustomed to sit for hours watching her father at his work at the forge and to ask questions about the processes he followed. "In this way," she says, "I got an early training in handiwork and industrial processes. I had manual training before such things were thought of, especially for girls." So well did she learn the trade of her father, with its practical bearings, that many years later, when she was district superintendent in Chicago, she was offered the management of a large manufacturing plant because, as the owners said, "she knew more about its affairs than anyone else." The fact that her mother and father took so deep an interest in treating her in an

open and frank way, and in giving her insight into what they thought and did, is of itself evidence that her parents were unusual people. The training in affairs which they gave her showed itself later in her interests and activities. No one is more quick to see the value of this early influence than Mrs. Young herself, and her loyalty to the memory of her parents is a thing sacred to her.

No one seems to have thought it necessary to teach Ella Flagg the use of books; in fact, she was about eight or nine years of age before she learned to read, and then she literally taught herself.

At the breakfast table one morning there was much excitement over an account in the morning paper of the burning of a schoolhouse. Ella was especially impressed by her mother saying, in a horror-stricken tone, "Think of it, little children of Ella's age threw themselves out of the upper-story windows!" After the family had left the table, she asked her mother to read it to her. Then, taking the paper into her arms, she went weeping into a room by herself and tried to read. She remembered the exact beginning, and fitted it with her finger to the words in the newspaper. She soon became aware that she did not know the words after the first few lines, and she went to the kitchen and asked the "girl" to read it. In this way she was able, finally, to read the whole account, which, fortunately for her, was not long. She became interested immediately in learning to read. If her reading was late and untaught, her penmanship was still later, for she refused to learn to write until she was ten years of age.

No further notice was taken of this acquisition until



one day when there was a quilting bee at the house, and in the course of conversation she spoke out, uttering some positive ideas. What she said she does not know, but she remembers distinctly the looks on the faces of the quilters, and her mother's putting her arm around her, saying, "I don't know how this little Calvinist got into the family, but we are all glad she is here." The quilting was resumed, and Mrs. Cameron, her mother's aunt by marriage, called the little girl to sit by her. Soon the aunt spoke out, "Jeannie, do you know what this child is reading? — Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*." The ladies started to laugh, but her mother's tone and manner were so calmly dignified when she said, "Ella, put on your sunbonnet and go to your garden," that Ella went in silence from the room. The next day her mother took her down town and the little girl returned with *Mother Goose* in her hand. In the meantime, Baxter had disappeared, and because of a sensitiveness about the ladies and something not understood, she did not enquire about the book. Years later, when breaking up the home after her mother's death, she came across the *Call to the Unconverted* at the bottom of a trunk filled with magazines and books.

Most of her early reading, however, was serious-minded material, such as she found in the family library, and hardly fitted, according to present-day standards, to the mind of a child. Before ten she had committed to memory the *Westminster Catechism* and most of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Psalms.

On account of illness, Ella was not sent to school

with the other two children until they were in the grammar department, her mother adhering to the plan of developing her physical strength. Each year she was given a piece of ground and was obliged to cultivate this flower bed, and also to care for certain garden vegetables. When gardening became a subject of instruction in the schools, after she had taught many years, she was an ardent supporter of the work, but more than once she quietly remarked to her friends that personally and practically she detested gardening, although professionally and theoretically she believed that every child should like it, should love plants and their ways.

As a child, after learning to read, gardening was made less objectionable by means of a plan which she and her brother adopted. He would bring her chair to the garden bed, and, making herself comfortable, she would read to him and expound the text while he would weed and hoe. Many were the times when her book learning was brought to a sudden pause by a criticism or a question raised by the boy pulling weeds or hoeing. She has said that these remarks and questions taught her early to be sure of the gist of what she was reading, and to avoid verbose explanations when she really did not know, in the full sense of knowing, what she was explaining. Such was the relation between the mother and the children that this garden study plan was submitted to her for approval and not practiced surreptitiously.

As soon as she entered school, the management and the recitations interested her deeply. She did not find the strangers among the children interesting. In short,

a child life spent with her mother had resulted in the usual condition—preference for the society of grown people.

That quite early she saw the desirability of stating an answer independent of illustration, is evident from her reply when asked by her mother, as she was getting ready for school, why she was so uneasy: "Today, as you know, is public examination day, and when somebody asks me, 'Why do you invert the divisor in division of fractions?' I can't reply." Her mother asked, "What can you do?" "I can show it by going back to one." Her father's democracy was shown when he detected a developing priggishness in her, after she was made a monitor and given a desk by the side of the principal. One day at dinner he said, "She talks like a little prig. What is she doing in school?" The reply that she sat on the teacher's platform and taught a class in Colburn's *Mental Arithmetic*, brought instructions that she was to have a desk on the floor with other children, though she might continue to teach arithmetic.

Upon her parents making their home in Chicago just after her thirteenth birthday, she was greatly disappointed to learn that she would not be eligible to enter the examination for admission to the high school until she had attended a Chicago grammar school one year. She entered the highest grade in the Brown School, but found it very wearisome to hear the class going over what was known to her, and naturally, in a few months, she dropped out. Five years later, after she had taught eight months in the Foster School, she was made head assistant of the Brown School.

In 1860 she was invited by some young woman to go with her to the teachers' examination, which she passed successfully but was too young to be awarded a certificate. In dismay as to what to do with her, the superintendent asked if she would like to enter the Normal School, and she was entered.

Schools were endeavoring to effect an organization that would make them alike in scholarship and discipline. The Normal School was looked upon as the chief instrumentality for forwarding the plans for systematizing the schools. Miss Flagg saw the aim, and fell in with the means for securing it. With no reflection upon the principal of the Normal School, she thought in later years that it was most unfortunate for her that she loyally supported the school and its mechanical methods. Posture was thought to be a fundamental in a good school—not a posture that was suited to develop each one's body, but a posture in which each child sat so exactly like the others that they all seemed more like copies of a model than living individuals. Many methods were like the mechanics in military drill but wholly unsuited to the play of thought. Written examinations were the tests by which all were measured.

Miss Flagg discussed her work and her lessons frequently with her father. He was seldom entirely satisfied with the work of the schools, and always insisted on her finding out the reasons back of things. One evening she was looking at a cut of an hydraulic press when her father asked her about it. After she had finished, she knew from the look on his face that he was annoyed. She left the room and returned as her father

was saying to her mother, "She had a fairly good mind to start with, but if she continues under such teaching she won't have any mind after a while." Greatly depressed, she returned to the hydraulic press and, carefully studying it step by step, discovered that a very important piece was not in the cut. The next day a written examination was given and one question was on the advanced lesson—the hydraulic press. All papers except hers were marked zero on the press, the important piece not having been inserted. In the talk among the students about the zero, the opinion was general that they should be expected to learn what was in the textbook, not to find mistakes therein.

Through such thoughtful and sympathetic guidance and such careful reading and thinking, she grew into habits of reflection and scientific accuracy and appreciation for the finer qualities of human life. Luckily her mental energy was not frittered away by being expended on an endless list of namby-pamby child-books. Her mind and body grew, free from the external distractions which are so common in our own day, and her habits of study and self-control grew at the same pace.

In the professional study of the Normal School, Wayland's *Mental Philosophy* was used simply to develop the "Mental Faculties," and the theory of "Formal Discipline." In commenting on this work, she says:

I accepted the theory of the faculties, but I remember distinctly telling my mother that I thought if the whole object in learning a subject was simply to get discipline out of it, that the subject was not worth much. It would better be omitted. She remarked that she hoped I would have an opportunity to put my ideas into operation some day.

Her mother, who had noted the impression that methods and system were making, felt greatly disturbed, but not in the same way that the father was irritated. The course was two years in length. In the vacation before the beginning of the second year, the mother had a talk with the prospective teacher, telling her that it was probably best that she leave school, abandoning the idea of becoming a teacher; that being the youngest child, she did not know young children, and having always dealt severely with herself for having done wrong or blundered, she would deal with other children as severely, which would be a mistake. The daughter thought over the suggestions and then planned to visit lower primary rooms once a week to determine whether they would not interest her. None of her classmates felt willing to enter on the plan of visitation of schools, so she went alone. The first two visits were made on hot afternoons in small recitation rooms in which everybody seemed dull and sleepy. The prospect was not encouraging. The third week she went to a school a mile distant. Walking rapidly, almost running at times, she knocked at the door of the schoolroom of Miss Rounds. Upon explaining that she was in the senior class of the Normal but didn't know anything about young children, she was made welcome and the children were given the information which had been given the teacher. They smiled a welcome and she took a seat on the platform. In speaking of that first-reader room, she says:

In the course of an hour, I was conscious that here was a relation between teacher and children, an atmosphere enveloping all, that I had never known in a school. The next week

found me again in that wonderful schoolroom. Soon after I entered, the third week, Miss Rounds asked if I would like to teach a class. From that time a part of every visit was spent in teaching.

Later the mother told the daughter that her objection to her becoming a teacher was gone; that the influence of association with real children was evident. Two weeks from the day when Miss Flagg began teaching, the mother died, but in that expressed doubt and that observed interest she had awakened the sense of responsibility acting through a personal interest and a consciousness of what that interest may achieve, which remained active through more than a half-century of life as a teacher.

One by one the family ties of her early life were severed by death. Charles Theodore Flagg, the brother, was in many of the great battles of the Civil War but received no wounds. He was killed when traveling on a railroad train in 1868 in an accident which brought death to him only. In 1868 she married William Young, who had been a friend of the family for ten years. Her work as a teacher was not abandoned, because of the uncertainty of Mr. Young's health, which was precarious even at the time of their marriage. Later he left Chicago on this account for the West, where he died. Shortly afterwards, her father and sister succumbed to pneumonia, and so the family relationships were all closed by death long before her work in the schools was ended.

It is worthy of comment, in concluding this brief sketch of Ella Flagg's early life, to note the insignificance of the school in her education as compared with

the influences of her home. Home occupied a larger place in the education of children than it does at the present time. She was not thrown at the tender age of four into a crowd of children in the kindergarten to be "socialized," but was left to grow up in seclusion, learning life's lessons directly from parents and the few other children of the home. She worked out alone the questions of nature and of self-control. The home in which she grew was fitted to build a strong, self-directing life. In all the years of service in schools, she recognized the dangers to children of the excitements of modern city life which she saw in the light of her own more primitive, quiet, sympathetic world of home.



## CHAPTER III

### TEACHING SCHOOL FIFTY YEARS AGO

**A**SKED what element of strength lies at the foundation of her success in life, Mrs. Young replies, "systematic work." All her life has been molded by continuous application to definite lines of work, not in a haphazard fashion, but in a carefully prepared plan rigidly adhered to from the beginning. Few people have been able to stick to a program more consistently than she has. One of the plans formulated by her the first year she taught was for the disposition of her time outside of school hours. According to this plan, three evenings each week were given to study; three were devoted to social interests and to meeting people in her community; and Sunday evening was reserved for church.

Her first task on her study evenings was to review to herself in an oral way the work of the previous evening, and then to go on with the advanced work. Out of this systematic use of her time she has acquired the ability to concentrate herself on the task at hand and accomplish a great deal in a short time. She has adhered to this plan of study all her life, so that her mind is always posted on the latest books and ideas in her work. Undoubtedly the plan of meeting and associating with people has kept her in touch with others and prevented her from becoming a book-worm and recluse. In her selection of material for study, she followed the advice of her father and began with his-

tory. Commencing with Hume, she studied ancient and modern European and American history. In this work she acquired a large library which later she used to furnish books for her pupils in school.

When Mrs. Young began her teaching in 1862, the world of education and society was propitious for an ambitious young woman. Like all periods of modern history, this was an age when great forces were operating—social, economic, religious, intellectual. It was an age of revolution in industrial interests, an age of application of science and machinery to industry and transportation. It saw the beginnings of the impetus to great cities and city interests. Professional life was rapidly broadening into wider fields than the classical ones of ministry and law. This opening up of new fields of professional life gave women greater opportunities in the work of teaching. New interpretations of education, new forms of schools, normal schools, colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts, were making their appearance at this time. In two particulars this age was unique: it was the period of the Civil War in America; it was an age of scientific discovery.

The effects of the Civil War as an epoch-making era in every phase of American life are too well known to need elaboration, but in none of these phases were the effects greater than in education. It was an age to try the strength of men and women. Thousands of America's young manhood were giving their lives in the cause of an idea. Chicago, like every other section of the country, was feeling the stress and strain of this great strife. Not only was brother divided against



ELLA FLAGG YOUNG  
When she began teaching



ELLA FLAGG YOUNG  
When Principal of the Practice School

THE NEW YORK  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX  
TILDEN FOUNDATION

brother, but end to free government was fully assured in the minds of many men. The struggle for the permanency of democratic institutions made this age critical in the life of the race. Bitterness, sorrow, selfishness, and even cowardice walked the streets beside patriotism, enthusiasm, and self-sacrifice. Financial depression, though keenly felt, was not the hardest of the social problems. The effects of this war on the minds of men are hard to determine. In camp and on battlefield, men from all walks of life were brought together on a common level to defeat or to be defeated. In spite of the evils spread by the war, association of men from all quarters of the country tended to break up provincialism and to form a cosmopolitanism not existing before. The power of local church and political ties was broken and in their stead came laxity of dogma and freedom from the domination of domestic discipline.

The war made calls upon the schools in two directions, both of them extremely important in their bearing upon the life of Ella Flagg Young. In the first place, the young men who left the schools of Illinois and other Northern states for the battlefields had to be replaced by young women. Reluctant school directors were compelled to employ women as teachers in order that the schools might continue. In the second place, the war produced new demands upon the schools for training in patriotism, in history, and in civics. A new conception of the school as a preparation for citizenship and as a public bulwark against internal strife and external aggressions was born. American orators waxed eloquent over free schools for a free nation.

Hereafter, "mental discipline" shares the place of honor with training for citizenship.

It is thus evident that Mrs. Young began her teaching at the outset of the modern "feminist movement," just at the time when the war made it necessary for women to take a larger share in the professional life of the community. That position of prominence in the woman movement she has held throughout her career, always taking a step in advance with every opening for women. Her work as a leader of this movement has never been that of the advocate, but rather that of the demonstrator of the capacity of woman for places of responsibility in the affairs of the society.

From the agitation during the war and immediately succeeding that period for school-training in citizenship Mrs. Young received an inspiration which has been one of her strongest motives in dealing with public education. Her faith in the power of the schools to mold men and women for the duties of the state has been a dominant factor in shaping the work she has done in this city. To her Chicago has been a great opportunity for practicing the ethics of citizenship. It was the insight that came to her during the very first years of her teaching that led her to adopt as the foundation of her educational philosophy the doctrine of the responsibility of the school to society.\*

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\* That Mrs. Young felt the value of education for citizenship and studied diligently on the problem is evident from one of her earliest addresses before the National Education Association which met in Chicago during the summer of 1887. Her subject was "How to teach parents to discriminate between good and bad teaching." She says the day has passed when even a minority of parents can be induced to visit schools. The school must stand on its ability to hold children

As an age of scientific interest and discovery, the period when Mrs. Young began to teach was unique, and the influence on her entire life profound. Darwin had but recently published his treatise on the *Origin of Species*, and Spencer, in 1860, his book on *Education*. The world was ablaze with controversy over conceptions long since considered finally settled. A British writer quoted by E. L. Youmans\* in 1867 says:

There have been, in consequence of revelations by scientific research in this direction and that, some most notable enlargements of our view of physical nature and of history—enlargements even to the breaking down of what had formerly been a wall in the minds of most, and the substitution on that side of a sheer vista of open space.

However slow the profession of teaching to give more than lip service to the new doctrines of science, still, during the period under discussion, minds and hearts were quickened through the efforts of the great leaders of thought. Scientific interests and investigations could not long go on without attempts on the part of those in the schools to carry over to educational activities the questions raised by scientists. For the most part the movement of science became effective in education through its utilitarian bearing on the ques-

to ideals and habits of honesty, work, clear thinking, and this can be done only as teachers possess these habits. "Parents who have seen the influence of a high-grade instruction will need no suggestion regarding the difference, when a weak teacher or a sham assumes charge of their children. . . . Although the patrons have done but little visiting, it has long been evident that they not only appreciate, but are keenly alive to the merits of the superior teacher." She insists upon teachers making themselves felt in the community as forces for control, a view that showed a clear recognition of the social significance of the school.

\* *The Culture Demanded by Modern Life*. D. Appleton & Co., New York.

tions of preparing the young for society. The Morrill Act of 1862, establishing colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts in various states, was an evidence of the influence of scientific interests working out into school life. As summarized by Youmans, "deeper than all questions of reconstruction, suffrage, and finance is the question what kind of culture shall the growing mind of the nation have?" And the answer was given in terms of the new realism being propagated through the teachings of science.

To summarize the movements of the time when Mrs. Young began to teach, we may say: Democracy at last was demanding that the schools take account of the resources of society, the needs of the community and individuals, and the capacities of those being educated. In this new movement of democracy the doom of academic culture, of religious and of aristocratic training was sounded, and the schools were called upon to prepare men and women for the actual life of the times in a state where efficiency and initiative and moral strength were the powers demanded. Discipline and culture had concerned themselves previously with training the few in the classics, in mathematics, in philosophy and logic, and had prepared only for the learned professions. Henceforth education must concern itself with the activities common to the people. Industry, labor, agriculture, and all interests were now to be considered as essential factors in the determination of an educational scheme. Practicality and utility were the tests that were to be applied relentlessly to the schools from this period forward, no matter what the grade of work.



As already pointed out, Mrs. Young had been brought up in a home where an open-minded attitude towards scientific and philosophic questions was encouraged. That she readily took hold of the great questions of the day is not surprising from such a training as that given her by her father. She insists that she was narrowly academic in her practice and theory when she first entered the schoolroom. But her mind was full of the ideas of the time, and she was striving to understand the problems of education as she found them in Chicago. That she understood the needs of new work and new practices is clear from her interest in the course of study formulated by Superintendent Wells of the city schools the year she began to teach. This course was based on the Object-Lesson plan, the form which elementary science took in the schools of the period. During her first year of teaching she wrote out all the knowledge involved in this Object-Lesson, or oral, course throughout the ten grades. This course in elementary science was in line with her early training and her interests in the movements of the day.

Mrs. Young was first appointed to teach in a primary grade of the old Foster School. After six weeks in this grade she accepted—against the advice of all the teachers in the school, because of the difficulty of the class—an upper grade, one known as the “cowboy” class. It derived its name from the fact that most of the boys in the class spent their time outside of school “herding” the cattle belonging to the families of the neighborhood on the prairies outside of the town. As might be supposed, such a group of boys, like the present-day “newsies,” had a reputation that made

them undesirable in the schoolroom. In this room, with many of the boys older and much larger than the young teacher, she found no difficulty in meeting all requirements of a good school. Only once during the year she spent in the room did she have to resort to harsh measures, and the effects of her treatment seem to have been appreciated by the overgrown boy in the case. A story is told of her custom of staying regularly until dark in the schoolroom finishing the work of the day. On one occasion one boy who had caused her most trouble as a disturber in the room remained after the others had gone, to remonstrate with his youthful teacher for staying so late and going out on the dark streets alone. Evidently her work with the boys and girls had made some impression, since one of them wished to see that she ran no risk in the neighborhood after dark.

Like most beginners, doubtless Mrs. Young took up her work in the school imbued with the "methods" which she had been taught in the Normal School. Doubtless, also, she was imbued with the spirit of success, for, as already pointed out, she made her own practice school while still a student at the Normal. Unlike most beginners, however, she had few schoolroom traditions to guide or hamper her, since most of her education had been gained outside of the schools. It was largely this lack of experience with the traditional school practice that enabled her from the start to succeed in dealing with boys and girls, because she never had any of the formality of teaching to overcome in meeting children. She met her pupils openly and frankly on their own level, without any of the conde-

scending or stilted habit of the school-ma'am, and she was able to hold them without force.

When Mrs. Young began her teaching the "profession" was not in very high standing. Normal schools had not long been in existence, and few of the teachers had made any special preparation for the work. Chicago and Illinois were like the rest of the country in this respect. A picture of the conditions in Cook County is given in a letter of the late John F. Eberhart, school commissioner of the county in 1859, who says:

There was little interest in education outside of Chicago. The county schools were without system and were very inefficient and neglected. There had been no school supervision, because the pay for such service was only two dollars a day. Certificates had been given indiscriminately at the request of the directors, and many were teaching without certificates. . . . There were then fifty-five teachers in the city, and one hundred and ninety-eight in the county outside of the city. . . . The situation was not inviting at first. Much of the territory about Chicago was occupied by "squatters" and renters, mostly of foreign birth, who had but little interest in schools except to get money out of them. In one district adjoining the city one director was paid fifty dollars a month to superintend the erection of a two-room school; his son got five dollars a month as janitor, and his daughter fifty dollars a month as teacher, although she had no certificate. In another district two of the directors signed the teacher's schedule by making their mark. . . . In another district there was a complaint that the teacher got drunk. I visited the school and found two or three children playing outside the schoolhouse and no one inside. I inquired whether school was in vacation. They said it was not, but that the "teacher was down at that house," and one of them volunteered to go for him. While the messenger was gone I plied the other children with questions and learned that the teacher spent most of his time with friends out of school and in saloons, and that attendance was irregular—though his last

schedule showed not a single absence for the whole term. They also said that he kept a bottle locked up in his desk, from which he frequently took a drink. His salary was fifty dollars a month and he and his friends felt much aggrieved when his certificate was revoked. (Quoted from Cook's *Educational History of Illinois*, p. 263.)

Much as has been said in recent years about women teachers, because of their unstable tenure of the position making the attainment of a high professional standing for teaching impossible, the fact remains that until they entered the schools as teachers there was no pretense of a profession of teaching. The men who took up such work were either incompetent or were ambitious young fellows striving to get on to some other occupation and found teaching the easiest means of securing a little ready money. Any man could teach, no matter what his preparation or standing. Mrs. Young entered the work just at the turning of the way, and, as already pointed out, when women were becoming the teachers. She was deeply interested in the professional side of the work and set about learning how to do the thing in the most effective way. In this respect she was not unlike a great many other young women of her time, though she proved unusually successful in learning to do the work effectively.

She found the schools of the city striving to keep room enough for the rapidly growing population. In 1860 Superintendent W. H. Wells reported that—

It is well known that the greatest evil from which the schools have heretofore suffered has been the crowded state of the primary rooms, and the large number of pupils necessarily given to a single teacher. In this respect there has been some improvement. One year ago the average number of pupils belonging to

each teacher in the primary schools of the city was eighty-one. The average number belonging to each primary teacher at the present time is seventy-seven. *The number is still too large by at least seventeen*, and fully seventeen-sixtieths of the efficiency and value of the schools are sacrificed on this account.

The next year the president of the board of education recommended legislation to raise the school age from five to six years in order to relieve the overcrowded conditions of the schools. In 1862 the superintendent reports a large number of "branches," one school having four rooms rented, all of which were reported unfit for school children. It was estimated that year that three thousand children between five and fifteen were running the streets, and no relief was in sight for the following years.

Not only was the profession of teaching in a low state at the time Mrs. Young entered the work, and not only were the lower schools overcrowded, but with few exceptions schools were not equipped with appliances now considered essential for teaching. Blackboards were just coming into general use. Most rooms in the city schools were heated with stoves, and teachers were required by rule of the board of education to look after the ventilation by opening windows. Into some schools, of which the Foster was one, steam heating had been introduced. Mr. Wells remarks that "it must be confessed that in the art of heating and ventilating schoolhouses we have not made much progress." State Superintendent Bateman said regarding this subject in 1860 that—

The reckless indifference and cruel neglect of this essential feature of a good schoolhouse in many parts of Illinois surpasses

belief. . . . The disregard of the laws of health manifested in the style of seats or benches often provided for young children can hardly be too earnestly deprecated. Children at that tender age, when curvature of spine or distortion of limb may be produced by slight and almost imperceptible causes, are required to sit for hours daily in seats so constructed by ordinary house carpenters as not only to be unpleasant and inconvenient, but absolutely to do violence to every bone in their bodies. And children immured in these spine-bending, chest-compressing fixtures are required to be as still and patient and sweet-tempered as if their chairs were models of physiological adaptation and anatomical skill. And when they grow restless and irritable and stifled cries escape them, the sharp reproof often reveals the truth that the cause of the irrepressible uneasiness is not understood even by the teacher.

In Chicago matters were not much better, though the new school buildings were furnished with single seats and desks.

The course of study, as noted above, had been a matter of active reorganization under the leadership of Superintendent W. H. Wells. In reorganizing the work utilitarian and scientific interests were kept in the foreground. Mr. Wells said in 1861 that—

The regular course of school studies, in most cities and towns, is already sufficiently extended, and yet it is notorious that pupils leave the public schools lamentably deficient on a great variety of subjects connected with a sound, practical education.

It was with a view to furnishing sound, "practical" education that the course was changed to give emphasis upon physiology, mineralogy and geology, natural philosophy, and chemistry "of common things." To thrust upon the schools such a scheme of education at a time when academic and book training was the only kind to

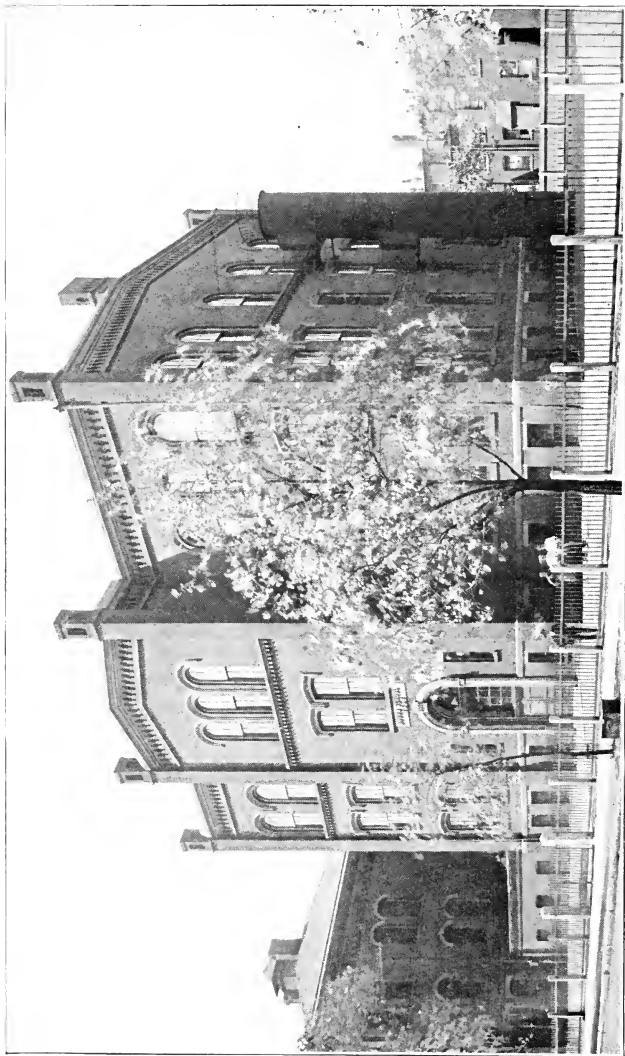
be had by the teachers, was a sure way to add another load of facts to be gained from books. Such was the fate of the "object lessons," of the elementary-science course, as it was called. It turned out to be a series of lessons for language, most of which were committed to memory by the children from the books. Nevertheless, the efforts to change the course so as to make it more "practical" and more in accord with newly awakened interests in science were valuable and were fruitful of stimulating the younger and brighter minds among the teaching force to growth. It stimulated Mrs. Young to know in detail the demands of this new line of education, and from her work in connection with it she soon outgrew the purely academic training which she had received in the Normal School. In her criticism, in later years, of this work in the schools Mrs. Young has called it a "bottled science" course because of the kind of material used to illustrate it.

From this brief summary of the social and intellectual conditions of the time, of the poor preparation of teachers, of the entrance of women into the schools, of overcrowding, of poor equipment, and of the new course of study, it must be evident that Mrs. Young began to teach at a time when education was a live element in the affairs of the city. Indeed, the period marks a turning point in the history of American public schools. Whether a free people can continue without free schools was considered seriously at this particular time. In her later activities and words on this subject, it is evident that Mrs. Young learned very thoroughly during these first years her lesson of the public and social responsibility of the schools. Whatever the

equipment, and whatever the requirements of the course of study, one thing she realized should be accomplished by her school, and that was the preparation of the young for participation in free institutions.

After one year in the grades as teacher, Mrs. Young was made head assistant in the Brown School. Although still a young girl, she remained here for two years. The position enabled her to become acquainted with the conditions and needs of the school as a whole. She was untiring in her study of the management of the school, of the course of study, and of the needs of children and teachers. One of the most apparent needs, as she soon found, was that of training the teachers for elementary schools. In every grade the work was an exact counterpart of the intelligence and training and sympathy of the teacher. Her interest in this subject led her to prepare herself to help train them for service in the schools. At the end of two years as head assistant she was selected as the first principal of the new "practice school" of the Normal. In order to prepare as completely as possible she got permission from the board of education to visit the Oswego (New York) Normal School, where elementary science had been worked out more fully than elsewhere in the form of the "object lessons." Because of restrictions at the school she failed to gain her desired end, and came away no wiser on their "methods" than she went. But her failure in no way dampened her intention to prepare for the work of supervising the practice school, and she set about making her own method of work. In her own normal-school days she had succeeded in making a practice school for herself, and now that the





THE OLD BROWN SCHOOL

Located at Warren Avenue and Wood Street. Here Mrs. Young first became head assistant. It was built in 1857, and was the "store box" type of school, then regarded as the best kind of building. It had four stories, including the basement, with four rooms on each floor, and an assembly room on the top floor made by moveable partitions. There was a middle hall running from front to back, and two toilets and two playrooms in the basement.

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opportunity came for her to help train others she was equal to the occasion. In this respect Mrs. Young revealed one of her striking qualities by her "forehandedness," her readiness for the job calling her.

## CHAPTER IV

### EARLY TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN CHICAGO AND MRS. YOUNG'S PART IN IT

THE conception that teachers are made, not born, developed in this country only a short while before Mrs. Young began to teach. Founded in 1856 as an adjunct of the high school, the normal department had been preparing "young ladies" to teach in the elementary schools of the city. Not all of the teachers, nor even a large percentage of them, had come from this school. Examinations held regularly provided most of the teachers for the schools, and these examinations were such that a person with the ordinary grammar-school education, with or without experience in teaching, might get into the occupation of teaching. The normal department of the high school was not regarded highly at the time and its students were not always of the better grade. But the importance of the normal department was not entirely in the number or the character of the students it turned into the schools as teachers. The fact that it kept alive the idea of professional training as an ideal for the teacher when such an idea was vague and meaningless to most people, was sufficient excuse for its continued existence. Professional training was becoming a recognized part of the equipment of teaching, as well as of other branches of learning.

It was well that such training was emphasized in a tangible way at this particular time, because the func-

tion of the teacher was undergoing a rapid modification. Vaguely held as was the new meaning then being given to education as a preparation for a democratic society, it was developing new lines along which teachers must direct their energies. Ability to control children through fear of the rod was giving place to control through understanding the nature and needs of the person being taught. Superintendent J. L. Pickard says in his report to the Board of Education in 1870:

From time immemorial the teacher's acquaintance with arithmetic, grammar, and geography has served as a passport to the teacher's desk. It is but very recently that a knowledge of the structure of the human body, and of its hygienic laws, has had any weight in determining a teacher's qualifications.

No regard had been paid to the mental and moral being of the children except so far as these were concerned in pursuing academic studies. He continues:

The next step in our progress must be the requirement of knowledge of the laws that govern man in his physical, mental, and moral being. But in our path lie the obstructions of long-established usage, and the lack of a really professional spirit. . . . The impression has prevailed that the things taught were of more value than the person taught. For the prevalence of this impression teachers are themselves largely responsible. Relatively too much stress has been laid upon the ability of the child to stand the test of an examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic — too little upon its ability to meet the hard work of life with resolute will, self-reliant and patient. . . . Our most successful teachers are those who are keeping themselves abreast of the times, who are constantly studying into the mental needs of their pupils, and who spend more hours upon the "How to teach" than upon the "What to teach," or rather, who, knowing well what to teach, are busying themselves constantly with the discovery of the real powers of the child and of better methods of application of means to the development of the mind of the child.

One other agency besides the normal school was instrumental in developing and keeping alive the newer notion of teaching and the necessity for preparation for the work, namely, the Saturday meetings and the Teachers' Institutes. Much more was made of this form of instruction then than in later days; in fact, this was the only professional training many of the teachers ever got. Through lectures on subjects and the teaching of them, ideas were disseminated of a more modern and humane nature. The better grade of teacher was always faithful in attendance upon these meetings.\*

In order to foster the training of teachers in the normal department it was found necessary to establish a school of practice. In 1865, at the age of twenty, Mrs. Young was placed at the head of the newly formed school. Superintendent Pickard reports at length on the reasons for establishing this school and for selecting Mrs. Young as its first head:

Intellectual qualifications alone are not sufficient to insure success in the teacher, nor will mere theorizing, however thoroughly comprehended, add much to the worth of the young teacher. Some actual practice is needed during the preparatory Normal course. Our best Normal schools have their schools of practice called "Model Schools." These considerations led me to examine into the feasibility of adding this important feature to our Normal school. That the school of practice might be of the greatest value, it seemed to me that it should be as near like the actual school as possible. So far as my observation had extended, the Model schools attached to the Normal schools of the country were not the same in character as the actual school for which teachers were being trained. The pupils were generally the children of parents in easy circum-

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\*Among the instructors in these institutes in 1868 is the name of Miss Flagg, who discussed the subjects "The Human Body—Parts and Uses," and "Common Objects."

stances who could afford to pay the tuition fee charged, and very generally children who were well governed at home; so that the discipline and instruction would be very uniform and comparatively easy; while there was not variety enough to develop to the fullest extent the tact of the teacher, not enough of the worst element to lead the teacher to cultivate the graces of patience.

Fortunately for us, the immediate proximity of one of our grammar schools to the high school opened the way for just such a school of practice as would meet our actual wants. The suggestion made was most heartily accepted by the board of education, and two rooms in the branch of the Scammon School were set apart for this school of practice, without in the least disconnecting them from the rest of the school. Pupils found in these rooms are just what they would have been had no such change been made, their course of study the same, their promotions from class to class and from grade to grade the same. These two rooms have been placed under the charge of the training teacher, Miss N. Ella Flagg,\* while the immediate work of instruction and of discipline is devolved upon the senior Normal class, each member having charge for two weeks during the year. This school of practice has also been a school of observation, for the oral instruction and nearly all the general exercises have been conducted by Miss Flagg in the presence of the whole senior class. The fears expressed at first that this frequent change of teachers might affect injuriously discipline and the progress of the school have been proved entirely groundless. There have been one or two instances only of marked disobedience, perhaps no more than would have occurred under any other circumstances, while the examinations for promotion have showed progress unexcelled by any school of the same grade under the constant care of one teacher. The experiment, for such it was felt to be, has proved more than successful, and the wisdom of the board in the selection of a teacher has been fully established. The hearty cooperation of the principal of the Scammon School merits commendation. Thus far the school of practice has touched but two grades—the sixth and seventh grades. So far as discipline is concerned, which is the principal

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\* The N which here precedes Ella was a part of Mrs. Young's name but never used by her.

thing to be considered, little more is needed, but in the work of instruction its advantage may be gradually and profitably extended. The work of oral instruction in these two grades may be in part committed to some Normal student who shows special fitness for this work, and some time of the training teacher be given to the oral instruction of one or two other grades, so that the school of observation may be extended into the work of other grades. The greater value of this new feature is yet to be felt, as the teachers who have for the past year been combining practice with theory shall enter the schools for which the trial to which they have been subjected has proved them best fitted.

From year to year the reports are uniformly favorable on the work of this department of the Normal School under its first principal. The president of the board the next year says that the school under Miss N. Ella Flagg has—

Proved a very satisfactory success, and I do not say too much when I say that this is not excelled by any similar school in our country. The practical knowledge, the tact in teaching, and discipline here gained by those preparing to teach is of more real value to the young teacher than any gained in the same or much more time in any other way. Many and perhaps most of our teachers would be benefited and improved by a term in this school.

The president of the next year says that—

the Training Department, inaugurated some two years ago, has been steadily growing in excellence and value since that time, and is now an indispensable part of the Normal School. (*Report, 1867, p. 12.*)

He further states that—

The benefits flowing from the school of practice have been plainly observable during the year. The graduating class of 1866 have, with the exception of one who was physically unable to teach, found employment, and success has uniformly attended them. Their drill in the school of practice has had a marked influence upon their teaching.



In 1868 Superintendent Pickard declares that—

The success of the school of practice is established beyond a question. Our schools owe more to this agency than to any other—I am tempted to say than to all others. The labor imposed upon the two teachers of the Normal School and school of practice is more than is just. An assistant teacher should be provided Mr. Delano, that he may find a little more time to give to the school of practice; and that Miss Flagg may be relieved from the necessity of hearing recitations in the Normal school, in addition to her duties in the school of practice, of themselves arduous enough. I feel that I should urge the appointment of an additional teacher, because our necessities enjoin upon us the enlargement of the school in numbers. The classes might well be larger. . . . I would be glad to see the time when no teacher, unless of some experience elsewhere, shall be able to find a place until graduated from the school of practice at least. (*Report*, p. 184.)

Again in 1869 the school of practice is highly commended by the superintendent: .

This school has maintained its standing, and has given additional proof of its great value to our work. Not one who has passed successfully through this school has failed in the regular work of the schools when assigned to duty after graduation. It is not to be expected that all should exhibit equal power as the result of training, for the school does not create, it simply develops talent. It affords means for the cultivation of whatever power the pupil-teacher possesses. It gives direction to power that might otherwise be misapplied, or fail entirely of application. All who graduate from the Normal School know what they can do, and set immediately about it with energy and with increasing success as age gives experience. (*Report*, p. 196.)

In this statement of the superintendent there seems to be implied the complaint of persons who had been found lacking in ability to take on the training of the school. It is out of this complaint later that difficulty arose for the principal of the practice school.

In 1870 the normal primary building was erected and the Normal School transferred to it from the high school. The special committee of the board on high school reported this year that—

The first and second floors (eight rooms) of the Normal primary building are used for the school of practice. The members of the senior class of the Normal department teach the pupils attending this school under the charge of Mrs. Ella Flagg Young, principal of the school of practice (a graduate of the Normal department), thus saving no inconsiderable expense for teachers who would otherwise have to be employed.

The same year the superintendent reports that “the most responsible of all positions, that of the principal of the school of practice, is filled by a normal graduate.”

In the same report the superintendent states that the standard established by the committee on examination of teachers had been gradually raised:

The average attainments of our corps of teachers is higher than formerly. Our normal course is substantially the same as it has been for years past. Is it not well to consider the propriety of enlarging this course of study, or of advancing the requisites for admission to the Normal school? Since the establishment of the high-school classes it has seemed to me that our Normal school might be made more efficient by taking the pupils from these classes instead of from the grammar schools, as at present, and thus give a more thorough course in mental science, natural history, general history, and in the history of educational systems, than we can at present furnish. The work of our Normal graduates is good, but might it not be made still better by a little higher degree of culture, especially in the direction indicated above? A diploma of graduation should be a passport to any place that may be vacant in our schools. But, to this end, a broader and deeper culture is necessary. In our present system some very important topics are touched very

lightly; others, not at all. An advanced standard of admission, or an extended course of study, will meet the requirement, and advance materially the interests of our schools.

Undoubtedly this demand for more advanced standards and extended course of study had grown out of the complaints voiced in the previous year. The principal of the practice school had found it impossible to "create talent" and had been unable to make teachers out of the children placed into her classes after only a grammar-school training. She herself was studying educational problems, and realized the need for making a higher demand of the girls entering upon the preparation for teachers' courses. Since there had been no separate "committee" for the Normal School or the school of practice, all matters of scholarship and efficiency devolved upon the two teachers in the school. In undertaking to follow out the recommendations of the superintendent for raising the standard of work to meet the new conditions of the city, there was sure to come friction somewhere, especially in a school governed by the board of education as constituted in Chicago.

On February 7, 1871, after the superintendent had vainly striven with her to retain her place, Mrs. Young asked to be transferred from the principalship of the school of practice to the high-school class at the Haven School. Characteristic of her whole career, she refused to remain in a position which hampered her and gave her no freedom for growth. The demand for fully equipped teachers from a two-year training course given to a lot of inexperienced girls just from grammar school had compelled considerable weeding out of

incompetents, and in doing so, to use Mrs. Young's own words, this "often hit the friends of the politicians." At the time of her withdrawal Mr. Walsh of the board of education offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

RESOLVED, That the committee on examination of teachers and the committee on the Normal primary school be, and they are hereby requested to investigate, conjointly, and report to this board at its next regular meeting, what changes, if any, are necessary to be made in the management of the school of practice to insure to the ladies attending said school necessary instruction, and a fair and impartial consideration of their qualifications to teach in our public schools, and to promote among the pupils an ambition to attain a higher standing in deportment, and greater proficiency in scholarship than now prevails.

It is quite evident that Mrs. Young had tried to weed out those persons whom the superintendent said lacked "talent," and in doing so had run foul of the constituents of some of the board members, one of whom, Mr. Richberg, remarks incidentally that—

This question [he does not explain what the question is, and we have no other evidence in the Proceedings] belonged to the committee on examination of teachers. There was no authority lodged with either principal to remove unpromising pupils. The committee not having attended to this matter, the two principals had acted on their own responsibility.

And as a result of their action, Mrs. Young as principal of the practice school had been the one to suffer, while the principal of the Normal School had not been mentioned or "transferred."

At this same meeting the superintendent suggested "an extension of the Normal-School course for half a

year, in order to obtain a *little more culture on the part of the ladies who graduate there.*" His suggestion was referred to the committee on examination of teachers.

At the next meeting of the board of education the following is found:

The committee appointed at the last meeting to investigate and report what changes, if any, were necessary in the management of the school of practice, and also to report upon the superintendent's recommendation for an extension of the course of study in the Normal school, report the following:

That, after the close of the present school year, the Normal be made an independent school, and a committee of three members be then appointed as a committee on the Normal school; that hereafter a higher standard of scholarship be required for admission to the Normal school, and two examinations for admission to the same be held each year, and that the course of study therein be revised and enlarged; that the Normal primary school be discontinued and the pupils thereof be transferred to the Scammon school; and that the pupils of the Scammon school in the ninth grade be placed in rooms most convenient to the Normal to form the school of practice; that the pupils of the school of practice be, as to instruction and discipline, in charge of the Normal teachers, and examinations for promotions be made by the principal of the Scammon school; and that in selecting special teachers for the school of practice the following order be observed when practicable: 1st, members of the Normal senior class; 2d, members of the special class who are graduates of the high school; 3d, members of the special class who have been connected with our public schools; 4th, members of the special class who have never attended our public schools.

The progress made by the pupils of the school of practice is reported as favorable. During the period since its establishment until the present time 176 young ladies have passed successfully through it as special teachers and have been appointed as regular teachers.

The regulation that required the Normal School to push through inexperienced and occasionally incompe-

tent girls and make of them full-fledged teachers broke down, and Mrs. Young was influential in breaking it. If teachers were to be trained for the public schools she insisted that they should get real training.

But she saw clearly that the board was not willing to furnish the freedom necessary to carry on satisfactory work, and refused to remain. Political influences were at work in the board making it impossible for the principals to keep incompetent students from graduation, when such students could secure the ear of a member of the board of education. That such was the case is clearly evident from the rule passed by the board in 1873, brought about by the agitation over the resignation of the principal of the school of practice. This rule gave authority to the committee on examination and the committee on the Normal School to remove "any pupils who do not give promise of success as teachers in the public schools." This provision, if it had been lived up to by the board, would have secured the demand which Mrs. Young made and would have made of the Normal School a real training school for teachers.

Mrs. Young's withdrawal compelled the board to put the school on an independent basis and to organize it so that it had the power to do its work without interference from outside influences. When she left the school she promised the superintendent that she would return to the Normal in another capacity should an opportunity offer. In June, 1872, a year and a half after having left the headship of the school of practice, she returned to the Normal and taught mathematics and helped direct the work of the school of practice.

She remained in this position until she became principal of the Scammon School, in 1876. Her work in training teachers produced lasting effects in Chicago, and her own success in school work has come in no small degree through her work in this direction at that period. She had become a student of professional literature and had begun her interest in outside improvements that made her a leader in the work. The reports of William T. Harris, then superintendent of schools in St. Louis, came to her and she used these to good advantage.

In 1877, the year after Mrs. Young left the Normal School, it was closed by the board of education. Ostensibly the reason for closing it was that it was "graduating more teachers than were needed," and that the standard of teaching could be elevated by the examination system of admitting candidates to the schools. The real reason for the closing of the school was that politics had again got possession of the situation and had used this means of curtailing the influence of the public schools. In spite of the efforts that had been made by leaders in education to establish professional preparation for the teachers in Chicago, the board of education was opposed to any system that was likely to produce too great efficiency in the public schools.

## CHAPTER V

### A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF BUILDING A CITY SCHOOL

**I**N 1876 Mrs. Young, unexpectedly to herself, was elected principal of the Scammon School. This position she held for three years, and then went to the principalship of the Skinner, one of the three largest schools in the city. In this place she remained until she was made assistant superintendent in 1887.

The Skinner School was situated in a cosmopolitan district on Aberdeen and Jackson streets, very near Tilden Avenue. Many well-to-do people lived in it, but one part was occupied by a rough, uncouth class of Italians whose children were under no control whatever, and with no idea of respect nor what was due to others. For a long time Mrs. Young hesitated about taking the large school, but finally decided that she could do it. Before making up her mind about the place she went over the district from one end to another, many times, until she was familiar with the people and the activities of the community and with what was demanded by them of the school.

When Mrs. Young came to the principalship women had taken the greater number of all subordinate school positions in the city. There were nearly a thousand women teachers in the schools, half of the high-school positions were held by women, and half of the principals of elementary schools were women. The movement of women into the school inaugurated during the



war had gone on with increasing rapidity each year. Practically every position except principal of high-school and the superintendency had come to them.

Mrs. Young's place in the woman movement demands further consideration because of its bearing on the problems of education throughout the country. Everywhere in America girls' and women's education was being patterned on the basis of that given to men. Women's colleges adopted curricula used in men's colleges. In the intellectual training of women no differences were made between mental capacities and interests of the sexes. The reason for pointing out this fact here is that Mrs. Young took the work of education at man's level and held as a standard of excellence the demands and attainments set up by the schools at a time when higher education was for men. For the most part, all her work has been influenced by this doctrine, early fixed in her character, of the essential similarity of minds, whether in men or women.

In consequence of this viewpoint she has refused to accept favors on account of her sex. One of her first acts as principal was to put herself on record as being able to earn any honor given her. Women principals at that time were holding positions without having passed examinations for certificates, a practice which had already been held up to ridicule by a contemporary educational writer. On the very first occasion she came up for examination as principal. Her experience as a high-school teacher stood her in good stead as a preparation and she passed the examination, standing first on the list of candidates. As Superintendent Howland expressed it at the time, she held a

certificate "by right and not by courtesy," and the board of education passed a regulation then that all future principals were to secure certificates through examinations.

Another instance of this independent spirit of the woman is related in connection with her election to the chairmanship of a large committee composed of principals. After the election and before the first meeting, a friendly man principal offered, because of her probable unfamiliarity with parliamentary practice, to carry the discussion for her, but she thanked him and said she preferred to try it herself. When the committee had completed its work the same gentleman reported her direction of the discussions as remarkably successful.

Her schools were noted for the best in current and accepted educational procedure. She had a masterful grasp upon the problems of the day, and she drew upon the leaders in school work throughout the country. She was not a "reformer." While full of the most advanced ideas of the time, she was always unwilling to impose them upon others. She did not wish them accepted unless understood and indorsed by those working with her. She was never radical, and struck out no new and extravagant paths, but accepted and utilized the best ideals and practices as she found them. At the same time she refined and humanized these practices to fit her own teachers and pupils.

One may quite truly say of her at this period in her life that she represented the sanely feminine conservator of forces, as she found them, rather than the innovator or reformer in school and society. Her teach-

ing and reading represented the solid elements in culture and educational theory, for as yet she had not attempted the experimental and the speculative either in thinking or in the management of her school. Yet so keen and clear was her grasp of the problems of the day that Mr. Howland, then superintendent of schools, held her judgment in very high regard and consulted her on vital matters.

But it is necessary to see more than a conservative principal in Mrs. Young's work at the head of a school. Her achievement as a principal rested mainly on her organization and her management of the school. In the sense in which we use these terms in modern city education no such things existed as organization and administration, or they existed only in rudimentary forms. They are the result of more recent development and work in large city schools. There was then no place to go for models in directing large school plants. Large schools already existed, but they were rather loose aggregations of parts, and had little definite cohesion.

The rapid growth of the city, with its cosmopolitan population, had brought together all sorts of children and thrown them into the schools. Mrs. Young's objection to the use of the term "melting pot" in describing the work of the public school was an outgrowth of the efforts she made to handle in a definite form the various elements in her own school. Today we think nothing of handling a school representing a dozen different languages and races, but at that period the problem was a new one and one concerning which many most intelligent persons entertained grave doubt

of an adequate solution. To make the difficulty still greater, this was the beginning of the attempt to substitute for the "rod," as a means of managing children, school government based on intelligent and sympathetic appeal to children. Mrs. Young rigidly opposed corporal punishment as a basis of control, and notices circulated to the teachers of her school from her office requested "hands off" in the management of the school.

While others were teaching and preaching "democracy and freedom" with blare and great noise, the Skinner Elementary School in 1885 was carrying on its work with an eye to the independence and cooperation of each individual child and teacher within its walls. Class-work was organized in such a way that each one felt himself a contributor to the whole. In arithmetic, for example, Mrs. Young's method was distinctively democratic. Instead of having "a method" of solving problems, a common practice among principals in teaching this subject, she had as many methods as there were teachers in her school. "No one can work in another's harness," was a favorite expression of hers to her teachers, and as a consequence she insisted that each one was to make her own contributions to the life and interests of the school. Visitors remarked that they found as much value in going through the rooms of the school as they could have found had they gone to many schools, because each teacher worked out her subjects in her own way.

In faculty meetings Mrs. Young insisted on discussions giving free play to ideas of each person, and never attempted to dominate the minds and independ-

ence of the teachers. She was always exceedingly generous in her appreciation of new ideas and acknowledged her obligations to the teachers who presented them to her and the school. "What new ideas have you today in this work?" was a common question of hers, and the person called upon for such help felt that she was really a part of the creative force of the school.

Mrs. Young's school stood out in the community as an influence in affairs of the people. She had become thoroughly acquainted with her neighborhood and tried to serve it. Former Mayor Harrison, Sr., remarked on several occasions that this school was the most effective social institution in the city. The demands upon the schools to meet the needs of society in a more effective way, which had been growing for several years in intensity, found an open statement in the acts of the legislature of Illinois in 1883 and 1887 "to secure to all children the benefits of an elementary education." Mrs. Young had been doing all she could long before the passage of these acts to make her teachers feel the responsibility for keeping children in school. She had attempted to follow up the children and keep in touch with them and their homes in order to hold them in school until they were old enough to meet the demands of society upon them. In the work she did in her schools to secure to children the benefits of elementary education she was a pioneer in the vocational guidance of children.

It is easy now to look back in the light of present school administration and see the work of that time as incomplete and transitory. But when one sees how slowly, out of prejudices, traditions, mixture of national and race elements, and varied interests of the city,

school organization has gradually been wrought, one can appreciate the enormity of the task of that period in trying to put a public school into active and effective touch with the community. There is no doubt that Mrs. Young made her school stand out prominently as a social force and as a well-organized institution, because visitors, both from within and without the city, were numerous and reported the great value of the work as they found it. In her school she held firmly to high ideals of scholarship. She was rigid with herself and required a high standard of efficiency from all with whom she was associated. Her teachers believed in her and were loyal to the school.

As in her work in the practice school, Mrs. Young came into intimate contact with politics and with political methods in the city schools. A few instances of this contact will suffice to show that she learned to deal with political forces at this early period. Shortly after leaving the Normal School for a principalship she saw the Normal closed by the board of education. As already noted, the school was said to be an unnecessary expense. "Influences," evident in the movement, pushed it through over the protests of educational leaders. In this act Mrs. Young gained a new lesson as to what schools had to expect from politics in school boards, and years later she found the fruits of closing the Normal in Chicago's poorly prepared teachers.

Mrs. Young also faced the necessity of selling her pay-warrants for several years at a discount because the board of education had no money to provide for payment of the teachers. As late as 1881 teachers were compelled to accept whatever merchants were

willing to give them for these monthly warrants. It was to the credit of the Skinner School that business men in the vicinity bought the warrants of the teachers of that school at their face value. Politics and poor management were alone accountable for such a condition in the finances of the schools.

One of the close friends of Mrs. Young, Superintendent Pickard, was ousted from that position through the same kind of policy. "Influences" brought into the assistant superintendency a man from the outside for the purpose of ridding Chicago of Mr. Pickard. This man made life miserable for the superintendent and later supplanted him, but was from the first wholly incompetent and lasted in the position barely two years. Another instance of political influence which came close to Mrs. Young during the period of her school principalship was in her own school. Her engineer had proved incompetent and unreliable, and she had asked for his removal. A president of the board of education interceded for him and attempted to force her to retain him in the position. The character of Mrs. Young was shown very clearly in her reply to this demand: "I shall do what is best for the Skinner School," and this reply settled the matter in favor of efficiency and justice in the management of the school.

Scholarship and classical culture were making a last stand against science and utilitarianism in education during this period. Mrs. Young was deeply interested in both sides of this issue, but during the period of her principalship she emphasized the former as an ideal, both for her pupils and her teachers. Superintendent Howland was a scholar interested in literary and aca-

demic ideals, and his influence on Mrs. Young was marked during this time. Among other evidences of her interest in literary and classical culture, the establishment by Mrs. Young of a "club" for the study of English grammar was in direct line with this tendency. It met every two weeks, at first in the school but later at her home. From reports gathered from members of that club it is evident that the leader tried harder to inspire her teachers with a love of learning than in a mere correct use of grammar. From grammar the club soon branched into the study of Shakespeare and the modern dramas. Plays were read and presented by members taking each a part for the occasion. Greek drama, Dante, and other forms of great literature were studied and discussed. Mrs. Young made it a practice to suggest books to be reported on by members of the club. Long after she left the principalship the club took up psychology, ethics, and philosophy, work in which Mrs. Young became more and more interested.

The study of English became an important part of the curriculum both in high and elementary schools during this period. In 1883 Superintendent George Howland says in his report to the Board of Education regarding the high school:

I have often thought, though I have never found my idea fully realized, that a course in English might be prepared and successfully carried out, which should be worthy to take its place by the side of our classical courses; which should include both a critical study of our language, and a large and thoughtful reading of some of our best authors, familiarizing the pupils with all the classic study so needful for the appreciation of our prose and poetical writers. With this should be a thorough and



systematic training in composition. The usual study of rhetoric seems comparatively futile, save in the knowledge acquired of a few terms, and the time devoted to English literature is often largely expended upon the history of unimportant and forgotten authors, with little appreciation or knowledge of our real literature.

Mrs. Young took a deep interest in placing the best literature in the hands of elementary-school children. She was not satisfied that they should read the textbooks, which often contained meaningless material and little of the best authors. Several years later she outlined in an address before the National Education Association her notion of the kind of literature to be placed in the course for lower schools, and her ideas expressed at that time were the fruitage of her years as principal. She secured permission from one of the large publishers to reprint some of the classics for supplementary reading in her school. This was one of the earliest attempts to give children in the grades the benefit of the best literature. In connection with the reading she developed the idea that children should read for meaning, that there should not be the two or three years of parrot-like mumbling of meaningless symbols in the early grades of her school. In providing a library for her school from money obtained through giving concerts and from donations by Judge Skinner, she further enlarged the opportunity for children to become acquainted with good literature. This was one of the first school libraries in the schools of the city.

In other respects the curriculum of the Skinner School partook of the same advanced character as

reading and literature. As John D. Philbrick pointed out in 1885:

The old standard subjects of instruction are uniformly retained, namely, reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, and history of the United States: comprising the trivium, or three R's, of the ancient school for the people, and the quadrivium, which is the accession of a more advanced era, and yet an era preceding the modern school revival, dating back about fifty years. The last half-century has witnessed a very considerable increase in the subjects of instruction. These subjects are object-teaching, singing, drawing, gymnastics, vocal culture, English literature, the metric system, physical geography, physiology (including anatomy and hygiene), geometry and mensuration, bookkeeping, astronomy, the German language, Constitution of the United States, general history, sewing, and perhaps some others.\*

Such an array of subjects gave rise to the demand for "shortening and enriching" the curriculum. Of the older subjects thus enumerated, Mrs. Young secured most satisfactory results. Her work was valuable not merely from the point of view of the scholars, but as an epitome of the conflict of the old and new curricula as pointed out by Philbrick. By this work the three R's were developed to the highest standard of effectiveness, a condition brought about by the necessity of showing their right to be continued in the schools in the face of the demands of newer and more modern subjects. As already pointed out, Mrs. Young was a conservator of the best of the time, and in the matter of the curriculum she brought out the very best in the material found in the course of study. A brief statement of her work in this direction will make the point clear.

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\* *City School Systems in the United States*. U. S. Bureau of Education, Washington, 1885.

In penmanship she broke away from the practice, common in the lower grades, of having the children print, and placed writing in every grade of the school, introducing pen and ink from the first. "Arm movement" was practiced, which with the use of pen and ink overcame the cramped pencil work of the lower grades complained of so generally at the time. Prizes offered for the best penmanship in the schools of the city were awarded to the Skinner School each year of her principalship and for the year following her withdrawal.

Arithmetic was one of the subjects which she took most interest in and worked on hardest. It delighted her heart to find a child quick in figures. Often she would step into a room, call the attention of the children for a minute, ask one or two questions in arithmetic pertaining to their grade, receive a quick answer, and pass on to another room. She laid stress on "mental" arithmetic and on work having a practical bearing on the other interests. She particularly discouraged assignment of home work because the child needed help of the teacher and in home work he did not get this, nor could it be told how much was his own endeavor. Great emphasis was placed on the individuality of method in arithmetic, each teacher and each pupil being urged to use the method that served him the best.

Grammar Mrs. Young taught herself. The course was given in the eighth grade and emphasized the understanding and correct use of language. In history two or three distinctive features of her method need attention. Since the upper grades in her school were

taught departmentally, a decided innovation then, the work could be more highly organized. A miniature house of congress gave opportunity for the necessary instruction in the United States Constitution; debates were used to good effect by children, often drawing on the aid of prominent men from the outside; and several books used as sources of material gave the children opportunity to select and judge in their study.

Of the newer subjects—singing, drawing, clay-modeling, and gymnastics—much was made in the school. “Shortening and enriching” the course of study appealed to Mrs. Young only in so far as they added life and interest to the work of the children and teachers in the school. Drawing, which at the time was regarded as a bridge between academic work and the “practical” life, was taught in every grade. It had been optional in the schools until 1884 and was then placed on the regular list of subjects to be taught. So well was the work done that the Skinner School was awarded the “W. K. Sullivan Prize” in drawing each year, over all the schools of the city. One way of making drawing effective was in having pupils use it in all their work as a means of illustration, giving rise to the term “graphic recitation.”

In addition to the regular work of the school as ordinarily regarded then, the physical welfare and comfort of children and teachers were carefully guarded. Both ventilation and lighting were subjects of great concern by the leaders in education. The “fan” system and steam heating had both been introduced into the newer schools. But Mrs. Young decided that only “window” ventilation could be made thoroughly ade-

quate, and she devised a scheme of using a board inserted at the bottom of the window for this purpose. She likewise studied in detail the system of heating until she was as competent as a trained engineer to run the machinery for heating the school. Wherever possible the children were arranged so as to get the most value from the light of the room. She was one of the first to follow the suggestions given by eye specialists as to protection of children's eyes in school work.

In common with educators of the day, Mrs. Young believed that children came to school to work and not to play. The kindergarten influence had not yet penetrated school discipline. Much was made, therefore, of gymnastics, but play was confined to the hours outside of school time. On the playground she was active for cooperation and kept a close watch over the children in their activities.

Very little handwork was done at this time in the elementary schools, and manual training did not make its appearance until the very close of the period. Mrs. Young gave some attention to handwork, but she had not yet seen the value of this form of education. In this respect she was not unlike other educators in elementary education. Superintendent Howland did not rank handwork with mental work. In his report to the Board of Education he says:

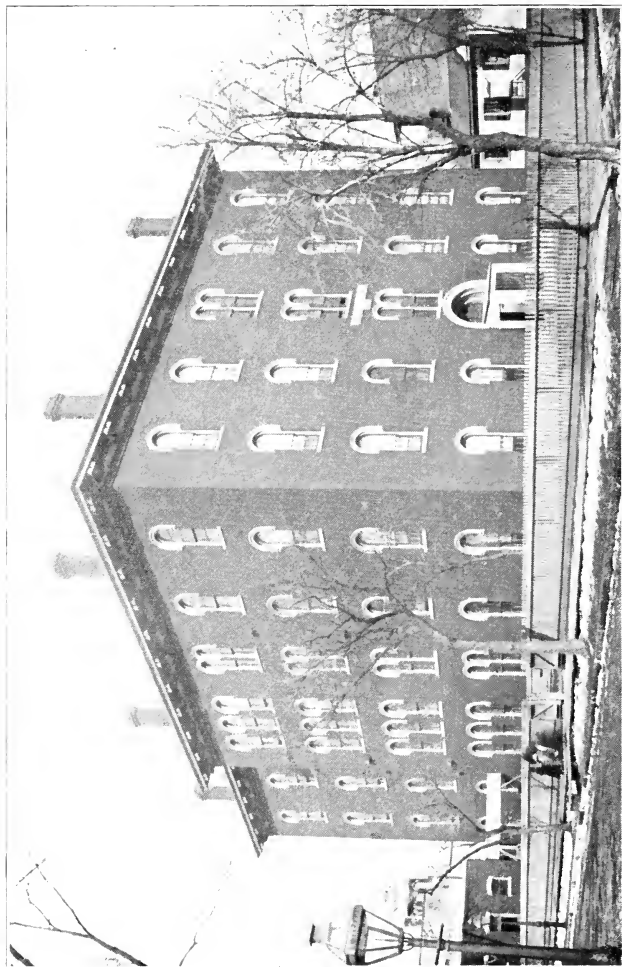
Our schools are to educate, not servants, but citizens; and whenever the darning and frying, the starching and stewing become important parts of the school work, the wealthier classes will send to private schools, and the public school, to which we look for the preparation of our children for responsible places in our business and social life, will become but an industrial school for cooks and second girls, instead of intelligent men

and women ready to act well their parts in whatever pursuits their inclinations or necessities may lead them to engage.

Because of her early training, Mrs. Young never accepted quite this extreme view, but that she was academic and emphasized the literary side of the curriculum is evident from the character of her school. More and more she saw the necessity for using all of the energy and capacity of her children, and her school kept up with the movement of introducing such subjects as were considered possible for that purpose. Drawing and clay-modeling were the ones most generally accepted, and they were both taught in her school.

No one was ever in doubt in her school as to the position Mrs. Young held in matters of conduct. She meant business always. In discipline she was severe but just, permitting no half-way measures, yet allowing each one as much freedom as he knew how to make use of in his work. Noise never troubled her in a room if by it children were getting something done. "Her power to know what was going on within the school was uncanny," says one of her former teachers. Apparently without effort she always knew where trouble was or where things were moving smoothly.

Her severity was intellectual. Beneath it all was the deepest sympathy and humaneness. She felt her own incapacity to express adequately her feelings, and on many an occasion asked some of her intimate friends in her school to do some mission of kindness because she had not the power to do it herself. If a teacher or a pupil was in trouble she was the first to help in some direct or indirect way. The loyalty felt by all members of the school for its interests was one of the



THE SKINNER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Located at Aberdeen Street and Jackson Boulevard. A type of an old-time school.





most noteworthy parts of the old Skinner School. As in all the other positions she held, Mrs. Young bound the members of this school to her as life-long friends. Her memory for names of children persisted long beyond their school days, and she has been known to recall instantly the name of some urchin of Skinner School days in the bearded man. Two pictures of her as she appeared then, one drawn by a teacher, the other by a child, are indicative of the spirit of the woman who could thus inspire and hold friendships. The teacher wrote:

It is very rare, I think, that one finds a woman who will do as much for other women as Mrs. Young did for her teachers. Ever mindful of our comfort and pleasure, she suggested that we spend an evening once in two weeks at her home for our club instead of the schoolroom, giving us an opportunity to go home, shake the dust of the schoolroom from our clothes, and feel freshened for our evening's work.

In appearance, when I first knew her, Mrs. Young was slight, dignified, of a rather grave countenance, wearing a black dress with white linen collar and cuffs, her black hair brushed smoothly down her face, making quite a striking appearance. Her manner was courteous and pleasing and she soon won the respect of her pupils. Although her expression was somewhat severe when in repose, when she talked and became interested in the explanation of a lesson, her face lighted up and became very fascinating and almost beautiful.

The other picture stands out clearly and gives her power with children:

. . . When I was a little girl about ten years of age I went to the old Scammon School on Monroe Street. Our principal, Ella Flagg Young, gave me a tortoise-shell-handled penknife as a present for making two grades in one year. I prized the knife greatly and kept it until I had grown up. I always call her our principal in speaking of my school days for I loved her dearly

then and still love her. I wish you could see her as she stands before me in my mind's eyes; a little bit of a woman, about five feet tall, all vim, push, and go-ahead. My, how she would make those boys fly; she with her jet black hair parted in the middle, combed back smooth, and her clean olive skin and even, white teeth. She always dressed in black, very plain. And her eyes, such eyes that looked you through and through. When she was transferred to the Skinner School I asked her if she would allow me to go there without a permit from the board of education, but she told me she could not, and as my mother was always too busy to go and I was not old enough to know how to go for myself, I consequently lost all interest in the school when we lost our beloved principal, and I quit after going all those interesting years. I lost my beautiful little knife, too, the only thing I had to remember our principal by, except her picture engraved in my heart, which will last forever.

Her power as a principal was thus not merely a great organizing ability, nor an insight into educational needs and educational problems, neither was it wholly in her incomparable capacity for work; but rather in her fine appreciation of efforts on the part of others. She was unselfish, loyal to her friends, undemonstrative in her decisions and appreciations, firm for the right, and, above all, imbued with a broad and deep love for children. Her school was found always a united, cooperating group, finely organized to live and work on a high plane.

## CHAPTER VI

### SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION FROM 1887 TO 1899 AS SHOWN IN THE WORK OF MRS. YOUNG

“WE received a decided shock,” said one of Mrs. Young’s teachers then in the Skinner School, “when Mr. Brenan, a member of the Board, told us that our principal was too big a woman for her present place and was wanted for a bigger job.” With two other persons she was elected to the position of Assistant Superintendent in 1887.

Her election to this position was not the first time she had been considered for a bigger job. Mrs. Young had been growing rapidly in her grasp of educational affairs, and she had become one of the most trustworthy as well as keenest persons in the system. It is desirable to review some of the persons and influences entering into her life and thought up to the time of her appointment as assistant superintendent. She had come into contact with one after another of the prominent leaders in education in the city and country, whose points of view she eagerly grasped and made her own. As we have already pointed out, she had been academic and formal at the opening of her career as a teacher, relying religiously on the training she had received; but by 1887 she had changed to an open and free mind, quick to see all sides of every question.

Of the persons influencing her professional life during the early years, the first was W. H. Wells, superintendent of schools when she began to teach.

To him she owed her earliest interest in the movement to modernize the schools through object-teaching. Mr. Wells' faith in science and in systematic organization of the curriculum was shared at an early date by Mrs. Young. At about the same period she came into contact with the intellectual influence of William T. Harris, for many years superintendent of the schools of St. Louis. Mrs. Young says his reports, which were remarkable educational documents, were the first professional literature she ever read. Harris undoubtedly had a marked influence on her philosophical point of view. His was one of the most effective attempts to introduce the doctrine of Hegel into this country and apply it to educational theory. His writings were an outgrowth of Hegelian idealism. The reports which he wrote were based on this philosophy, and Mrs. Young was so diligent a student that her thinking and writing show its influence.

Another important influence on her educational career was that exerted by Superintendent Pickard, with whom she was closely associated during his entire administration in the Chicago schools. He was keen and clear in his own thinking and could not help influencing people with whom he came in contact. His interest in Mrs. Young's professional work was more than passing, as shown by his efforts to keep her in the Normal School. Pickard was one of the best organizers that the schools of Chicago have possessed. In the matter of organization his greatness lay in his ability to use intelligence in system. He refused to allow the schools to become formal and dead through a rigid system of gradation and classification. Mrs.

Young has always shown in a marked degree the effects of Pickard's teaching in this direction and has used system as a means and not as a final result of efforts at improvement.

To Superintendent Howland, who was at the head of the high school when she graduated and began her teaching and when she went back into the department of practice, Mrs. Young owed much of her interest in fine scholarship. His culture and his training in classical literature always appealed to her. In her paper before the National Education Association in 1896 on literature in the grades she shows very clearly the effects of this association by her interest in literary scholarship. She has always referred to the work of Mr. Howland as the most significant in Chicago schools in developing a right sense of language and its relation to grammar teaching.

But the real teacher of Mrs. Young during these interesting years was life itself. Systematic study and unwavering service to the schools of the city gave her strength and poise and self-confidence. She was not a servile imitator nor follower of anyone, but had interpreted for herself problems as they had arisen in the course of duty. She says of her own thinking that for many years she was a close student of mathematics because of its exactness and clearness of demonstration. But there came a time when she realized that its exactness was its own limitation; that it was too mechanical. From the study of mathematics she turned to that of human nature, where free spirit could be followed in its own self-determined course in realizing itself through growth. To a remarkable degree she

had developed faith in other people. Hers was the true teaching spirit; the confidence in other persons that begets self-confidence. Above all else, she became constructive in her thinking and her work. In an address delivered in 1887, she says: "A lecturer who has nothing but a battering ram for existing systems, thus throwing the educational world into a state of chaos, would do well before taking the field, to prepare something definite to suggest in place of the things to be demolished."

Thus Mrs. Young entered upon the work which engaged her for twelve years. She had grown into a commanding personage in school affairs in Chicago, and from henceforth her influence is felt in growing measure in the educational policy of the city. Her appointment came at a time when the superintending force of the city was being reconstructed. The following report shows the kind of reorganization being undertaken:

First. All educational departments should be under the control and direction of the superintendency, not only in theory, but in fact. In this category I would embrace music, drawing, German, and physical culture, as well as the ordinary features of the course of instruction.

Second. The superintendency should be enlarged by the addition of at least two assistant superintendents, in order to reduce and subdivide the present enormous labor of visiting schools which rests on three earnest and faithful men.

I believe . . . there would spring better methods of instruction, better discipline in the corps of teachers, better and higher attainments among the teachers, better supervision of all the departments of special instruction, and, last but not least, better and more mature and confident advice and assistance to the members of the Board in fixing the course of instruction and in

adopting textbooks and other educational appliances. (*Report of Board of Education, 1885, pp. 19-20.*)

In reorganizing the superintendency in accordance with this plan, two of the new superintendents were women. A woman had been made a member of the board in 1889 because of the demand made by women's organizations based on the grounds of the prominence of woman in the teaching profession, though this was not accomplished without opposition.

The first and most obvious reason for increase of the supervising force lay in the growth of schools and the inability of the superintendent to cover the ground. There had been a constant growth in the area to be supervised and in the numbers of pupils and teachers. In 1887 there were over twelve hundred teachers and principals, and all of the supervising was done by the superintendent and two assistant superintendents with the aid of special teachers in subjects like music, drawing, and German. In 1889—

The territory embraced in thirty-three entire school districts, and in parts of eight others, was declared annexed to Chicago. In this territory were over one hundred schoolhouses, cared for by an equal number of engineers and janitors, and accommodating over thirty thousand pupils. There were nearly eight hundred teachers employed in its schools, and these schools were supervised by about two hundred and thirty school officers. (*Report of President of Board. Proceedings, 1890, p. 12.*)

But a more important reason for the increase in supervision was to be found in the character of the teaching force. Complaints of the system of providing teachers were chronic. In 1885 the superintendent says that the high-school graduate "is well-nigh help-

less when first placed in a room of fifty or sixty pupils." The cadet system placed about seventy new teachers in the schools each year who had received no training for their work.

If the superintending force were sufficient to allow one of the assistants, perhaps, to call these together three or four times a week for instruction in the plainer principles and methods of education, and specially to supervise the application of these principles and methods in the daily work of the schoolroom, an earlier and higher success would undoubtedly be secured; and a great waste of effort on the part of both teacher and pupil be avoided. The instruction would give a new life to the teaching, and the teaching assist to a better comprehension of the instruction. (*Report of Board of Education, 1885, pp. 52-53.*)

After the close of the Normal School several years previously, the teaching force gradually deteriorated. Graduates from the high schools were admitted with no preparation for teaching aside from the academic courses, at first on an examination, but later on a grade of ninety per cent in scholarship. Examinations for admission to outside teachers were very superficial, hardly exceeding the requirements given for entrance to the first year of the high school. This deplorable condition had its explanation in the politics which, as already noted, closed the Normal School. It was not to be wondered at that critics found Chicago teaching about the poorest in any city in the country. J. M. Rice, writing on the subject in 1893, said there was a very small percentage of teachers who were Normal graduates, and qualifications were very low. The work he found unscientific and on a low standard.

Some of the teaching was by far the most absurd I ever witnessed. The amount of objective work is extremely limited,



even in the lower grades, and the sciences are not included in the curriculum. The education of teachers after appointment is devolved on the superintendent and his assistants. In Chicago, however, but little has been done by them, thus far, systematically to instruct the teachers in educational methods and principles. (*Public School Systems of the U. S.*, 1893, p. 170.)

Rice's article stirred up wholesale criticism, but we find the board and the superintendent making excuses or defending the situation.

The president of the board thus expresses himself:

Much has been said in the public press about incompetent and inefficient teachers in our public schools, but I was much pleased to learn from the special reports required under our rules to be made by the superintendent of schools and his assistants to the committee on school management just before the close of the school year, so that incompetent or inefficient teachers may not be reappointed by the Board; that last year, out of over 3,500 teachers in our public schools, only the names of about twenty incompetent teachers were presented by the superintendent for the consideration of this committee. Surely this speaks well for the extraordinary ability and efficiency of our teachers. I do not think any other city could make such a record, but perhaps the standard of our superintendents does not quite come up to the expectations of the members of the board or of the public press. (*Report of Board of Education*, 1893.)

Later in the same report, the superintendent points out that there had been a great amount of criticism about the schools made by both competent and incompetent critics, saying that "after several months of investigation and inspection of every department of the school work a few changes have been made." (*Ibid.*, p. 58.)

In a teachers' meeting in Chicago shortly after this, Mrs. Young stated that —

A few weeks ago, if I had been told that the old-time recitation in history, formal question and memorized answer, was still to be found in Chicago schools, I would have resented the slander. But I can not deny the testimony of my own eyes and ears. Lately I have actually listened to recitations of just that kind, and in the fifth, and sixth, grade rooms, too, where, of all places, they ought not to be found.

The failure of the teaching body was largely due to the fact that conditions and demands were rapidly changing and the teachers were not forced to prepare for the new work. As noted in the last chapter, the ideal of educational excellence had been academic and literary. The work along these lines had been emphasized to an extent that had shut out the growing notions of science, art, and construction. While the course of study had been simplified, and language and literature had replaced, in large measure, the dry-as-dust work of the grades, there had not been a corresponding growth of knowledge on the part of teachers of the new demands made for activities as parts of education.

The needs for improvement were so urgent that in 1893 a Teachers' Training Class was organized and put in charge of two instructors who gave their entire time to the work of fitting young women for the grades. In the "class," which at first ran for only half a year but later was extended to a whole year's work, Mr. Howland's recommendation that assistant superintendents be required to lecture to the young teachers on educational principles and methods was at last put into operation. Here Mrs. Young came back into the work

of helping to prepare teachers for the schools by giving lectures on psychology and education.

The consequences of poorly trained teachers showed themselves in a more vital way in changing the course of study. In 1893 there began a strenuous fight in and out of school on "fads." At first thought this fight may seem to have little connection with increased supervision or a deteriorating teaching body, but as a matter of fact the fight is a logical and necessary outcome of both problems. Of course the popular cry against "fads" usually may mean anything whatever, but back of the demands at that time for a return to simpler forms of instruction there lay legitimate grounds. We have already noted the cry set up for "shortening and enriching the curriculum." As the untrained teachers became less and less competent to keep up with the growing demands of modern practices, there came to be greater dependence upon special teachers and trained supervision. We have already seen how Mrs. Young as principal had fought for scholarship and freedom among her teachers. She felt more keenly than most leaders of the period this tendency of the schools to depend upon the specialists for the new subjects that were becoming popular, and she felt that the welfare of the schools depended primarily upon the intelligence and independence of teachers, and therefore devoted more time and energy to this problem in her school than to all others. In spite of the work of individual principals, however, the special teachers became prominent in the schools, and their work was necessarily emphasized in proportion to their ability to present it. Art, music, physical culture, German, all received direct

attention by trained specialists. Mrs. Young stated this point in connection with another subject in an address in 1899. She says:

Have you ever thought of the difference between the conditions surrounding kindergartens, manual-training rooms, and vacation schools, and those surrounding the regular school-rooms? The former were established in recognition of the failure of the regular school to meet certain needs. If they should merely duplicate the old, the very reason for their existence would proclaim them failures. They must be, not variations on the established schools, but radically different. The more innovations they introduce, the nearer they fulfil their mission. The public school, on the other hand, is bound to the past. Back of it are thousands of parents, demanding that their children shall give evidence from day to day that they are learning what their parents before them learned. Back of it are the taxpayers, feeling the burden of taxation and demanding that the simple, inexpensive curriculum of long ago be substituted for the extravagant course of study of today. Back of it are the traditions of the school, which made its life something distinct, aloof from the life of society. In this environment are the voices calling to the teaching corps to act as the great conservator of a past theory of culture.

The consequence of this separation of the newer subjects under specialists as supervisors was to pull them apart and leave the three R's behind, losing even the strength they had acquired during the previous period of growth.

And then the fight on "fads" broke forth. The school report for 1893 shows the effects of various criticisms on conditions in the schools. German was eliminated from the primary grades. Music was unified by the adoption of a graded course of books, and all technical study of the subject was eliminated from the early years of the school. Drawing, likewise, was curtailed in primary grades, and clay-modeling, pasting,

and paper-cutting dropped. The president of the board in 1894 says:

The warfare against "fads" has resulted in their elimination from our schools. No longer are scholars required to defile their hands, without strengthening their intellects, by the creation of mud pies or clay-modeling. Paper-cutting and all kindred innocuous, time-consuming fads have, with their authors, disappeared from the common-school service of the city. Upon the superintendent and his assistants there should be lodged no censure, either for the creation or maintenance of any of the fads mentioned. Their paternity is chargeable to a few members of the board who have resigned or whose terms of office have expired, and whose authority was more potential than that asserted by the superintendent and his aids. In the kindergarten department clay is used for the purpose of illustration and in object studies, and its use there is proper for the reason that no books whatever are used, the work being of a creative and constructive nature. The horizon of drawing has been circumscribed and within the limits of its present confinement good results have been obtained. Considerable money has been saved to the school service by reason of the abatement of the fads, and is now being used in teaching the children things which will be of service to them when their school days are over, and when they are called upon to earn a living. (*Report of Board of Education 1894*, p. 16.)

All her experience in the schools of Chicago led Mrs. Young to feel the need of well-trained teachers. Conditions as she found them in her wider field of supervision convinced her that the most important work of the assistant superintendent was in helping to secure such training. We find most of her energy directed along this line during the twelve years of her office in the schools. First of all she took up the work opened by the new Teachers' Training Class, as already noted. On every occasion she talked and lectured to the teachers on the desirability of better preparation. She

carried along the club organized years before and increased its scope by other efforts at improvement. The institutes which had been a part of the system of teacher training for many years she made a real force in that service; one writer says they were enjoyed because the leader herself was the best learner in attendance. Besides her own efforts in the monthly meetings she secured the best available talent to help in directing these institutes. William James, of Harvard, and John Dewey, of The University of Chicago, both came to help her. That she succeeded in some measure in bringing her teachers to a higher level of appreciation for their work is evident from the reports coming both from individuals and official sources. James said at the time of one of his lectures before the teachers:

I came expecting to find bare walls, and I find pictures and statuary adorning the school rooms. I came expecting to talk to an audience untrained to think in abstract terms and I was compelled to reconstruct my entire series of lectures to meet the demands of the teachers.

In her efforts to improve the teaching force, Mrs. Young resorted to her practices as principal of going about hunting for good teaching and commending every evidence of independent work or conscientious endeavor. Wherever she found work that was unsatisfactory she did not hesitate to condemn in no uncertain terms. The careless, slipshod shirker found little satisfaction in Mrs. Young's visits to her room. In all of her supervision she was fair and honest, praising effort but condemning lack of effort.

That the task of raising the standard of teaching in a large city was a difficult one, Mrs. Young appreciated

fully. She gave herself without reserve to the work and met with a large measure of success. But such an undertaking under the conditions of the professional standing of teachers at the beginning of her work was sure to bring with it opposition and criticism. Her experience was not an exception to this rule. She was called hard, cold, severe, mannish, without sympathy, and in general, very critical. Even her enemies, however, acknowledged her power and fitness for the position she held. Her decided views and her positive statement of her judgments without any preliminary apology may have led often to such opinion of her character. Usually those who occupied the unenviable position of "time-servers" were the persons who found her "hard and unsympathetic."

On the other hand, her quick appreciation of the right spirit in a teacher was her power to win and hold the great mass of the teaching body. She was popular with the children as well as teachers. As a lecturer, she had a large following. "Her lectures are largely attended, not from duty, but from pleasure. She is a fascinating speaker, knows her subject thoroughly, and always gives us something to carry away." These words were spoken by one of her adverse critics. Another writer says, regarding a sense of humor, "That is one of the reasons we all flock to hear Mrs. Young, and sit on the steps of the hall for an hour to be sure to get a seat." (*School Journal*, October 22, 1898.) In another place in this article the writer says:

Mrs. Young has been appointed supervisor of the domestic arts, and we are beginning to think she is being imposed upon. She is so capable, so willing, and everything she undertakes is so

well done that it would surprise nobody if she were appointed head of manual training and gave a practical demonstration of the way to make a chair. She is an inspiration to the teachers who feel themselves incompetent to manage household affairs owing to their exclusive attention to intellectual work.

Her work and attitude endeared her to the great mass of teachers in the system.

Next in importance in improving the schools to that of raising the standards of teachers, Mrs. Young held that a broad, flexible curriculum was essential. In this work she insisted on the necessity of greater power and intelligence on the part of teachers. She had decided ideas on the rigid gradation with hard-and-fast lines in the promotion of children. She took every occasion to change this system in her own district. Many of her early addresses before the teachers were on some phase of the inflexible course of study and how it could be remedied. A brief résumé of one or two of these addresses will show how strenuously she labored to secure greater freedom in the course of study for the grades.



## CHAPTER VII

### A CLASH OF IDEALS IN SCHOOL GOVERNMENT

MRS. YOUNG'S growth from a narrow, academic-bound vision in her earlier career to that of a broad-minded believer in all forms of education was completed during her period in the superintendency. The evolution of a great mind follows the flow of life in the world at large, or rather epitomizes the interests of the age. Educationally, the world had for more than a third of a century been moving away from classical and literary ideals and towards scientific and industrial culture. Great leaders were imbued with this vision of a new day for the training of the young, but, as yet, only the faintest impressions of it had been conveyed to the rank and file of teachers and superintendents throughout the country. Mrs. Young's grasp of this movement and her efforts to set it in concrete form before her teachers show her as one of the coming leaders of the period. Briefly summarized, her interests and activities in this direction indicate the trend of modern education for that time.

In a previous chapter, Mrs. Young's interest in literature for the elementary schools has been noted. A further discussion of her position is necessary to show her growth in the grasp of the subject over her earlier viewpoint. Brief extracts from her paper delivered before the National Education Association in 1896 will suffice to illustrate her conception of the subject.

Although the young are still given the ordinary in both thought and expression with which to acquire the so-called mechanics of reading, yet the teachers are few who have the hardihood in theory to restrict those little ones to a diet of the commonplace. . . . Though the schools are moving slowly, often halting on the way, hindered here by deplorable theories based on custom, weakened there by the cause of nature stories and adaptations of the classics written by the non-literary, yet, thanks to those who have blazed the way to a broader and higher view, no time need now be spent in presenting the claims of literature as an element in child life. . . . A prescribed course in literature is not necessarily arranged with an eye single to a logical sequence of subjects or to culture-epochs. It may be planned with but one object in view, that of making the best a definite and developing part of the curriculum. It may consist of such prose and poetical, such descriptive and dramatic works that one in whom are combined literary tastes and a deep sympathy with child life can find no adverse opinion to pass upon it.

She then shows how a hard-and-fast course of study may defeat this object.

Literature reveals the possibilities of the human soul. Running through every literary production is some one of the fundamental principles underlying the higher life, and this principle woven into the warp and woof of the narration, the novel, the poem, the myth, the drama, suggests to the reader something farther and higher reaching than the soul itself has yet attained. In all this there is an appeal to the nobler self. It makes that self realize its personal, its individual responsibilities. By putting a prescribed course into the hands of the teacher, this permanent element, the arousing of the sense of responsibility through a selecting activity, is ignored. The book, the essay, the poem, may be appreciated, but the teacher goes to the class as the bearer of another's choice; as an inferior acting for a superior; not as one who, having found a joy, a life-giving thought, must share it with the children. . . . The necessity for courses of study in some subjects has been conceded in this paper; yet, today, that necessity demands not half so much attention from those who are close to the elementary schools,

as do the narrowing and benumbing influences of minute details in those outlines. . . . Loud are the complaints made by the secondary schools, colleges, and universities, to the effect that students come to them weak in spelling, weaker in punctuation, and weakest of all in their use of the mother tongue. So faint of heart are we as to the propriety of admitting the interesting and the beautiful into our schoolrooms that the first breath of adverse criticism makes us disown them as interlopers. The complaints, coming at a time when faith in literature in the schools is just beginning to germinate, tend to weaken that faith, and to concentrate attention on the form side of language, before its use and power as an instrument for the expression of thought have been felt. . . . The spelling, the punctuation, and more than these, the diction of the young should be improved, but in the right way. Spelling, punctuation, forms of words, choice of words, construction of sentences, all may be grouped under the head of the technique of language. The same law holds here that prevails in other subjects. Empty forms will not generate content. The resurrection of the meaningless or stilted sentence set for spelling and punctuation, or paraphrases that kill the thought and imagery of the original, and retain the phrases and clauses arranged in reverse order, will not develop beauty and vigor of thought and expression. The seeds of thought must be implanted in the young minds and then the technique be developed out of the resulting imagery and reflection. (*Proceedings of the National Education Association, 1896, pp. 111-117.*)

On another occasion she raises the problem of reading and literature and, as she had done in the Skinner School, deploras the dry and mechanical reading of the elementary school, demanding good results by introducing children as soon as possible to the best in literature. "Having acquired power in translating the printed symbol into the spoken word, a child should not have reading and literature as distinct exercises." Commenting on the recommendation of the "Committee of Fifteen," which enunciated the doctrine that three years

of a child's life should be occupied in mastering a printed and written vocabulary, Mrs. Young insists that children can be taught so as to get thought from their reading from the first day. Learning to read thus becomes an intelligent process and not a drill in symbol learning. She insisted on the child being allowed to put his own interpretation on his reading. Because of her wish to make reading intelligent and an organic part of other studies, she championed, on all occasions, an open list of books for reading and history so that children could have opportunities to weigh various points of view.

The subject of teaching reading is discussed again in 1899 in her address, *The Outlook for the Schools of Chicago*, published in the *School Weekly*. She criticizes the report of the "Committee of Fifteen" with reference to its recommendation on reading, saying:

In it was enunciated the doctrine that three years of a child's life, beginning at the age of six years, must be occupied mainly with acquiring the mastery of the printed and written forms of his colloquial vocabulary. It is true that in some schools of Chicago the method of reading is an endorsement of the committee. It is also true that in some schools reading as an exercise for the mastery of the forms of familiar words has been superseded by reading as an exercise for getting at thought through the mastery of the forms of the words in which the thought was expressed. In these schools the first word or sentence read is read in order to get at the thought expressed by it. To see a class of children from non-English speaking homes three months after beginning to learn to read take each a piece of paper fresh from the press on which the teacher has printed a series of different things to be done, look them through intently and then carefully obey the printed instructions, is to know what is meant by the theory of reading that has distanced the theory of the famous Committee of Fifteen.

In season and out, Mrs. Young advocated manual arts and drawing. During this period a few elementary schools of the city were fitted out with complete equipment for manual training, at first furnished by private funds but later by the board. Work of this nature she considered opened up new avenues for expression and creation by growing minds. In an address before the Teachers' Club and Ella F. Young Club, February 12, 1898, she said:

Drawing has given the children more means to express themselves. Scissors, blocks, and various implements have released the little hands from the slate and pencil, which Mr. Howland called "the modern pillory and thumbscrew." The aim of manual training is not to drive boys to trades, and keep them away from the overcrowded professions, but to increase the value of their work in every department. Girls are not taught the domestic arts in the public school to train them for servants, but for the purpose of teaching them the values of foods and hygiene.

With the growth of interest in nature study, Mrs. Young had kept pace, and had always been an advocate of the subject. The old object-lesson had appealed to her at the beginning, but that had degenerated into language lessons and on the object side into what she called "bottled science." Upon the establishment of the teachers' training class in 1893, Mrs. Young was influential in securing a science teacher from the high school as one of the two directors of the work of preparing teachers. She had seen that the failure of the old object lessons and all other attempts to introduce nature study and science into the elementary schools had been due to the lack of intelligence in the matter on the part of teachers and principals as to the ends to be accom-

plished by these subjects and the resulting tendency to mechanize them.

In her emphasis upon these subjects, Mrs. Young did not lose sight of the academic branches, the traditional three R's. Arithmetic was shortened at both ends of the course of study during this period, and the recommendations of the Committee of Fifteen prevailed in some respects as to the material of the course. Algebra and concrete geometry were introduced into the seventh and eighth grades, and Mrs. Young advocated the reduction in the number of examples which children were required to solve. The craze for vertical writing was not shared by her because, as we have already pointed out, she had developed a most proficient system of free movement in penmanship in her own school, so that this idea seemed wholly unnecessary. But in spite of reluctance to admit the value of vertical penmanship, she saw in it a breaking up of the previous burden of written work required of children.

Mrs. Young's work as assistant superintendent brought her into contact with all classes of schools and children. In one school, made up of the foreign and poor, located in the midst of the Chicago "vice district," she found the greatest need was for bodily cleanliness. Here, in spite of opposition on the part of board members to schools assuming the functions of the home, was established the first school bath in the city. Many children at this period spent four and five years in the early grades of the schools without even learning to read. In rooms where such things occurred teachers were trying to handle sixty and seventy children. The board tried the plan of raising salaries of

the primary grades to a level with the grammar grades in order to secure teachers able to deal with these large numbers, but this was a failure in more directions than that of primary grade work. One of the first remedies which Mrs. Young applied to the situation was to reduce the seating capacity of the rooms. On the West Side, where she first went as assistant superintendent, she had all but fifty-four seats taken from the primary rooms. The story is told of the attempt of one of the principals to return the seventy seats to his rooms as soon as it was known that Mrs. Young was to be transferred to a district on the South Side, but his order was never executed.

Through all of her active work as a teacher and administrator to the close of her work as assistant superintendent in 1899, Mrs. Young had been officially connected with the public schools of the city. In the meantime, however, her mind had been employed on the current problems of education of the world outside of Chicago. She had made the acquaintance of men and women of America and Europe and had been studying her work in the light of their influence. It is not strange, therefore, that "down state" she became an active factor in education. In 1889 the Governor appointed her a member of the State Board of Education, a position she held for twenty years, being reappointed each time until she became so deeply engrossed in Chicago schools that she had to give it up. While a member of the body, she was continuously on the Committee on Course of Study, and for most of the time on that of teachers. As we have seen in connection with Chicago schools, her deepest interests were

in these two problems. A prominent man of the state said of her work on the state board that she was the "best man on the board."

But her influence was not confined to an official position on a board of education. She became prominent in the club known as the "School-Mistresses' Club." Political interests of some of the women of the state led them to attempt to establish a separate association for women. In 1888 Mrs. Young was invited to prepare a paper on the aims of the club. She took a stand against the separate association, but was strongly in favor of a club for the educational and humanitarian advancement of its members. As Miss J. Rose Colby, a member of this club, writes,

Her influence carried the day. The School Mistresses' Club has had a long and useful existence. I have more than once heard Mrs. Young say that its meetings and its work were the most valuable meetings and work she had ever shared. She was president of the club for as many years as we could win or force her consent to hold that office. As leader she did for us what she has everywhere done as leader—she stimulated us to many-sided reading and growth, to a greater intellectual curiosity, and a new sense of the significance of intellectual life. More than anyone else I have ever known she had and has the power of a great leader—if she asked any woman of us to do anything, we wanted to do it, and even though we doubted our own powers, she managed to give the doubter courage. More than one undeveloped and possibly crude woman grew visibly from year to year in the work. And the spirit of good fellowship and comradeship that grew up in the club I have never seen equaled in any other organization, whether of women alone or of men and women, that I have been connected with.

Mrs. Young for many years was a prominent figure in county institutes of the states, where she was unusually successful. One of the teachers from Peoria who



attended many of her institutes says of her that "she has few equals in her power to inspire teachers to make more of themselves and live up to the best that is in them." While still in the office of assistant superintendent, Mrs. Young's reputation among educators became national. She became a prominent figure in the National Education Association, on the programs of which she frequently appeared.

Chicago schools have never been completely free from some more or less active political influence. In the nature of the organization of the schools they lend themselves to power-seeking interests. Such was the case in 1897 when business interests made demands for better and more efficient organization in schools. As a matter of fact, the management had not previously been effective in many respects. The superintendent's power was not great, and methods of administration were not modern. In compliance with the demands of the time, the Board of Education was reorganized. An educational commission was appointed of which W. R. Harper, president of the University of Chicago, became head. This commission reported in favor of more centralized administration and more effective business management and drafted a bill for a law to make its recommendations effective. This bill became a law. Over its provisions the most bitter fight waged, and charges of all kinds were made against the interests back of the commissions and the law. It was said to have been another attempt of big interests to use the public schools in their own behalf.

In reorganization the board selected a man from the outside for superintendent, a man of wide experience

as an administrator, and one who was thought capable of introducing modern business methods into the schools. When it is remembered that "home talent" had been employed in the superintendency for many years, first in the person of a former high-school principal, and later in that of a Cook County superintendent, it was evident that an outsider might find difficulties in entering upon the position. As a matter of fact, the new superintendent was never able to get the schools into his hands. On the one hand, he was too democratic for the "forces" employing him, and on the other, teachers distrusted his power. He was a misfit from the first. While many of the measures which he introduced and fought for were later accepted and became parts of the administrative machinery, he himself was unable to put them into operation.

But teachers were opposed to his ideals of centralization. At once Mrs. Young championed the cause of the teachers and democracy as opposed to methods which administered schools from the top, regardless of ideas of the teachers. She refused to work under a régime which reduced school work to the lines of a business corporation and made mere tools and clerks of teachers and principals and assistant superintendents. Her resignation was abrupt but fully thought out. Newspapers were filled with the controversy because the matter was thought to involve a vital issue in public-school government. The following letters were incorporated in the annual report of the board, and show the kind of fight Mrs. Young put up for the freedom of teachers and their independent coöperation in the management of schools.

In regard to the letter, the president of the board wrote:

Mrs. Ella F. Young severed her connection with the Chicago Public Schools after a service covering a period of twenty-five years. Her reasons therefor appear in the following letters which I received from her and which were made public at the time. They appear on page 654, *Proceedings of the Board of Education* of June 14, 1899.

Chicago, June 3, 1899.

*Graham H. Harris, President of the Board of Education:*

Dear Sir—It is my intention to sever my connection with the public schools of Chicago at the close of the current school month.

The Board of Education has undergone many changes since I entered its service, yet it has ever generously recognized whatever of merit has been in my work. I take this opportunity to make acknowledgment of the courtesy and encouragement extended me by the Board.

Respectfully yours,

ELLA F. YOUNG,  
District Superintendent of Schools.

Chicago, June 13, 1899.

*Graham H. Harris, President of the Board of Education:*

Dear Sir—The announcement in the daily papers regarding meetings to be held Saturday, June 10th, by the Teachers' Federation and the Teachers' Club, necessitated a statement from me concerning my future in the schools. My information was received so late, June 9th, that it was impossible for me to write you before writing to the teachers.

I beg pardon for sending you a clipping from the newspaper as a statement of my conclusions, but I can add nothing thereto, and the clipping is a correct copy of my letter.

Thanking you for your personal, as well as official, courtesy to me, I am

Very truly yours,

ELLA F. YOUNG.

*Miss Goggin, President of the Chicago Teachers' Federation; and Miss Mary E. Lynch, President of the Chicago Teachers' Club:*

I have learned through the city press that the Federation and the Teachers' Club will meet Saturday, June 10, to prepare a petition to the Board of Education in relation to my resignation. While warmly appreciating the friendly attitude which leads some of the teachers to take such action, I owe it to them, because of their confidence in me, to declare my position.

As you well know, I hold positive views regarding official courtesy and official discipline. Only after careful consideration of all the conditions did I take this important step. To withdraw my resignation would imply either that the conditions had not been duly considered by me or that the conditions had been changed. Neither of these implications is true.

Let me present the subject in another light. When a subordinate in interviews, which she knows will be published in the daily papers, expresses herself as being in disaccord professionally with her superior in office, the relations of the subordinate and chief should be severed. Under the circumstances it would not be in accord with my theories of discipline for me to continue as a district superintendent.

Promotion in the Chicago public schools is made impossible for me by the events of the past week, not because of inability on my part to meet heavy responsibilities, but because my resignation and the published interviews would furnish ground for a misunderstanding as to my motives in resigning.

You are sufficiently familiar with my methods of speech to know that when I state I had absolutely no new position under consideration at the time of notifying the President of the Board of my intention to leave the schools, the statement means exactly what appears on its face. Equally clear and direct is my statement that I intend entering into the duties of another educational position when a satisfactory one shall present itself.

That no doubt shall exist as to my attitude, the above is summed up as follows: First, I cannot withdraw my resignation; second, I cannot continue to serve as a member of the teaching corps of the public schools of Chicago.

With earnest wishes for the welfare of the schools and the teachers of Chicago, I am yours very truly,

ELLA F. YOUNG.

The superintendent under whom she refused to work reported in this connection as follows:

By declining re-election for another year Mrs. Ella F. Young has severed her connection with the public school system of Chicago. Mrs. Young is a woman of rare talent, untiring energy, large acquirements and ripe educational experience, who has deservedly won a host of admiring and devoted friends. As teacher, principal, and superintendent she has served the city for thirty-seven years. I deeply regret her withdrawal from the position she has so ably filled, yet congratulate the educational public on the promise that her professional labors, though in another field, will still be continued. (*Report of Board of Education, 1899, p. 119.*)

A petition signed by thousands of teachers and school patrons was sent to the board at the time Mrs. Young resigned. The petition was addressed to the workingmen of the city and was headed by a statement of the reasons why the petition should be signed. In part it said:

In order that the citizens of Chicago may understand Mrs. Young's reason for resigning, it is necessary to state that she has been deprived of the educational influence which she had exerted under former school administrations. Mrs. Young is a graduate of the Chicago public schools and has filled with honor and ability every place in the school system from the lowest to the highest, and her work has contributed in a large degree to the excellent reputation which our public schools enjoy among the cities of the Union. She has a national reputation as an educator and has the faculty of inspiring with the highest ideas of manhood and womanhood every teacher and pupil who comes within the sphere of her influence. . . . Mrs. Young has taken this noble and courageous course in order to place the matter in its true light, and also to impress on the minds of the citizens of Chicago the danger that lurks in the present movement of Mr. Andrews.

This petition bore no fruit so far as recalling Mrs. Young to the position she had left. Once her mind was made up in matters of this kind it could not easily be changed.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A WOMAN PAST FIFTY

**I**N 1904 the late William James wrote: "Chicago has a School of Thought!—a school of thought which, it is safe to predict, will figure in literature as the school of Chicago for twenty-five years to come." Mr. James characterized the philosophical work of Mr. Dewey and his co-workers in the University of Chicago as an "evolutionism," as an "empiricism."

Taking it *en gros*, what strikes me most in it is the great sense of concrete reality with which it is filled. It seems a promising *via media* between the empiricist and transcendentalist tendencies of our time. Like empiricism, it is individualistic and phenomenistic; it places truth *in rebus*, and not *ante rem*. It resembles transcendentalism, on the other hand, in making value and fact inseparable, and in standing for continuities and purposes in things. It employs the genetic method to which both schools are now accustomed. It coincides remarkably with the simultaneous movement in favor of "pragmatism" or "humanism" set up quite independently at Oxford by Messrs. Schiller and Sturt. It probably has a great future, and is certainly something of which America may be proud. (*Psychological Bulletin*, I, i, January 15, 1904.)

One of Mr. Dewey's associates at the time of this statement was Mrs. Young. She became a member of the department after leaving the assistant superintendency in 1899, and remained a part of the faculty until her resignation in 1904, when Mr. Dewey left the University. On the side of the application of this "school of thought" to the problems of education she had a large part.

Long before Mrs. Young left the public schools she had interested herself in the work of the University. Her first connection with it was to enter a seminar in 1895 conducted by Mr. Dewey. At that time she was fifty years of age. She tells this interesting incident of her entrance of this work, saying it shows how small are some of the things of life that decide one's course. When she entered the hall where registration for the opening of the year was taking place she was met by the hum of voices and the bustle of figures of young women and men intent upon entrance routine.

I was told that in order to enter Mr. Dewey's course I should have to present a permit signed by him. I looked up the long flight of stairs of Cobb Hall and watched the eager faces of the young people and decided that it was a place for young people and that I should not take up the work. As I turned to leave, some young man who knew me by appearance stepped up and offered to go up stairs to Mr. Dewey and get his signature for me. So that's the way I happened to enter the University of Chicago.

She continued in this afternoon seminar for four years, studying logic, ethics, metaphysics, and Hegel's philosophy. During this period she had opportunity to work out the application of the philosophical theories as she studied them in her supervision of schools.\*

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\* One of the members of the seminar during the time Mrs. Young attended it speaks of her as follows: "My impressions of her then were that she was a serious student, alert to what was going on, had opinions of her own, and was able to express them. In this latter respect I used to feel that she went too far; she seemed inclined to run things somewhat. I could see that she was acquainted with Dewey, and he appeared to let her have a good deal of rein—perhaps on account of their acquaintance. She was not of the tiresome talker variety, who monopolizes things and rides over you. What she had to say was good. There were no indications of verbo-mania



That she profited by this association of theory and practice is evident both from the effects of her work on the schools during these years and from her statements made before various bodies of teachers in the city. The first public mention Mrs. Young makes of the work of the University was in an address delivered in January, 1899. In this address she said with reference to the work:

The University of Chicago has recently opened what it calls a college for teachers. With a warm appreciation of the fraternal attitude of the University towards the public-school teaching corps, I must express my pleasure in the new department. I am forced, however, to say that the title of the new department is confusing. There are two gains to teachers in the opening of the college, but neither of these in any way warrants the phrase "college for teachers." The first gain is in the lessening of the distance to be traveled by persons, not necessarily teachers, living in the north and west divisions of the city and wishing to study under some of the best teachers in the University. The second gain is the definite understanding as to the conditions under which teachers work in order to obtain a degree. Neither of these gains, as has been said before, has any relation to the ideal for which "teacher" stands.

To the inquiry, "Would you have the college simply a normal school or a school of pedagogy for experienced teachers?" I reply, "By no means." The contention is that there is nothing in the method of study of languages or sciences that makes for better teaching in the elementary schools, any more than there is in the departments "not for teachers." Judging by the expressions of some who are enrolled as students in the college, it is looked upon as a ladder by which teachers in the elementary

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or the sort of egotism that bores one to death. It was rather, if anything, a case of her and Dewey discussing Hegel to the neglect of the rest of us. I do not know that her views were 'way yonder' ahead of the average of the class, but she was disposed to 'get into the game' about all the time, and of course she was giving her own views and not absorbing those of others."

schools may climb into the secondary-school corps, and members of the high-school corps into college and university faculties. It is not desired that the instruction shall be diluted to the comprehension of young children, but it is desired that the work shall be so related to life that students in the college for teachers shall not share with university graduates in a distaste for teaching the young below the high schools. The outlook for elementary education is not brightened by the present attitude of the student class toward the child under fifteen years of age. The present treatment of subjects makes one almost understand the objection to giving women a higher education, as it takes them away from the children, and somebody must teach the children. The narrow limits within which the vast majority of teachers pursued their studies have restricted both their method and their theory of education. But those offering advanced courses to teachers should make sure that the elements of the deepest and highest forms of life are in what they offer.

The manner in which the University has thrown open its doors to the Chicago teachers commands our admiration. It meets our ideal of a university as a great educational force, shedding its light throughout an entire city. That the teachings of the department of philosophy and pedagogy have not been concreted in the department termed the college for teachers surprises and disappoints us. It is to be hoped that the plan of the college will receive further consideration in time, giving to its students an equipment that will elevate the teaching corps in all the departments of its work. With the University faculty and other competent lecturers on the subjects of arts, science, and literature in this city, the public-school teacher who can calmly look on, taking no part in class or club organized for study, must regret the hard fortune which forces her to mingle with the great body of Chicago teachers—a body of students.

With this statement it is evident that Mrs. Young had seen clearly the influence which the University was exerting and would continue to exert. Two direct influences were felt coming from the school. In the first place, President Harper was a man whose ambition to organize and systematize institutions with which he came into touch led him to undertake such a task with

the public schools of Chicago. Whether, as he was accused at the time, he had any notion of making a great educational "trust," using the city schools as feeders for the University, need not be considered. He did undertake to centralize and control the administration of schools as was pointed out in the last chapter.

"The school system requires radical improvement," reads the report of the Harper Commission. It recommended that the board of education should be made up of eleven members who were to be "only men of the highest character and enlightenment." The board should be alone responsible for the purchase of sites and the erection of buildings, and not dependent upon the city council in these matters. Committee government of school affairs as practiced by the board was condemned. The superintendent of schools "should be granted much larger power" and elected for a term of six years. All educational questions, course of study, text-books, apparatus, examination, appointment and dismissal of teachers, devolves upon him. There should be a capable business manager "free to apply the same methods as in a well-conducted business," and he was to have the same salary and length of service as the superintendent. Teachers should be required to possess higher standards, and to secure such the normal course was to be lengthened from one to two years. Salaries were to be based on promotion gained through efficiency rather than on length of service. A more flexible course of study was demanded, reduction of some of the subjects in the course was called for, with the introduction of "constructive work" into every grade. The commission recommended the establishment of kindergartens,

vocational and evening schools, more manual training in the high schools, and a four-year "commercial high school." It recommended also the use of school yards as playgrounds and a wider use of the school plant. The commission discussed forms of parental schools and recommended the establishment of one in Chicago. In order to stimulate them to further advancement the teachers in service were to be formed into faculties or councils to discuss educational problems.

The law proposed by the commission to secure these changes was the object of the most bitter attacks. Several teachers' organizations in the city opposed the idea of a reduction in the number of members on the school board and argued that it should be larger rather than smaller. Such discussions as the following were common in the clubs of teachers:

1. Should the board of education be representative, especially, or is it to perform a service to society as a unit?
2. Is this service such as requires numbers or may it be performed best by few with wisdom, skill, and integrity?
3. Should candidates for appointment to the board be required to give evidence of qualifications as to age, skill, wisdom, and character?
4. Should the board be expected or permitted to decide questions involving professional skill and knowledge?
5. Is it wise to trust the school interests of this great city entirely to one person?
6. Would it not be wise to have a board of superintendence to decide regarding general policies relating to all parts of the city?
7. Can we not have a law that may give due freedom and responsibility to superintendent, district superintendent, principal, and teacher?

Most of the complaints against the bill proposed by the Harper Commission were of too great centraliza-

tion of power in a few hands. A superintendent and business manager appointed for six years with power over the educational and business affairs were greatly feared. In the report of one committee of teachers are found the words:

We object to the centralization of power in the superintendent in the matter of hiring his assistants, principals, supervisors, teachers, and other officials, and the selecting of textbooks. We feel that the idea of democracy should be encouraged. It is necessary in a city like Chicago for the people to be in close touch with the work of the school, made up as it is of a mixed population.

In spite of opposition to the recommendations of the Harper Commission great strides were made in the direction of greater efficiency in administration. At the same time the conflict between a more highly centralized administration and greater freedom among teachers was raised and became so acute that Chicago schools for several years presented a continual commotion, sometimes with the school board and superintendent on one side against the teachers, and sometimes with superintendent and teachers standing together for greater freedom. The Harper Commission marks an epoch in school history in Chicago, and through it the University exercised a powerful influence on the schools.

The second direction through which the University of Chicago came into the school life and thought of the city was in the influence of the department of philosophy under the leadership of Mr. John Dewey. The essential contribution of this department had been to turn philosophical interest and thought towards the problems of society of the present day. As Mr. James put

it, this was a new school of thought. Instead of making philosophy a dry-as-dust digging up of the thoughts of the ancients and devoting time to philological dissertations, Mr. Dewey and his associates turned towards the problems of human life. Since thought is dynamic and pragmatic, its province is in a living, acting world of people.

It is not strange, therefore, that Mr. Dewey turned his attention to problems of elementary education. Education gives opportunity for putting into effect the ideas and principles which thinking brings to light. There, also, is found opportunity for testing and developing, through experimentation, theories of human conduct. As pointed out by Mrs. Young, the department of philosophy had already been strongly felt in the awakening of a higher and more intelligent conception of the work of education. Other evidences of Mr. Dewey's influence on the schools of the city are not wanting. Many of the more ambitious teachers and principals had taken advantage of the courses which he offered, such as that attended by Mrs. Young. In the course of study adopted for the elementary schools of Chicago in 1897, not only were the ideas of Mr. Dewey clearly evident, but even phraseology used by him found a place, such as his statement that "the school is not a preparation for life, but is life." Most significant for the schools at large was the new "laboratory school" founded by Mr. Dewey in 1896. This school attempted to "concrete," to use the expression of Mrs. Young, some of the ideas and plans promulgated by the department of philosophy at the University. Visitors were attracted to this school from all

parts of the country, and its influence was widespread, even though the school lasted but a few years. In 1900 Mrs. Young became a "supervisor" in this school.

The spirit of this school was stated by Mr. Dewey in his book, *School and Society*.

A recent writer speaks of a revision of the book thus :

When Professor Dewey brought out the first edition of *School and Society*, in 1899, he found a very eager audience for the doctrines of innovation which he had to teach. From a broad sociological and ethical point of view Dewey called attention to radical economic changes which have been going on in society and outlined the corresponding changes which must be made in the organization and course of study of the schools. He called attention, in his second chapter, to the necessity of making all of these changes with due recognition of the child's intellectual and physical and moral nature. In the third chapter he pointed out the fact that our present school organization is very defective because of its failure to bring together the different educational agencies in any unified way. In the earlier edition, the fourth chapter contained a sketch of the history of the laboratory school which Dewey founded. The questions that were to be investigated by that school were outlined, and one derived a clear understanding from that chapter of the reasons why Dewey called his school a laboratory school. Furthermore, the questions raised by Dewey made it evident even to the inexperienced reader that educational experimentation is very much needed in order to improve both the method of instruction and the organization of the curriculum. . . . Certainly Professor Dewey may rest assured of the very great influence of his book. It is given only to a few men to write educational classics. Since Spencer wrote his essays there has not been a more important contribution to educational reform than Dewey's *School and Society*. (*The Elementary School Journal*, October, 1915.)

From a position as superintendent in the public schools Mrs. Young went into Mr. Dewey's department in 1899.

At the time of her resignation from the schools of the city she planned for a year abroad, to travel and study. The night before her departure, in June, President Harper of the University of Chicago sent his secretary to interview her on the subject of her taking a place in the faculty of the University. She refused at first to consider the matter, and he sent his secretary a second time asking for the interview. He offered her a full professorship in the department of pedagogy, but she could not bring herself to accept such a position without ever having taken any college degree. "How could I go before my students and urge them on to higher education without first having even a bachelor's degree myself?" President Harper offered her a position which he said he would "create on the spot" for her—"associate professorial lecturer in pedagogy"—and give her an opportunity to study during the first year for her degree. This position she accepted and cut her visit to Europe short, returning to the University at the opening of the fall quarter. For a year she pursued courses in philosophy and psychology, continuing the work begun in Mr. Dewey's seminar. At the end of that time she was granted a degree in philosophy and education. She became a full professor of education after having obtained her degree. A story characteristic of Mrs. Young's lack of formality she tells giving her experience in the examination for this degree.

It was a blistering hot day and we were garbed in cap and gown and sitting about the long table in impressive style. I took off my cap and said I guessed it would be safe on the table, and then slipped my gown back onto the back of my chair. My act, though a breach of the dignity of the occasion, at least made



me much more comfortable for the prolonged questioning of the august committee.

Mrs. Young and Mr. Dewey became associated in the closest unity in their work during her five years in the University. Her wide range of experience and her wonderful grasp of the details of school work complemented his philosophic insight into the underlying principles of the subject. Her adaptability and power to learn gave her the benefit of this new pragmatic interpretation of life and education. Their work together was made the more effective because of their mutual appreciation of each other's power. Both were fundamentally democratic in thought and character, and, as a consequence, they could lay aside all sham dignity and enter at once into the heart of the problems of philosophy and education. One of the products of such discussion was the joint authorship of six monographs called by them *Contributions to Education* (The University of Chicago Press, 1902). Mrs. Young wrote three of the six—*Isolation in the School*, *Ethics in the School*, and *Some Types of Modern Educational Theory*. In the first of these essays she takes up, first, "The parts of the social institution," secondly, "Some recent constructions of psychological, ethic, and logical modes that must be recognized in a rational conduct of the school," and, thirdly, "The function of a school in democracy." Mrs. Young stated most fully her philosophical point of view in this essay and shows very clearly how she had been influenced by modern biological conceptions of psychology and philosophy in her thinking and writing on educational questions.

Imitation and invention as shown in children are two

sides of the same activity, and this activity, as the author points out, is controlled by the organism which possesses the "original impulse which selects and reacts. The modern psychologist has thus shown the growth of mental power, even in so primary an activity as imitation, to depend upon the modification which the mind of the imitator originates." Again, in discussing the formation of habit, she has pointed out the biological aspect of this form of growth. She criticizes both Carpenter and James, saying:

The chapters written by these brilliant men are decided contributions to psychological and ethical theory; and yet, in neither does the writer rise to the command of the subject which shows that the imitative and the habit, the cause that makes the nerve-current traverse a certain path the first time and the repetition of the act, are the two aspects of a unity.

She finds in Baldwin's *Mental Development* an answer to the question of "What made the current traverse the path for the first time?" and quotes:

Habit expresses the tendency of the organism to secure and retain its vital stimulations. On this view, a habit begins *before* the movement which illustrates it actually takes place; the organism is endowed with a habit, if that be not considered a contradiction.

But she finds Baldwin's biological view of habit formation contradicting the doctrine of mind set forth in modern psychology, and so sets up another view in which she follows Dewey's doctrine of "the reflex arc concept"\* of habit formation in education. This new

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\* *Psychological Review*, vol III, 1893.

conception, instead of presenting destruction as the outcome of reformation, strengthens the self-respect by the requirement to search for the elements of power and then utilize them in the new mode. The dull routine of trying to form habits by wearisome repetitions, the discouraging process of trying to overcome the enemy, the old habit, only to find it upon the first lapse of vigilance reinstated in full sway, must give way to a higher type of activity.

When Mrs. Young made this statement she was thinking of the fossil type of school grind through which children are passed in order to form habits. She had in mind the fruitless repetitions, known as "drill," which young children are compelled to endure, while all this wasted energy might be turned into useful channels of learning both for children and society.

A third illustration in this essay of the psychological characteristic and tendency of Mrs. Young's writings is shown in her treatment of attention. Attention is always a function of the person's purposes, according to the author, and is controlled by the ends he sets out to accomplish. Inattention, therefore, is merely another way of saying that the person is attending to something else or has purposes in other directions from those immediately apparent.

If the general consensus of opinion as to the relation between mind-wandering and attention were taken, it would be found to embody the idea that in trying to follow oral discourse the mind of the listener can often be kept from wandering by the mechanical repetition of the words of the speaker. Here, in a nutshell, is the perversity of the theory which often makes dullards of the young. What value is it to keep the mind from wandering if it is tethered to words, not intelligence? The

failure to distinguish sharply between the discriminating alertness of attention and the undistinguishing passivity of the mere repetition of words is due, probably, to the non-recognition of the activity of feeling, as well as of intellect, in the process of attention.

To attempt to secure attention of children by stirring up fictitious kinds of interest is to destroy their capacity to follow through serious problems which they may have to meet. The modern psychologist is more fully concerned in the capacity of the organism to pick out and hold up ends which are of value to life than he is in any other aspect of behavior. While Mrs. Young's statement of this problem is very brief, it opens up the entire field of application of attention to school work. It is in the direction of the use of these psychological concepts in teaching that she has been of most service in this essay.

The second study of the *Contributions to Education* was her *Ethics in the School* (The University of Chicago Press, 1902, pp. 44). In style this essay is the freest and most popularly written of Mrs. Young's works, and sets forth clearly her position as to the function of the school in forming character in children. In her ethics as well as in her logic, Mrs. Young is a democrat. Moreover, her democracy is for each person, whether that person be adult or child.

Without depreciating the value of the experience of the adult in weighing conditions that are often new and perplexing to the boy or girl, one sees in this assumption of a command of all that is right and reasonable by the adult, an ignoring of mentality in the child. The conduct of a home or a school on the theory that it is the parent's home, or the teacher's school, and hence the child must conform to the laws, rules, or customs

which the parent or teacher has decided to be satisfactory to him, is hostile to the growth in the mind of the child of an ideal co-partnership in and responsibility for the order and care of that home or that school. (*Ethics in the School*, p. 31.)

Her respect for the right to think and for the personality of others is the most fundamental part of the ethical teaching in this as well as other statements. In her essay already quoted, *Isolation in the School*, she says: "The most difficult line of action to pursue is that which respects the rights of other minds; not the rights of property, but of thought." (p. 110.) In the same essay she quotes Mill's words that "intellectual power and practical love of truth are alike impossible where the reasoner is shown his conclusions and informed beforehand that he is expected to arrive at them." (p. 72.) Freedom and democracy are the two principles which run through all the writings of Mrs. Young on ethics.

*Some Types of Modern Educational Theory* is the title of the third study of the Contributions. In it the author discusses the views of Arnold Tompkins as set forth in his *Philosophy of Teaching*, a book published in 1891; of Mary R. Alling-Aber's *Experiment*; of W. W. Speer's theory of education; of Francis W. Parker's *Course of Study*; of John Dewey's educational doctrine. She analyzes fairly, though briefly, the point of view of each doctrine, and states the directions in which it conforms to modern psychology and philosophy of education.

Another essay written while a member of the University faculty and appearing as one of the papers furnished by the several departments for the *Decennial*

*Publications* was her *Scientific Method in Education* (First series, vol. III, *Decennial Publications*, The University of Chicago Press, 1903, pp. 15). Here a strong plea is made for the application of scientific method in matters educational. Criticizing modern educational method and its unscientific attitude, she says:

Educational method has, however, disclaimed the name of science, and rightly, too. It started with the expressed aim of setting conditions that would be conducive to the development of the child according to the law of its being. Its terms have been those of evolution and development, but its meanings have been meanings of pre-Darwinian times. With the magnification of the teacher as the external force, whose chief office was to prepare the nutritious food in layers so that it should be taken in accord with the determined laws of nature, there has been a steady growth of non-scientific method in the schools. To plan and conduct a recitation so that the learner shall neither hesitate nor stumble have been the alpha and omega of so-called educational method. (p. 5.)

The courses of Mr. Dewey and Mrs. Young in the University were developed so as to complement each other, and students in the department felt the force of these two great minds coming at problems from distinctly different points of view yet developing a common underlying philosophy of the subject.

Mrs. Young was dissatisfied with the name of the department into which she went, and her objections changed the department of *pedagogy* to that of *education*. Her courses included work in psychology and education, social aspects of education, the history of the arts, the philosophy of activity in education, and handwork as an educational instrument. As a teacher in the University Mrs. Young was particularly stimu-

lating. She never lectured to her classes. Her great power lay in her ability to draw out her students and make them take stands on questions at issue. In her questions she cut both to the heart of the matter in hand and to the deepest and often hitherto unexpressed beliefs of her students. But the recitation was not merely a debate on some question. It was rather a many-sided symposium, involving the contributions of each one in the class. Her stimulating power came from her democratic respect and faith in each person in her work, or, as someone else has put it, in her power to make each one believe in himself. Each felt called upon to do his best and felt his power to do the subject justice. All this did not come from an exhortation to her class, but from her power to present the subject in a way that compelled the student to lose himself in it as it opened up under the leadership of an active mind and spirit. Whether the course was a history of the arts, or method in history and grammar, her work was always effective and stimulating. Said a former student years afterward: "Do you know that the work I had with Mrs. Young carried farther into practical teaching and administration than anything I took at the University?" He himself was a man of mature years and experience at the time he attended her classes.

Always outside the problem, like a scientist with his material before him, she never set up her own opinion or position between the student and the subject itself. She never obscured the issue by a preliminary dissertation nor limited it by her own immediate vision. Often persons in the class expressed dissatisfaction that she did not express definitely the ends she expected them

to arrive at, but she always kept in the background so that one was never quite sure of her deepest thoughts on the matter. Whether she was herself groping for a deeper meaning and was striving for further enlightenment and was thus unwilling to commit herself and her students to an unfinished and imperfect viewpoint, or whether she merely held back in order to bring them to their own formulation, was never quite clear to her students. Undoubtedly her hesitation in such cases was the act of a teacher seeking to throw the responsibility upon the judgment of those she was trying to teach and refusing to bind them to a doctrine of her own. Her ability to set one doctrine over against another, to make the student carry on these doctrines to some objective goal of their own making, while she stood on the outskirts of the struggle, helping here and there with a suggestion, was likely to obscure to those in the midst of the discussion the fact that she really had a principle at stake and was deeply committed to a particular philosophy back of the problem.

As matter of fact, however, she was continually growing in her own viewpoint and mastery of modern thought at the very time she carried on her classes in the University. One need only read some of her earlier and her later essays and speeches to note the tremendous growth of the author of them during these years. Probably the most remarkable aspect of Mrs. Young was her power to grow during the years from her entrance to the University to the time of her withdrawal. For a woman of her age to take up courses in the University and grow through the entire time is a criterion of Mrs. Young's character.



While in the University her heart, as always, was in the problems of elementary-school teachers. In her address on the University before she entered there, Mrs. Young pointed out the danger of higher education drawing teachers away from elementary grades. Upon her entrance into the University she attempted to put her ideas into practice and developed her work as far as possible for the elementary-school teachers. She kept in touch with the schools by having a club of teachers meet at her home once each week during all her residence at the University. This was the continuation of the club which originated in her own school while she was principal, though it had grown in numbers and changed somewhat in personnel. Not only were her courses planned for the elementary teachers, not only did she keep in touch with them through personal association with them, but she became the editor of a magazine planned directly for that class of readers, *The Elementary School Teacher*. Her essays and addresses published during this time dealt with elementary-school problems and were addressed to them.

When Mr. Dewey left the University in 1904, Mrs. Young felt that she could not remain with conditions as they were at the time. She was asked to stay and continue the work of the department of education, but she declined.

Mr. Dewey's estimate of Mrs. Young is set forth in the following letter, quoted at length because of its clear and sympathetic analysis of her character:

Regarding my relations to Mrs. Young: First, it is hard for me to be specific, because they were so continuous and so detailed that the influence resulting from them was largely insensible.

I was constantly getting ideas from her. In the reorganization of the laboratory school after certain weaknesses in its original scheme of administration had become apparent (due largely to my inexperience in administrative matters) her influence with that of Mrs. Dewey were the controlling factors. It is due to these two that the laboratory school ran so much more systematically and definitely—free from a certain looseness of ends and edges—in its last three or four years.

In my opinion, what Mrs. Young got from her study of philosophy was chiefly a specific intellectual point of view and terminology (the two things can't be separated, for terminology with a person like Mrs. Young is a very real thing, not a verbal one) in which to clear up and express the practical outcome of her prior experience. This gave her in turn a greater command of her experience and a greater intellectual assurance. This led her in many respects to overestimate the explicit content of my own teachings. That is, she gave me credit for seeing all of the bearings and implication which *she* with her experience and outlook got out of what I said. As a student (in the classroom, I mean) I should say her chief mark was the ineradicable tendency to test all philosophic formulations by restatement of them in terms of experience—and this not the conventional "experience" of philosophy, but a very definite experience of what the doctrine would mean if attempted in practice—the difference it would actually make in the way of looking at other things than just philosophy. She had by temperament and training the gist of a concrete empirical pragmatism with reference to philosophical conceptions before the doctrine was ever formulated in print. Another thing that impressed me was the range of her experience—its scope, and her habitual attitude of openness to everything which would enrich it. To say that I have never seen a student of her age who had retained the flexibility and open-mindedness of younger students is to understate the fact very much—her experience had, instead of closing her mind, made it more eager and more competent in growth. She hadn't retained flexibility and open-mindedness; she had cultivated and acquired them to an extraordinary degree.

Apart from the suggestions, which were so numerous that I couldn't name them, what I chiefly got from Mrs. Young was just the translation of philosophic conceptions into their empirical equivalents. More times than I could well say I didn't see

the meaning or force of some favorite conception of my own till Mrs. Young had given it back to me — I am referring even more to association with her as a colleague than when she was a student. And as I have already intimated, she generally assumed as a matter of course that I had the point in mind from the start. I can give two examples.

I think what Mrs. Young chiefly got from her philosophic courses was an intellectual systematized justification of her practical and experimental belief in and respect for the intellectual procedures of the pupil as a pupil. I have to confess that I had never appreciated this aspect of my own logical theory till I found it so emphasized by her. Putting it in another way, it was from her that I learned that freedom and respect for freedom mean regard for the inquiring or reflective processes of individuals, and that what ordinarily passes for freedom — freedom from external restraint, spontaneity in expression, etc.—are of significance only in their connection with thinking operations.

The other point is this. I hardly ever have seen anybody who had such an habitual and keen sense of the influence of one person's associations with others upon mental habits as had Mrs. Young. And I have never seen any one with such a keen sense of it as applied to classroom procedure — the reflex effect of the teacher's habits upon the pupil in all kinds of subtle but pervasive ways. As a consequence, her sense of intellectual life as a "give and take" process was practically instinctive.

I owe chiefly to association with Mrs. Young the depth of my conviction that all psychology which isn't physiological is social. And this leads me to add a third point. Mrs. Young's experience in teaching had forced home to her the importance of the mental and moral influence of physical and organic conditions. At the same time she had her enormous faith in spirit, *i.e.*, the act of thinking, of reflection.

In general, I should say that I have hardly known anyone who made the effect of genuine intellectual development the test and criterion of the value of everything as much as she. I have known but one other person—also a woman—who so consistently reflected upon her experiences, digested them, turned them into significance or meanings for future use. Her readiness, her intuitions in dealing with new situations, were not the result of falling back (as administrators are wont to

do) upon preformed practical habits or by continued meditation and turning over in mind, into a net meaning special precedents, but of the translation of prior experience. Thus her experience was at her finger tips when needed. I often think that Roosevelt's knowledge of politics is the only analogue of Mrs. Young's knowledge of educational matters with which I am acquainted. And I should be inclined to guess that the latter's was the more reflective of the two. Her belief in mind, in spirit, in thinking, and her consequent belief in freedom for teacher and pupil, were consonant with her personal practice.

## CHAPTER IX

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE CITY NORMAL SCHOOL

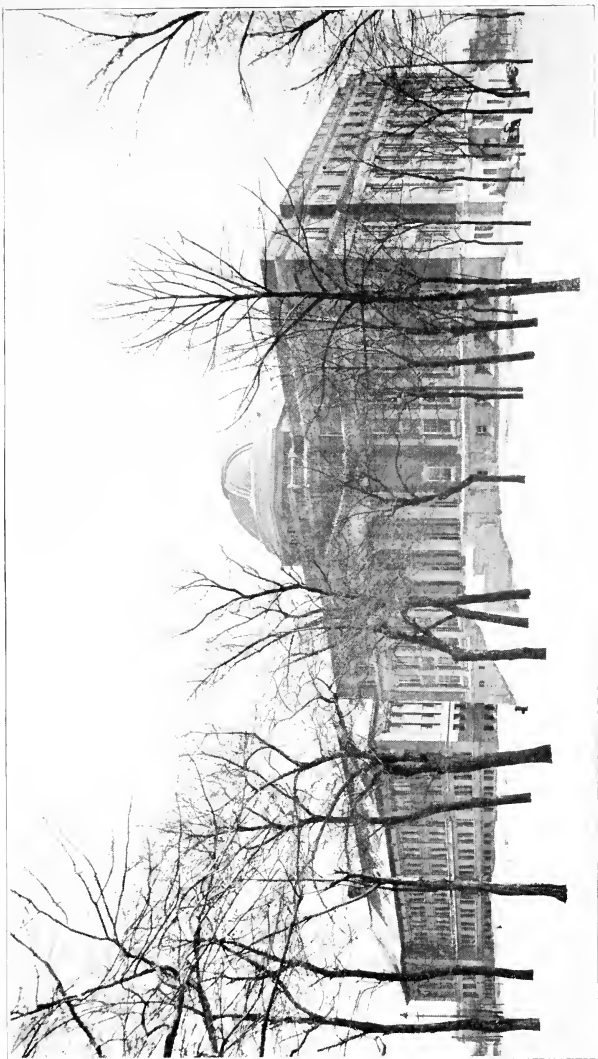
FROM the University Mrs. Young left for a year of travel and study abroad, carrying into effect the plan she had given up some years before. This was not her first trip abroad. On two former occasions she had made trips to Europe during the summer holidays. In this trip, however, she went leisurely through many of the European countries: England, Scotland, and Wales; she studied schools in France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. She was not only busy with schools and study of life and history in these countries, but she kept in touch with Chicago through an extensive correspondence. Her friends in Chicago continually supplied her with newspaper clippings on political and educational affairs in the city, and in addition wrote what came within their own experiences. When she returned at the end of her year she was up to date in affairs of the schools as fully as if she had been at home.

Soon after her return from Europe Mrs. Young was asked by the superintendent of schools to take the principalship of the Normal, which at that time was left vacant by the death of Arnold Tompkins. She accepted the offer and took up her work at the opening of school in September, 1905, six years after having severed her connection with the city schools. Like other positions which she had occupied, this one came unsought, but, like them also, it found her fully prepared

to do the work required. A careful study of the records of the school during her four years of service shows the power of her personality and the breadth of her grasp of education in city and nation.

It may be important to note casually the history of the institution of which Mrs. Young was made principal. As a county normal, and for some years after it was taken over by the city, the school had been under the management of Francis W. Parker. It had attained a wide reputation during this time as a school of advanced ideas and practices. Following Parker the work was taken up by Arnold Tompkins, whose doctrines of education were based on idealistic conceptions which had much to do with keeping the school on a high plane of accomplishment. Under the leadership of these men "The Child" had been apotheosized. More emphasis had been placed upon the ideal aspects of education than upon the education of children as they really existed in street and tenement of the city. Under such conceptions of education the Chicago Normal School had come to occupy an almost independent place as a college apart from a great city system, its faculty and course of study developed from ideal scholastic considerations. The superintendent is reported to have said in 1902 that after having given an address to the school on its responsibilities to the city members of the faculty held an indignation meeting because of his suggestion.

That an effort was being made by the Normal School and the superintendent to bridge this gap between theory and practice may be seen by the report of the superintendent in 1903.



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During the past year the Normal School has been brought into closer connection with the work of the elementary schools than ever before. The heads of the various departments have visited the elementary school, have worked with the committee of principals in preparing courses of study and selecting material for work, and have conducted most of the institutes given to the elementary teachers, besides working in the Normal extension classes. . . . The Normal School faculty are sure to acquire a more complete knowledge of the school situation in Chicago, and to be thereby the better prepared to undertake the work of training teachers. . . . The increase in the responsibilities of the Normal School must inevitably lead to the employment of a very high grade of teachers there. The instructor who has merely a book knowledge of academic and professional studies, and who might succeed in giving graduates of the high school a knowledge of educational theory, cannot successfully stand the test of undertaking the instruction of trained and experienced teachers in the city schools.

In a school of this sort, under the control of men with strong ideas, there is always the danger that the faculty may become indoctrinated and thus merely exponents of particular theories and points of view. A school dominated by a personality and a highly individual philosophy of education may become effective within a limited and a preconceived realm of work, but it is probably not qualified to meet the needs of a cosmopolitan city.

When Mrs. Young entered the Normal School she found a faculty thus developed, and one of her most difficult tasks was to break through the crust of philosophical and educational doctrines dominant at the time. That she should succeed in completely remaking a faculty, with new outlook and more independent control, was too much to expect in a period of four years, but that she did improve matters is beyond question.

From her first day as principal she offended the sense of many members of the faculty by refusing to state in some concise way "her point of view," *her* philosophy of education. From bitter experience with the futility of these statements she refused to make any such formulations, "for," said she, "all that people desire me to do is to give them some stock phrases which they can use on all occasions instead of doing their own thinking." Her patience was tried by the continued appeal to "the pedagogical child," and finally she resorted to sarcasm and sharp words to have ideas and ideals of real children dominant in faculty discussions.

During her work as principal of the Normal School Mrs. Young, unlike her predecessors, refused to become the mentor of her school, and demanded free and independent judgment on the part of both faculty and students. A characteristic statement of this demand is taken from minutes of a faculty meeting:

It is the desire of the principal to consult freely with members of the faculty concerning matters about which there are any questions, but, on the other hand, when persons are appointed to work out plans in committee or otherwise, they should not expect the principal to formulate a plan so that the report will be from the principal rather than the true representative belief of the committee. A faculty meeting which consists merely in endorsing something propounded by a member of the faculty or by the principal, is no faculty meeting at all. The faculty meeting should be a place for free discussion of all objections. Objections need not be thrown out in a combative way, and objections need not be entered only when doubts are felt; but when any proposition is not thoroughly understood it should be expressed in the meeting. Our attention is often misdirected: we are apt to ask ourselves what is wanted, rather than what should be.

In another connection she says:

There is danger of the departments of the College outlining the work in such a way that the critic teachers will become mere agents of the departments. It must rather be cooperative. In the last few years many changes have been talked about, and most teachers can speak fluently of developing the subject-matter in a natural way, but, in really doing the thing, the same old formal work exists, and the only change is in the close relationship between teacher and child.

Intellectual freedom meant more than the formal recognition of the right of a person to speak on questions. In discussing educational principles in the faculty at one time it had been necessary to drop the plan already formulated, because "the mixture of elements is so diverse among the individuals of the faculty that there are some who know the whole subject and can talk glibly on it; and these individuals, by their assertive form of argument, shut off discussion before the matter was well started."

Students were to have the same freedom in their judgment and work as members of the faculty. Mrs. Young was afraid that supervising teachers might interview the student-teachers more frequently than necessary. She said it would be better for the students not to feel that teachers were continually trying to improve them. Students would be better off if they were not spoken to every day about their work, but in this matter the critic teacher was to feel free to use her judgment. In another connection she points out that the student-teacher is not a child and must be accorded consideration due her power to assume responsibility. She is to be considered for the time being as the teacher of the room, and must be given the same support

and encouragement as the regular teacher. Student-teachers go to their work with the benefit of academic and pedagogical instruction, and do not go as "girls," but as "if they had something important to deliver for which they are responsible teachers." This attitude can only be obtained by treating the students with the spirit that goes with that of the teacher. She took the position in regard to the college teacher and critic supervisors of practice students that the same custom should obtain in the schoolrooms that governs the intercourse of well-bred people outside the school: that for two supervisors to discuss a student-teacher in the room where she was teaching a class would be an exhibition of rudeness and ill-breeding that would not be tolerated in well-bred society; that to discuss a child's mentality in his presence and the presence of classmates was unpardonable; that to mention the poverty or wealth, the home conditions, the physical peculiarities, or any handicap in such a way that the child knew the remark referred to him, showed either a lack of judgment or an unsympathetic nature in the speaker.

In one of the faculty meetings Mrs. Young discussed individual differences and the necessity of giving opportunity to each one to grow in his own way. Teachers tend to usurp the power of the child to grow. They have little faith in his native impulses to grow in the right direction, therefore they spend too much time teaching and directing.

Some consider it necessary only to plant the germs of thought in such a way that the individual student can tend their growth according to his own needs, while other teachers think it necessary to stop and tend the growth of each germ planted, leaving

little for the individual to do. Probably it might be well to cut down the length of time for recitation and attempt to do more germ planting.

Her attempt to throw upon others the responsibility for thinking and for formulating each his own doctrine of education was only one of her aims in the school. Year after year she persisted in her endeavor to bring the school into harmony with the needs of the city. As already pointed out, the policy of the school had been undergoing a transformation during the previous year or two, but no one had ever been in the school who understood the needs of the city as did Mrs. Young. In each of her reports to the superintendent she strikes at some phase of this problem. In 1907 she says the elementary-training course has a double duty, the first being the preparation of students to teach every subject in an elementary school, and the second being a necessity to give students opportunities to go ahead along some line of special interest. The course prepared had both required subjects to meet the former need, and elective subjects to provide for the second. In 1908 she is more explicit in her views of the relationship between the Normal School and the city:

For many years it was the custom of the Chicago Normal School to conduct its practice work upon outlines of study prepared by the several departments of the College. While much might be said in favor of this plan, it unconsciously creates in the student body an attitude of depreciation toward the course of study in use in the city system. If there are deficiencies in the course of study for the city which time will make plain—and doubtless there are—the Normal School should carefully analyze them and suggest to the superintendent the best remedies for them, and so develop a closer relation between the preparatory work of the student and their work as teachers.

Following this line of thought, the regular course of study for the city has been made the guide for the practice schools.

It is doubtless evident from her emphasis upon this relationship between the Normal and the city schools that one of the first undertakings of Mrs. Young would be that of the course of study in the Normal itself. Each year she injected new questions and suggestions and set new committees to work on special problems in connection with it. Work which she had striven years to get into the elementary school as an assistant superintendent she now found possible to give as preparation for the young teachers of city children. Nature study, art—both graphic and industrial—English, and music were the objects of most careful reconstruction and improvement.

In respect to nature study, increased demands in the course of study for the elementary schools gave her an opportunity to effect much-needed reforms in the teaching of that subject—in fact, a double opportunity. In order that the Normal School might be able to prepare teachers adequately for the new demands an important change was made in its course. The required major in science which had before been interpreted as a major in physics or biology was now divided equally between physics and biology. Reform is equally apparent in the nature-study outlines that began to be issued. Emphasis was placed upon the scientific character of the material and mode of approach, and upon the kind of courses of most value for children in the city. All work in nature study was organized to take the form of occupations for children. Work with plants and animals and with physical and chemical materials was

put within reach of the grades, giving opportunity for study in the school garden and for experiments with electricity. A definite attempt was made to use the activities of other departments, particularly along the line of construction.

To effect improvement in the conditions of English teaching in the schools Mrs. Young had recourse to a drastic move. She cut in two the classes in English in the Normal School. Each department, moreover, was asked to contribute, through conferences and committees, to the improvement of English. Mrs. Young herself studied the English in use in the practice schools. Her report in 1907 foreshadows her introduction into the schools, several years later, of special teachers for defective speech. She says:

A command of the mother tongue should be a *sine qua non* of every young man and young woman receiving a diploma from a normal school. Children with slovenly enunciation and incorrect and meager English pass from the elementary into the high school, and with but slight improvement graduate into the normal school, and finally, with some advance but with the careless, defective speech still characteristic, from the normal into the teaching corps.

In relating the graphic to the manual arts Mrs. Young exerted a most marked influence in the school. An incident of her first year illustrates how fully she appreciated the value of good work and was determined to secure it. Some window-boxes made by students in a manual-training class had been placed in a conspicuous place in the building. They evidently represented poor workmanship. Upon request for an explanation for the display of such work she was told that it represented the efforts of the students. "Take them down," she

said; "things here should have beauty as well as use." Her efforts at getting beauty into construction necessitated a reorganization of the art department and the bringing in of people who had notions in this direction and competency to put them into practice. In her report to the superintendent for 1907 she says:

To render efficient service in helping solve the problem of early training for the eye and the hand, leading to a training in the technique of different arts and industries, the departments of the graphic, the manual, and the industrial arts in the Normal School have made a determined and, it is hoped, an intelligent effort to work in cooperation. It has been said that to propose a scheme of cooperation of artists is to launch oneself on a stormy sea, but in this instance the teachers of art, manual training and construction in the college and practice schools were highly cooperative, not because they were trying to work amicably, but because of a comprehensive grasp of their problems. In present conditions, however, there are difficulties almost insurmountable. The chief obstacle lies in our limited knowledge of the beginnings of art in the immature mind. A fondness for using the hand and for bright-colored material in making things does not, perforce, develop the artistic sense. It may lead to a pagan form of art such as that of the American Indian. Yet, notwithstanding a strong feeling that the problem is still before us, the departments prepared and printed, in June, 1907, an "arts course" which testifies to the gain arising from the harmonious work of the different arts.

Of the teachers she had selected she speaks, in 1909:

This school is fortunate in having for teachers of arts those who are each intimate with the subject matter of their special arts, and are also clear as to the blending of individuality and social service that must inspire the ideal and its realization if that art is to be of genuine worth to the schools of the city and to education. In physical education effort has been directed toward that higher degree of sure, graceful control of the body which increases health and the power of endurance. In musical education the acquaintance with good music has been enlarged;



meanwhile note-reading, technique, and interpretation have been developed beyond the standard of chorus singing only. The things constructively and decoratively designed in the department of graphic arts, and made in the departments of manual and industrial arts, bear testimony to the continuous endeavor to combine skill and the artistic in every product.

Departments of the college were made responsible for the educational bearing of their courses. In this respect Mrs. Young's work was distinctively professional and pedagogical and produced most marked results. Each head of a department was required to give a "special method" course to students practicing in his particular subject, and in this course he advised students as to the work in the grades. The plans of students for their teaching thus came to be influenced directly by the college department. In addition to this arrangement the courses in general psychology and education were changed. General psychology was added to the curriculum, and gradually the amount of time given to it was lengthened. A course in the principles of education took the place of an older course in the ideals and the history of pedagogy. Mrs. Young herself taught classes in what she called "The School," meaning by it the practical, social bearing of the subject. She also gave a course in practical ethics to the freshmen. She saw to it that students were trained both in theoretical and practical ethics, a "mark" in social efficiency attesting the latter aspect of the training. Conduct of student and teacher came to take the place of a theoretical consideration about "the child" or "the school." In order that full opportunity might be given students to gain a practical insight into teaching, Mrs. Young reconstructed practice schools, select-

ing for the purpose typical schools of the city. She dropped a school in an American district and took up one where foreign children predominated, in order that students in practice might understand one of the big problems of the city, with the result that "an encouraging element amid the difficulties of the situation is that the faculty, in its endeavor to make the Normal School an efficient force in the city, is brought closer than before to the problems confronting cities in America."

In short, in every department such reorganization of courses took place. Mrs. Young's effort everywhere was to make the work fit the needs of teachers entering the city schools and at the same time serve to stimulate students to further educational efforts. Her ideal was that of efficiency in practical teaching. Actuated by modern educational theory based on science, she insisted that teachers understand the problems of education and the needs of the city in particular, and then be trained to execute their ideas in practice. Her feeling of responsibility of the Normal School for ideals to be applied in the city was expressed clearly in her speech at the dedication of the new college building in 1906.

The ideals of well-warmed, well-ventilated, and well-kept school buildings, developed by the conditions in this Normal School must be effective in the various schools to which its graduates are assigned. The care of materials used in class teaching in the college and the practice schools affects the attitude of the student body toward the means furnished by the city for the use of pupils and teachers in making the work of the school concrete.

When Mrs. Young entered the Normal School she found the practice work in charge of a general super-

visor or head critic. She found that many of the teachers in the college never visited their students in the practice school. Students in practice were responsible primarily to the head critic, and wherever any conflict arose between college department work and the classroom teaching in the practice schools the college department was ignored. In order to make the instructors of the college responsible for the bearings of their own teaching she set about to reorganize this condition. In the first place she required that plans prepared by students for their class work in the practice schools should go to college instructors for approval as well as to critic teachers. At her first faculty meeting on entering the school she brought up this matter in the form of questions which led to the reorganization.

Should the lesson plan be corrected by the critic teacher only, or is the college faculty to be considered in the criticism of plans? What is the point of union between the college and the critic department? Is the college to teach certain subject-matter without in any way ripening the knowledge of the critic department? Is the critic department to teach the pupils without in any way affecting the experience of the college instructors in adapting the subject-matter to the pupils?

Likewise, marking the success of students in practice was thrown upon the joint judgment of college instructor, critic teacher, and practice principal rather than the individual judgment of the head critic. Finally the head critic was replaced by the departments of the college as supervisors of work in the practice schools. The tendency of this arrangement was to make the departments responsible for the outcome in practice of their teaching in classroom, and, at the same time, to emphasize the departmental idea and organization.

Administration of a highly departmentalized school so as to keep work evenly balanced in the practice school is much more difficult than it had been where the entire responsibility for supervision rested upon the head critic. During Mrs. Young's administration of the school she succeeded in bringing about harmony among the various departments so that their supervision of the practice work was at all times effective.

Practice-school work was to Mrs. Young a constant problem and study. To keep the entire system of interests in practice schools and college together was on her mind always. She regarded the name "practice school" as unfortunate. She insisted that it was misleading to understand this school as one to which students added nothing and in which they practiced or experimented "hit or miss" with classes of children.

No greater contradiction could be found than the identification of mediocre practice schools with advanced methods and ideals of teaching. It would be parallel with the futile attempts made sometimes in the endeavor to cultivate in children a nice perception of the quality of harmony of musical tones through practice on instruments that have lost their tone and are out of tune.

She assumed it as her first duty as principal of such a school to effect an organization of forces that would develop a high degree of cooperation between all the various parts and with the schools of the city. She was fully aware that it was possible for each division of the Normal School to move along, using the language of cooperation and social efficiency, and yet committing itself to isolated details which were not the true embodiment of the normal-school ideal. "A comprehensive

view of the Normal School and its fullest life can be founded on a true social life only—a life involving a ‘give and take’ activity of all divisions.”

Mrs. Young never forgot the personal interests and welfare of her teachers and her students. In the old Normal Training Class, formed while she was assistant superintendent, she secured pay for the students substituting in order that they might partly defray their expenses in traveling about the city to the schools in which they went to work. When she came to the Normal School as principal she found much being made of the general assembly hall. From two to four in the afternoon of each day students met here for their study of lessons for the next day. The arrangement which brought a great crowd together without the direct influence of any one in particular was by no means pleasing to Mrs. Young, and she set about ridding the school of it. In doing so she arranged for the school to close its afternoon session at two, thus releasing many students coming from distant parts of the city which had compelled them to travel home late at night. By cutting off two hours at the close of each day she was compelled to rearrange the hours of students in the practice schools. The arrangement was made for all teaching to be done during the first two hours of the morning session in the practice school, thus giving the regular critic teacher the rest of the day to handle her own room to the satisfaction of parents sending their children to these schools. These two acts of shortening the day of students and confining practice to the morning hours did more to add efficiency to the work of students and faculty than any other act of her administration.

In 1906, departmental work was introduced, of which she says:

a successful introduction of the departmental plan was made in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades of the practice schools. The plan is vertical, not horizontal, since the teaching of a subject in successive sections in the same grade is even more stupefying than that of instructing in every subject taught in the grade. The change of rooms by the classes affords mental and physical rest for the children. The establishment of a room as the headquarters for history, or art, or geography, or literature, tends to make that room a museum and library of the subject in its elementary-school phase.

One further effort of Mrs. Young in her short four years at the Normal School deserves attention. She originated and edited, with the aid of the faculty, the *Educational Bi-Monthly*. Her ideal in this magazine venture was twofold. In her own words, "the magazine serves as a clearing-house for those who are working along special lines, and also as a means for conveying to teachers some of the latest thoughts on the theory of education and on subject-matter." As already pointed out, the school had during most of its history been dominated by the theories of some principal. Mrs. Young wished the faculty to become independent contributors to educational thought and work, and a magazine, written and edited as well as printed by the school, would serve for such an incentive to independence. The continuation and growth from year to year of the magazine is evidence of whatever of value it had for the faculty or the city elementary schools.

In addition to establishing and writing for the *Educational Bi-Monthly*, the only literary work of Mrs. Young during her principalship of the Normal con-

sisted in reports to the superintendent and addresses before educational bodies. In 1907 she delivered before the National Education Association an address on "The educational progress of two years, 1905-1907." Her discussion of persons and movements in social and educational institutions showed careful reading and deep thinking. She was clear and keen in her discussion of higher education, especially on the relation of college and university to the individual. She quoted President Wilson of Princeton in saying the "object is to get the college instruction into the lives of the undergraduates." The curricula of higher institutions showed a more liberal attitude than formerly toward scientific study. In the preparation of teachers she insists that progress in professional training is being made. Her faith in coordinating vocation and academic education under one roof in high schools foreshadowed her efforts some years later in fostering "cosmopolitan" high schools.

Great progress is reported in health work among the schools of cities. Likewise, social work and social responsibility for children in cities are reported as growing. Questions of advancement of salaries of teachers, consideration of freedom of teachers, and output of educational literature are dwelt upon at length. On one of these questions she says: "If the public-school system is to meet the demands which twentieth-century civilization would lay upon it, the isolation of the great body of teachers from administration of the schools must be overcome." With this address, and particularly with the sentence quoted, it is evident that Mrs. Young had carried her doctrine of

the freedom of teachers much farther than when she resigned from the district superintendency and was prepared to take up administration on this platform should opportunity offer.

At a conference on "Secondary Education" at Oberlin College, June 19, 1908, Mrs. Young gave an address on the subject, "Reciprocal relations between the subject matters in secondary education." (*Educational Bi-Monthly*, vol. III, pp. 75-84.) She discusses recent tendencies in industrial education in high schools which she says seem to foster a caste system in education. A statement of the history of efforts to unify the curriculum of the schools shows that the efforts were expended mainly on elementary schools, leaving secondary education untouched. The tendency in high-school teaching has been to keep courses narrow and segregated, so that experience gained in one subject was not consciously made to function in other lines of endeavor. A paragraph from the address will show how the author attempts to give life and unity to the elements of the course.

There must be some standard by which the value of the academic work can be tested, and in that test the duration and effectiveness of the knowledge acquired should be large elements. If the power to use anything connected with a subject disappears soon after the completion of the work in it, then it cannot be that the study gave either culture or discipline. If a boy is headed toward medicine and he shuffles off everything learned in geometry and yet becomes a cultivated man, the cultivation is not due to time wasted in geometry. If a girl becomes a cultured woman the culture is not due to time spent on biology, long since forgotten. The fanciful notion that things of which one has not been conscious, or that generalizations upon which one has not reflected, influence the intellectual and moral judg-



ments, making the character of the mind and of the individual truer, is not based on any data that will stand analysis. Education is activity in the process of growth. If the young people in the secondary stage of education are not each reinterpreting his or her individual experiences, readjusting knowledge already gained, to new and broader and deeper questions that arise out of conditions peculiar to other departments of systematized knowledge, then the judgment is not becoming truer, keener.

Another address of this period, given before the National Education Association, at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1908, was called "The school and the practice of ethics." In this address the plea is made for the development of ethics through the "cultivation of the judgment of values in conduct." The notion one must acquire is "that character develops in childhood through the exercise, the activity of the ethical judgment." As in all forms of life, Mrs. Young insists that the child grows through actually doing deeds and being responsible for his own conduct, and not by being directed in all vital matters by outsiders. This application of ethical teaching is in line with the author's earlier treatise on the subject already noticed.

From the personal standpoint Mrs. Young took her work at the Normal School as the most serious business. She felt it as a personal obligation to see that principles and habits of action should be established on a firm foundation. At the same time she insisted that the Normal School, like the individual, should never become a closed system. There should always be openness to conditions in the changing social environment combined with a flexibility that would result in a progressive adaptation to the new. The school should have that poise which comes through the consciousness of a "rich

and subtle activity in enlarged aims." It should be abreast of the best thought on educational theory and practice. The men and women in its college and practice-school faculty should be strong in their special work, and "the principal must be singularly effective in arousing that spontaneity of action which will give an upward and onward movement not only to the whole school but to the whole school system."

As in all other positions in the school system, Mrs. Young's administration of the Normal School was fearless and positive. She was always outspoken in her convictions and did not hesitate to tell the individual or the faculty what she thought on questions at issue. She was so bent on things she considered worth while that she spared neither herself nor others who were responsible for them. Lack of willingness to devote one's entire energy to the problems and the welfare of the school on the part of faculty or student branded such a person as wanting in loyalty to the cause. Toward such a person she showed neither patience nor sympathy, often indicating her disapproval by sharp and blunt word or rebuff. She acquired among many in the school a reputation for being hard because of her outspoken attitude toward persons who seemed to lack loyalty to the interests of the school, which absorbed her entire energy and time. On the other hand, she encouraged and helped most graciously and tenderly both teacher and pupil struggling to do a duty. For independence, for initiative, for loyalty, and for devotion to the school shown by others, her most active coöperation was never wanting.

Even after leaving the principalship for the superin-

tendency of schools she kept an active interest in the Normal School and appeared on the platform at nearly every commencement exercise. She fostered its work and its interests to the very end of her official connection with Chicago schools.

## CHAPTER X

### REORGANIZING A TIME-HONORED INSTITUTION

FOR nearly twenty-five years before her election to the superintendency of the Chicago schools, Mrs. Young had been taking an active part in discussions and deliberations of the National Education Association. She once said: "When I first began to attend the meetings of the National Education Association women were permitted to sit in the gallery and listen to discussions carried on by the men." The meeting referred to by Mrs. Young in this statement was held at Ogdensburg, New York, in 1867, the year that Mr. W. H. Wells was president, before the Association had changed its name to a national organization. From this obscure position as a listener to an active participant in affairs, and finally to the most prominent place in the Association, is the story of Mrs. Young's rise in the educational world. She had come to occupy a place in the intellectual movements of the country as a whole, and she was known to have a message whenever she appeared on the program of public meetings. Her progress during the time of attendance of the National Education Association kept pace with the recognition of women in affairs of the country. The story of this progress will be told briefly in the following pages.

Mrs. Young's first appearance as a speaker on the program of the Association was at the Chicago meeting in 1887. At that time she spoke on the topic, "How to teach parents to discriminate between good

and bad teaching," a subject which grew immediately out of her experience as a principal of schools. In 1893 she appeared again on the general program on "Grading and classification," showing in this address the tendency in the schools and offering suggestions which she was trying to put into operation as assistant superintendent. "Literature in elementary schools" was given in 1896, a subject on which she had been working for many years. It is interesting to note in all the addresses which Mrs. Young made on various occasions that she always discussed problems in which she was then actively engaged in the schools. In 1903 she talked on the subject, "Saving time in education." This subject had its origin in her work at the University in the elementary school. Her next address was given in 1906, a year after she became head of the Chicago Normal School, on "Influence of the city normal school or training school," which was again an expression of immediate and pressing experience. In 1907 she discussed the question of "The proper articulation of technical education," and in 1908, "The school and the practice of ethics," and also "Utilization of experience in home environment."

It will thus be seen that Mrs. Young was a familiar figure in the circles of the Association. Her influence was strongly felt along the lines of her interest, and people had come to have a high degree of confidence in her ability and integrity. That she took for her topics of discussion in all her formal addresses matters in which she was vitally interested was in itself a commendation of her sincerity and her qualification for leadership in educational ideas. Up to the time she

became superintendent of schools she had not been very influential in molding the policies of the Association, though she was a well-known figure among the active membership.

In order to understand the influence of Mrs. Young in the history of this organization it is necessary to point out briefly the career of the National Education Association. The institution is almost as old as Mrs. Young's work in the schools of Chicago. For many years it struggled along with only a small membership, kept in existence by the energy of a few leading men in the service of the schools. By and by its membership grew into large proportions and its power as an organization grew at the same time. A permanent fund was established and a corporation formed. For several years many important investigations were undertaken and reports made which have been of tremendous influence in the schools of this country. The reports of the "Committee of Ten" and the "Committee of Fifteen," issued during the nineties, have had the most widespread influence. After a time the policy of the Association as regards investigations seems to have changed, and the money of the institution to have been conserved. A permanent secretary was appointed, and affairs were managed by a board of trustees. More and more power was taken over by this board, until the members of the Association had little to say about affairs of vital import. Investment of money of the corporation, essential matters of meetings and programs, and selection of officers, while ostensibly in the hands of the members of the Association, were in reality in the hands of the board of trustees.

Out of this arrangement grew a very powerful body of managers, an oligarchy, controlling the Association. Opposed to its growing power were the individuals who believed in democratic principles of government. The consequence was that there grew up two factions in the Association and occasional "revolts" against the domination of the board of trustees, or at least of certain members of that body, in the management of the Association. One writer, opposed to the board's control, says:

This company of men managed matters very shrewdly. They occasionally placed an eminent educator in the presidency of the Association and took pains to have a number of prominent men and women upon the program for its annual meeting. They kept down opposition and insurrection by the usual methods of the political boss. Objectors were usually snubbed and relegated to obscurity. When an "insurgent" gathered sufficient strength to promise real trouble he was usually "seen," probably given an office or taken into the "clan," and the revolt quelled. The "good" were rewarded with offices, with assignment to committees where they had the privilege of sitting beside the great and voting "right" on matters presented, and by places on the program. A study of the programs for the past years will repay the student for the time consumed, and will reveal the names of a limited number of these "faithful" appearing regularly on the platform of the Association in company with the distinguished educational speakers who were also asked to appear.

Before 1910 there had been several minor "revolts," both within the board of trustees and in the organization at large. A notable case of the former was that led by Pearse, of Wisconsin, against the action of certain members of the trustees in attempting to oust him from that body. His success and the notoriety of the case formed backbone for the uprising in Boston which

resulted in the election of Mrs. Young to the presidency of the Association. Quoting from the writer mentioned above, we find that—

The spirit of insurgency was so strong that the members took the matter upon the floor of the Association at its annual meeting where the election of officials is consummated. The name of Superintendent Young of Chicago was substituted for that of the regular nominee and she was elected by an overwhelming vote. This was the first time in the history of the Association that the report of the committee on nominations had been turned down. Every possible political trick and every ounce of political pressure were brought to bear to prevent Mrs. Young's election by the nominating committee and to prevent her friends from taking the matter to the floor of the convention. Threats, flattery, and denunciation of those who were supporting Mrs. Young and of the methods used in advancing her candidacy (methods which had throughout been perfectly open and frank), and promises of future advancement, all were used wherever it was thought possible to mollify the progressives, or to induce them to come into camp and "be good." It was all without avail. The membership was for Mrs. Young and they were not to be denied.

In the face of this bitterness engendered by the older element resenting a break in its power, Mrs. Young's name was presented by a minority of the nominating committee. Preparation for this event had been made by the friends of Mrs. Young for several weeks. The moment was tense. In presenting her name, the speaker said:

I understand that the presentation of such a report as I am making is without precedent in the annals of this Association, and I am glad that this woman, who has been breaking records ever since she started, is breaking the record of this Association now. . . . For the first time in the history of this organization a woman has been mentioned for the high office that has been filled for so many years by so many distinguished men, and for



the first time we have a woman who stands, frail and little as she is, towering above those that are about her. She has not merely a national reputation, she has an international reputation. I regret any mention of a sex line in any contest. We are presenting the name of Mrs. Young as the best human being for this position. She has the record of having taught from the primary school to the university. She has done something that thrills every one of us; when you can say that man or woman past fifty starts in and obtains a university education, it is something to thrill one with admiration. . . . We have a woman to speak for us in Mrs. Young who will not speak the word wrong. It has been said that too many presidents come from Illinois. . . . Mrs. Young comes not from Chicago, but from this whole country. There are women and men from north and south, from east and west, and from the center, all anxious to see her given a chance to do in this Association what she has already done in Chicago.

When the vote was called for, out of 993, 617 favored the substitution of Mrs. Young's name for that of the majority candidate. The domination of an oligarchy had been broken. Bitter words grew out of this act on the part of the meeting. These words were echoed and re-echoed in various forms in newspapers and educational magazines and in some of the speeches of men in the Association. An editorial in a leading educational journal said that—

To take this action [nomination of Mrs. Young from the floor of the convention] in the interest of a particular candidate who had not received the support of a majority of the committee duly chosen to select a president, and in the face of the fact that the committee had nominated a man of national reputation and of long and devoted service to the Association, was injudicious, to say the least.

This entire editorial was an adverse criticism of the convention's action. In the same journal at a later time an editorial writer criticizes Mrs. Young severely

for indorsing all that was done for her election and the methods resorted to. The writer says there were even threats of vengeance upon any one who dared to oppose her. She had an all-absorbing ambition and determination to win at any cost. The appeal, according to this writer, was made to a house packed by members of the Association from Chicago, New York, and Boston. If such a policy were to be pursued, the writer suggests that the constitutional provision for a nominating committee should be repealed. In another educational journal an editorial says the atmosphere of the Association was like that of a political convention. It claims that Mrs. Young was elected in spite of over-zealous efforts of would-be friends and would make an excellent president. "The only regret is that her election could not have been more dignified."

Such words represent the death throes of a system intrenched behind narrow partisanship and not the attitude of the vast majority of people. Two editorials, one from a daily paper of the time and the other from a western educational journal, express the more general feeling:

If the duties of president of the National Education Association require an administrator possessing preeminently the highest faculties of the profession of teaching, then the organization has voted wisely in electing to its highest office Mrs. Ella Flagg Young, the superintendent of the Chicago public schools. In a year's service in the latter capacity Mrs. Young has disclosed characteristics and abilities manifold and admirable—endowments sufficient to overcome all the perplexities of her difficult position and to make her the most successful and progressive executive the system has ever had. If there were no doubts a year ago as to her fitness for the task, there were at least prejudices. But with the certain evidences of her achievements in the

various functions of her office, even these prejudices have disappeared, and there exists a comforting satisfaction that the direction of the schools is in the proper hands. The National Education Association will find that its chief officer is a woman of the utmost tact—a tact which has soothed and reconciled conditions of petulant insurgency in the Chicago schools after years of annoying turmoil. It will find her a woman of fine mental strength, clear of view, just and sympathetic, guided by principles instead of arbitrary rules, flexible but guilty of no craven concessions. Her educational qualifications, her pride in her calling, her capacity for administration, her experience in various branches of instruction, are a rich equipment and one which should add definitely to the prestige and power of the association of which she is head.

In the *Nebraska Teacher*, the editor wrote:

The election of Mrs. Ella Flagg Young as president of the National Education Association is another victory for good government in that organization. Mrs. Young has made a good record as superintendent of the second largest system of schools in this country. She was the popular choice of a very large majority of the teachers of the country. There was every reason why she should be chosen for the great honor which this position carries with it. Her election emphasizes the principle so well established in Nebraska, that such honors should go unsought to the one who will honor the position because of great service to the educational cause. Mrs. Young's election is fitting not only on these grounds, but because of the opportunity to recognize the great service of women to education in this country. It is fortunate that the active members of the National Education Association at Boston had the courage of their convictions.

Upon her election to the office, Mrs. Young uttered the words that crystallized the opposition into the "old guard," a name based upon the control exercised by the board of trustees for many years. She expressed not only the hopes of men and women who had been fighting for a more democratic form of government

in the National Education Association, but expressed again the spirit that had animated every act of hers in educational administration. When called to the platform and introduced, she said:

It is with a deep sense of the honor you have conferred upon me and the responsibility I assume in accepting the presidency of this Association that I enter upon the duties of the position to which you have elected me. I am well aware that in one short year a president may not influence the character of the Association in a marked degree. The president may, however, conserve the good which has been developed in the past and assure one advance step in the future. I hope to assist in abolishing the distinction in membership between those who can and those who cannot pay comparatively high dues. This will never be a truly democratic organization while it shuts out from active membership the men and the women who receive small salaries teaching in a cramped environment where people have not yet learned the value of the teacher. Something certainly can be accomplished toward advancing the spirit of fellowship among teachers so that all will be interested in education, not only in the rural district, the village, or the town in which their personal work is carried on, but throughout the land.

During her year as president Mrs. Young made her position as to democratizing the Association felt to a degree that it did take "one advance step." From the very first she was opposed and fought. The legality of her election at Boston was questioned, and her own part in that event was made the object of criticism by the powers that had been controlling the organization. The board of trustees and the secretary undertook to run affairs without consulting the president, not so much out of disrespect for her, as for the reason that this had been the custom. Before the year was over they were fully aware that this custom would have to be changed and it would be necessary to include the

president as an active, though *ex-officio*, member of that body. Mrs. Young thought that good business management required full and technical intelligence as to the disposition of the permanent funds of the Association. In expressing this idea she was voicing the demands that had been heard from individuals for several years. But her statement of this need brought abuse and an effort to discredit her as president on the part of opponents of progress.

In spite of opposition the meeting at San Francisco the next summer was a successful meeting. A movement was set under way at that time to put the Association's affairs as completely as possible out of the hands of any political body and to make the active members responsible to a degree not possible before. Officers were elected who had been known as fighters for the principle on which Mrs. Young won at Boston. Mrs. Young's address on "The hypothesis in education," already referred to, was devoted to a discussion of an educational and not a political subject.

Of course, the fight which Mrs. Young had got into did not cease with her year as president of the Association. The following year in Chicago the whole issue was raised again and she was brought into it in the most bitter kind of fight. In Boston teachers from New York City had been active leaders for Mrs. Young. In fact, one member from that city had presented the minority report which nominated her. It seems that this had been done with a distinctively partisan and political object, as the course of events in Chicago demonstrated. Long before the meeting took place every effort possible was made to draw Mrs. Young into a

deal whereby she should return the favor to a New York woman which had been shown her. She was accused of not playing the game, and her friends were criticized in private and on the floor of the convention at Chicago. In spite of all pressure and all bitterness of a personal nature against her and Chicago teachers, Mrs. Young refused to be drawn into the struggle. It was her influence more than any other force, though she exercised this by withholding from the controversy, which brought through the issues before the Association: The adoption of the changes to the constitution of the Association.

It is evident that the time was ripe for a revolution in the management and the ideals of the National Education Association. Changes made in the constitution liberalizing the conditions for active membership; new impetus given to investigations and leadership in movements of the day; greater appeal to the "men and women who receive small salaries teaching in a cramped environment where people have not yet learned the value of the teacher"; and, finally, the rehabilitation of faith in democratic control, were some of the accomplishments of this revolution. Mrs. Young's great help came through the power she had to throw on the side of the teachers of the country against a narrow oligarchical institution.

That her election to the presidency of the National Education Association came during the first year of her work as superintendent of Chicago schools shows the general esteem in which she was held throughout the country. Her fight for democracy in that organization was merely the application of the principles she had in

mind to put into operation in the city schools of Chicago. As the following chapter will show, conditions in the National Education Association were considerably less intricate and less permeated by selfish interests than were the affairs of the city schools. By far the larger problem of administration lay in the city, and it is to that problem that Mrs. Young devoted the best of her energy and constructive powers.

## CHAPTER XI

### DEMOCRACY AND THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF CHICAGO SCHOOLS

**W**HEN Mrs. Young left the assistant superintendency in 1899 the schools were in a turmoil over the question of the teachers. Salaries, study, promotion, and tenure of office were questions agitating the minds of teachers and board and superintendent. To Mrs. Young the most important question was that of the efforts to reduce teachers and supervisors to mere clerks, to automatons under the direction of a responsible head, of a superintendent and the board of education. For the first time in the history of Chicago schools, teachers began to agitate over organization for mutual protection and to secure ends of their own. Mrs. Young left because the situation was in confusion and there seemed no immediate hope of securing relief.

From the day of her resignation from the schools until her re-election to the superintendency ten years later, this agitation over the status of teachers and teacher-organization was kept up. Her immediate predecessor in the office of superintendent inherited the controversy from his predecessor, but instead of being able to bring order out of the chaos, he added fuel to the fire. To questions of salary and promotion, he added that of a secret marking system which made the teachers' standing dependent wholly upon the will of principal or superintendent with no intelligent recourse. Teachers were driven for self-protection to affiliate themselves with labor organizations having ends out-





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side those of the school. During these years of controversy between superintendent and teachers' organization the public was given to understand that the difficulty rested upon the fact that the teachers' federation was composed of professional agitators. Not once was it made clear that this organization was the result of the conditions under which Chicago schools were governed. At any rate, the city grew sick of continual friction in the management of school affairs, and demanded relief.

It was with satisfaction to the public that quiet was restored from the day that Mrs. Young was elected to the superintendency. Teachers at once felt that they could count on a fair deal because they knew and trusted the superintendent. Secret markings were abolished, teachers were heard in their own defense, and very shortly were called into councils to advise the superintendent on vital affairs in the schools. They were consulted in the making of courses of study and selecting of textbooks. Salaries were readjusted, and promotional work reorganized so as to give each one a fair chance for advancement and growth. Instead of fighting the organizing of teachers, Mrs. Young encouraged it because she believed, as she expressed before the so-called Senate Committee in 1915, that

the growth of the grade teachers in a general civic sense, and recognition of the rights of the human being, has been remarkable since the organization of the teachers' federation. . . . Not only the federation, but the various clubs are beneficial. Whatever makes teachers appreciate the life of the community, the spirit of the nation to which they belong, helps the school. The great drawback in education in the past has been that teachers knew their books and didn't know life outside.

From the point of view of history the work of Mrs. Young as superintendent, obscured by the recent controversies so bitterly waged, cannot be rightly judged. Only time can tell how permanent and how strong are the changes and the institutions for which she was responsible. But, judged from the standpoint of the unity of spirit prevailing among the elementary-school teachers of the city during her administration, her work was unique. In one place in her testimony before the committee mentioned above, she remarked in passing that "when I was a teacher we went meekly to the institutes that we were summoned to attend by the superintendent." In the teachers' councils which Mrs. Young called together, there was none of this meek coming together because summoned by the superintendent. Instead, the councils were the liveliest and most outspoken of meetings, and each teacher was anxious to get her position before the superintendent and was encouraged in this effort.

But Mrs. Young did not find the administration of schools a bed of roses. As pointed out in the opening chapter of this book, she reached a point where every move she made was fought. The last two years of her term as superintendent were comparatively ineffective because of the determined opposition and efforts to rid the schools of her service. A discussion of this controversy in all of its details would involve too extended a treatise and would be without value in showing the position Mrs. Young occupied at the time. So many interests and so many aspects of the questions are involved that a clear and unbiased statement is difficult to make. It is the burden of this chapter, however,

to set forth this controversy in as brief and fair a way as possible, even though it be at the expense of completeness. Of one fact there is no doubt in all this controversy, and that is that every act of Mrs. Young can be given the widest publicity without any fear of finding it questionable or dishonorable. Her purpose to serve the schools never wavered through the entire time, and from a "heckling" board meeting she would hasten to some piece of work providing for the betterment of schools, or children, or teachers.

"Interests" represented on the school board lie at the foundation of most of the ills of city schools, in Chicago as elsewhere. This point has already been made clear in the first chapter and so is here referred to only to introduce the elements of interests that figured in the troubles which beset the superintendent of schools during the past two or three years. Probably in last analysis, financial influences have been back of the political machinations in the controversy. More specifically, these took the form of the selection of textbooks, dealing with organized teachers, and the selection and purchase of building sites. In addition to these questions, which are essentially financial, there arose, in common with the movement throughout the country, a question of religious and sectarian influences in school matters. All of these elements were present in the fight on Mrs. Young during the last years of her office, and a discussion of some of them will show the position she took. Some form of organization and amalgamation of these forces finally succeeded in driving her from the superintendency.

The first matter that broke the calm of administra-

tion was the question of the selection of textbooks in reading and spelling. Under oath, Mrs. Young stated before the Baldwin Committee in 1915 the facts of this controversy, a brief summary of which follows. In June, 1912, she recommended to the school management committee that a series of readers should be adopted. She made her recommendation of the series she had selected and then says: "In connection with the adoption of those readers I had my first experience of what almost every superintendent in the United States has met before going out of office." An agent of one of the books not adopted threatened to "get" her, and was one source of trouble for her. In adopting a spelling book at the time she says:

Unfortunately, I said to some members of the committee on school management that board members were trying to influence me. . . . When we got into committee I was asked for the names of members trying to influence me. Of course, I had to say "yes," and stated who they were. From that day the intention was to move me out of office.

Mrs. Young's experience in dealing with textbooks had up to that time been singularly free from entanglements that are common in school administration. At that time it was not so much a matter of the direct action of any company as it was a demand on the part of board members for union-made books. Without doubt, pressure was being brought to bear on these members by the interests that had put them in their position for just such emergencies. Largely out of this controversy over textbooks grew the bitterness that led Mrs. Young to withdraw from the superintendency in 1913.

The second element in the fight between Mrs. Young and the board was over the teachers being affiliated with organized labor. The attitude of Mrs. Young on this matter has been pointed out in connection with her testimony before the Baldwin Committee. Again, the issue was probably at bottom a financial one. Organized teachers were becoming too strong for the recognized "interests" in the board itself and were demanding consideration as to living conditions that the board found it expensive to meet. Mrs. Young's first split with the members of the board over the federation came when the board and the teachers had separate bills before the legislature for a system of pensions. One member of the board expressed fear that teachers federated with labor might be a menace to the schools because of a provision of such organizations to use the strike as a means of gaining their ends. Mrs. Young refused to accept such an interpretation of the teaching force of Chicago. Again and again this matter came up in one form or another until finally a rule was introduced making it illegal for a teacher to belong to outside-controlled organizations, though, as explained at the time, the rule was aimed specifically at the teachers' federation. The fight in the lower courts over this rule has gone in favor of the teachers, but in the meantime Mrs. Young left the superintendency.

As an essential part of this controversy over the organization of teachers came the fight to reduce salaries in order to meet a deficit in the board's funds for schools. One of the things, as already explained, for which Mrs. Young contended during her superintend-

ency was for better salaries for teachers. When the question of retrenchment arose during 1915 she said she thought the teachers of the city would be willing to contribute a part of their time that the schools might not be closed on account of a shortage of money. Her plan in this suggestion was to forestall any cutting of the salary schedule for the coming year because she feared, from her previous experiences with such matters, that the cut might be permanent. The committee handling this question accused the federation of blocking the move and blamed Mrs. Young for abetting them in this. The finances of the board are so managed that no one seems to be able to tell where a deficit is likely to arise, or why. In her testimony already referred to, Mrs. Young explains the system in vogue, of transferring funds from one department to another to meet the demands of the time. She also pointed out that the so-called deficit in the educational department was not as great in proportion as that in the administrative department, yet the latter had been reported without a deficit. The idea she intended to convey was that her opponents were trying to show that her work and her department had been run into debt because of poor management, while as a matter of fact no such condition existed. In connection with this struggle over the so-called deficit, Mrs. Young believed that with the increased taxation voted by the legislature the board should borrow money for current expenses until such increase became available for the schools.

Whether irregularities existed in selecting building sites has not been conclusively proven, though the gen-



eral public believes such to have been the case. Newspapers and committees of investigation have gone over the evidence, but have never gone far enough to show what was the real situation. In this matter, as well as that of leasing school-board property, the practice in Chicago has been uncertain because it has always depended upon the makeup of the board from time to time. Mrs. Young was consistently opposed to a slipshod policy, and gained much of the enmity against her in this way.

Mrs. Young's fight for the unit system as opposed to the dual system of vocational education was one of the most important forces in making her a target for some of the interests back of the school board. She was undoubtedly one of the greatest individual factors in forestalling the scheme to divide the educational system and fund of this state and city. At the same time all prominent teachers' organizations took an active part in this struggle, and among them the most active was the federation, which thus gave its enemies one more incentive for its elimination.

Religious issues injected into school affairs of Chicago were partly the result of a general agitation in this country against mixing religion with public policy. Arguments against Mrs. Young based on this agitation were common. In her testimony before the Baldwin Committee she said:

There are people who have intended to injure me. They said from one end of this country to another that I am a Catholic. I am a Presbyterian, and yet I have been called a Catholic, and it is not a week since I was told that I ought to get the word out that I am not a Catholic. I said "No." I cannot say any-

thing, for I respect many Catholics, and for me to come out in the papers with this announcement would indicate that there was something disgraceful in being a Catholic. Yet it has been said that I go out of this hotel every morning to early mass; that I have an altar in my room; that I have a son a Catholic priest.

The first open break in this matter, though religion was not explicitly mentioned, came in the refusal of the board to confirm one of Mrs. Young's nominees for a responsible position. Her own religious views were always liberal, for, though she classed herself as a Presbyterian, she followed David Swing in his formation of the Central Church. Opposition against her on religious grounds could only have been originated by persons with selfish purposes. That she has been open-minded in dealing with so delicate a subject as religious and political beliefs, all her dealings with men and women prove. Her belief in the integrity of the public schools was so strong that she lamented the intrusion of sectarian and political and social issues. White or black, native or foreign-born, believer or unbeliever, were all to her human spirits and were given such opportunity as citizens of a democracy were entitled to. She proclaimed in public on numerous occasions her conviction that every child in this country should be educated in the public schools of the country.

All these factors entered into the fight against Mrs. Young as superintendent during the last two or three years of her term. In July, 1913, she presented her resignation to the board of education. A great amount of agitation sprang up against this action and the board refused to accept her resignation. She was given every assurance of support by the board at the time, and she

consented to go on with her duties as superintendent. But she lived to regret her action. In this act she violated a principle that had governed her official record from the beginning, and that was to leave a place that she felt she could not fill without being hampered by bickering. Ostensibly, the reason she gave was that she could not work while a part of the board stood against her policies. She was accused of playing politics by her move in resigning. Undoubtedly, most persons in such a position would have to put up with a divided board at some times. Mrs. Young felt, however, the force of the divided board, and she knew that no constructive work could be done under such conditions; therefore, she refused to trade by political maneuvering in the position. As one writer puts it:

They didn't like her, first, because of the stand she took against the schoolbook trust (she would not be manipulated by it), and they didn't like her because she seemed to have too high an ideal of her office. She stood as a complete obstructionist to all efforts to speculate in school sites and to create real-estate situations that any one might have private gain. And there was also opposition on the part of the board because of the increasing interest which the women of Chicago took in the schools over which Mrs. Young was placed.

After the board refused to accept her resignation, Mrs. Young again took up the work with her usual earnest effort for the betterment of the schools. Matters seemed to move very smoothly, all too smoothly, as events showed later on in the year. At the annual election of superintendent in December of that year, the board suddenly developed an opposition candidate. Mrs. Young was taken by complete surprise. One of her friends on the board came to her on the morning

of the election to say that there would be opposition, but she rested so securely in the belief that the action in the previous July in asking her to reconsider her resignation had been genuine, that she supposed opposition to her would amount to nothing. It seemed, however, that there had been a secret intrigue during the previous few months which had built up a combination to elect someone else to the superintendency. Some of the principal movers in this opposition had been apparently her friends, and not those who had openly fought her in the board. So taken by surprise at the opposition and the nomination of another candidate was she, that in chagrin and anger, partly at her own stupidity, as she has said, as well as at the double dealing of some of the members, she left the board rooms at once. This was the first step in her repentance for having been persuaded to recall her resignation. Later she said:

Two years ago last July I violated one of my pet theories, and I have always regretted it. I have always thought that when a person resigns he should never go back to the position. I have seen it work out a number of times. I resigned then, and two weeks later the board of education refused to accept the resignation. I thought the members meant what they said. I was mistaken. If I had not gone back I should have escaped all the trouble.

By a sudden and dramatic uprising, men and women throughout the city demanded her return to the superintendency. Among many editorials in daily papers this one gives the temper of the city:

Chicago never before gave such a testimonial to any citizen as the meeting at the Auditorium, Saturday, in behalf of Mrs. Ella Flagg Young. The vast hall was jammed, not with people to see a show, but with solid citizens bent on showing their

confidence in the city's foremost educator and on righting the wrongs done by politics to the city's schools. A native son who had been elected president of the United States might feel flattered at such a demonstration. The gathering of Saturday, and the universal outcry from all parts of the city, show that a democracy is not ungrateful for services rendered its children.

The mayor of the city took a hand in affairs and the city witnessed the spectacle of two sets of officers trying to fill the places on the board of education. Although another superintendent had been elected at the time Mrs. Young left the rooms, the board reconsidered its action and put her back into the place. There was nothing else the board could do. Pressure from newly enfranchised women in Chicago was so insistent that political forces were compelled to recognize the interests of the schools, at least ostensibly. But the two years from the time of this action in December, 1913, until her announcements of her resignation were one continuous turmoil in board management of schools. Hitherto unexpressed opposition on the part of the men principals and some of the men teachers in the high schools found more and more clear expression in various ways against a woman superintendent. One of the daily papers, up to this time a staunch supporter of Mrs. Young, now by insinuation and by open attack editorially proclaimed the necessity for a change in the superintendency. Many persons of unbiased judgment saw the hand of "interests" in the published statements of the newspapers and the moves made to "investigate" the schools.

In every way possible efforts were made to compel Mrs. Young to leave the schools. It was generally recognized that she was the storm center about which all

the controversy revolved. Political interests found it difficult to handle the situation as long as she occupied the superintendency. Some of these activities need stating in detail. In the first place, in connection with the deficit in school appropriations, an "efficiency" committee was appointed that undertook to cut teachers' salaries in order to meet the shortage. Because, as already stated, Mrs. Young opposed this, and because the teachers' federation opposed it, the fight ostensibly against the latter organization was in reality a fight against the superintendent, who figured so largely as an exponent of organized teachers as against the political interests on the board. For several months this committee wrangled, and ended by simply having made matters unbearable for Mrs. Young. Not a single positive recommendation was made and carried out by this committee, except to foster the attack directly on the federation and to hasten the growing disgust of the superintendent with a heckling policy. The attempts of the common council to "investigate" the finances of the school board were not aimed at Mrs. Young, though even here the meaning was undoubtedly a political one.

A second aspect of this effort to drive Mrs. Young from the schools was the policy of the mayor elected in 1915. Instead of making the appointments to the school board in July, as was the requirement of the case, he neglected to do so, and thus left the board as it was then constituted to fight it out against the superintendent. Undoubtedly, he was unwilling to assume, for political reasons, the responsibility of appointing a board that might continue the task of making life miserable for the superintendent, and, on the other hand,

he was unwilling to offend the powers back of this fight by appointing a board that might favor her work and retention. As evidence for this statement it is merely necessary to call attention to the fact that as soon as Mrs. Young's intention to leave the schools was made public, the mayor immediately named seven people for the vacant places on the board.

One other "investigation" of school affairs was undertaken by a committee of state senators. The resolution creating this committee was entered after the adjournment of the senate, and, judged by its activity and history, was undoubtedly a part of the movement to get rid of Mrs. Young. The author of the resolution creating this committee was a close political friend of the mayor, thus tying up more closely the political interests back of the movement to rid the schools of her influence. Testimony taken by this committee, as already pointed out, centered mainly about the superintendent and the attack against the teachers' federation. Openly the committee showed the greatest respect to Mrs. Young, giving the widest publicity to her statements and encouraging the public in believing the investigation was for a real purpose of furthering the schools of the city. Within the committee dissension arose because of the evident purpose of a majority to carry on matters in behalf of the "interests" of Chicago which offered "philanthropically" to defray the expenses of the committee. Moreover, no further indications of the meaning of this committee are necessary when it is understood that the moment that Mrs. Young made her announcement that she would not be a candidate for re-election, it dropped out of existence

and has not been heard from since. Opposition within the committee itself could not have accounted for its complete cessation, because a majority of the committee was in favor of the policy for which it had been appointed. Politics back of the city government of Chicago and the board of education was undoubtedly the moving force in this investigation as well as other activities mentioned, and the object of them all was to rid the city of Mrs. Young without seeming to the public at large, particularly the women voters, to be fighting her. The methods of politics to cause friction and dissension and yet keep in the background are so well illustrated in the work of the last two years of her superintendency that nothing further is necessary to a complete understanding of her resignation.

In her resignation Mrs. Young wrote as follows :

Persistent discussion of the superintendency of schools in the daily papers leads me to write you officially of the subject. When I was re-elected, December 9, 1914, I intended to complete the plans made for the school year ending June 30, 1915, and on that date to sever my connection with the Chicago public schools. When the school year closed a most perplexing situation existed. The board was confronted by a prospective deficit varying from \$600,000 to \$1,350,000, according to the opinions of different persons. In order to reduce the sum as much as possible the board had adopted certain restrictions that were to be effective until December 31, 1915: (1) the employment of no extra teachers; (2) the non-increase of additional teachers; (3) the non-recognition of increases in salaries because of promotional credits; (4) assignment of pupils to teachers of manual training and household arts. Knowing that the enforcement of these restrictions would subject a superintendent to adverse criticism, I believed that my responsibility in recommending higher salary schedules for principals and teachers placed on me the duty of administering these restrictions, and I therefore decided to remain until December 8, 1915. No deficit will con-



front the schools for 1916, and I shall gladly see my successor enter upon the duties of the office with the prospect of an educational field cleared for work upon the problem of the schools and their interests.

Mrs. Young did not release her hold on the affairs of the schools even up to the very day of her departure. Her last report was one defending the morals of the high schools against charges made by persons whom she considered enemies of the public high schools. Every item of estimate for the following year was gone over by her as painstakingly and conscientiously as if she were going right on with the work. In this act the most characteristic attribute of Mrs. Young came out. She would not give up an office with the work disorganized and confused. Even though her friends continually urged her to let up on the amount of energy she was putting into the place during the final days, she was always there and always busy finishing the duties as she found them pressing upon her. Her successor did not need to spend weeks trying to catch up with the slack of official matters. It was not that her successor might be relieved, however, but that the schools might not be left with some period of inattention and neglect. Her interest was ever in the schools, and this interest lasted to the closing day of her connection with them.

With her withdrawal from the superintendency the tension that had existed for several months was at once relieved. The interests that had fought her at once turned attention to a reorganization of management in harmony with their own demands. The feeling of unrest and expectancy was notably absent from the board meetings. This relief in tension was noticeable

in the speeches and pledges of good-will at the meetings immediately following Mrs. Young's departure. Unfortunately for the schools of Chicago, however, the fight through which she had just gone seemed to bear very little immediate fruit in the reorganization. Merely to secure peace and good-will in management is no sign of progress in school administration. The difficulty had been in a politically organized board of education, in the dominance of interests responsible for appointments to that body. All that happened in the new organization was a rearrangement of affairs suitable to these interests, so that harmony and peace appearing were those of a temporary nature. The political board remains political. In time Chicago must witness the same kind of upheaval in school affairs that it has in the past. The present management is based on exactly the same kind of uncertain status that has always been the case, and no amount of ability and conscientiousness on the part of a superintendent can ever make his tenure of office secure. In spite of the most extensive publicity given through Mrs. Young to the weaknesses of the school board during the past few years, the public does not generally seem to realize the necessity for changing matters. American faith in turning out one set of officers and electing another is the only remedy employed in handling school affairs.

After the withdrawal of Mrs. Young the recognition given her by citizens of Chicago in public meetings and receptions inspired some of the members of the board of education to offer a permanent and substantial recognition of her years of service to the city. The suggestion was that she should be made superintendent

*emeritus* with a salary of five thousand dollars a year. Mrs. Young stated to her intimate friends that she would not accept such a position, even though it might be offered her, and no one who had known her well would have expected her to do so. When the matter came up for consideration in a committee of the board it was found to have considerable opposition. There was a feeling on the part of some that it would be safer for the interests of the board to be completely rid of all of her influence. Arguments that this would be without legal sanction and an expenditure of the public money needed in other directions were made, so the proposition was dropped and nothing further done about it, except the passage of the following resolution.

On May 24, 1916, the board voted unanimously—

that in humble acknowledgment of the unpayable debt of our citizens to the wisest, the greatest, the most devoted teacher the schools of our city ever have known, this simple record of the official service and positions in public life of the first woman superintendent of schools of the City of Chicago, Ella Flagg Young, is spread upon the proceedings of this board of education.

Mrs. Young retired from the office of superintendent of schools January 1, 1916. Her withdrawal from the system terminated a period of service which started in the year 1862, when she began as a grade teacher. In one year she was a head assistant. Two years later she became the first principal of the school of practice upon its creation as a part of the Chicago Normal School. At the end of six years she was given charge of the high-school class which developed into the South Division High School. After three years she returned to the Normal School as professor of mathematics, for two years. She then became principal of the Scammon School, which was followed by her principalship of the Skinner School.

In 1887 she was made a district superintendent, which position she held until 1899, when she left the service and became,

first, an associate professorial lecturer, and later, upon earning her doctor's degree, a full professor in the department of education of the University of Chicago. In 1905 she re-entered the school system as principal of the Chicago Normal School, which position she held until the year 1909, when she was elected superintendent of the public schools of this city.

Mrs. Young was a member of the state board of education of Illinois for twenty-five years. She was elected president of the State Teachers' Association of Illinois in December, 1909, and in the year 1910 she was elected president of the National Education Association.

Be it resolved, That an engrossed copy of this resolution be given to Ella Flagg Young in token of the highest esteem and fullest appreciation of this board of education, as the representative of the citizenry of the City of Chicago.

Mrs. Young's immediate power thus passed out of the school system which she had served for over fifty-three years. By the action and enthusiasm shown in the public receptions given in her honor during the last month of her term of office, it was evident that her efforts for the school children of Chicago had left a permanent impress on the history of the city. And while the plan she hoped to see put into operation to take the school board out of politics as far as possible was not realized, the city has a more adequate notion of the problems and the dangers that beset the public schools than it has ever had before.

Education of the public to its responsibility to watch and to guard the interests of its children has gone on at an increasing speed. So also has been the spirit of unity among the teachers of the elementary schools. Without an official connection with the schools, Mrs. Young's influence cannot be removed from this increased enlightenment of the community and a closer comradeship among school teachers.

## CHAPTER XII

### MAKING OVER A CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM

ON the occasion of Mrs. Young's election to the superintendency, July 30, 1909, one of the Chicago papers wrote editorially as follows:

Her election to the superintendency of the Chicago public schools comes as a fitting reward to one who has given her life to their advancement. There is no phase of their work with which she is not perfectly acquainted. There has been no development which she has not watched closely, if indeed she has not had a part in it. . . . The election of a woman to be superintendent of schools in the second largest city in the United States is in violation of precedent. If any man among the candidates had possessed all the qualifications recognized in Mrs. Young her sex might have been against her. The board of education tried faithfully to select the best equipped individual for the important place. The training, experience, and administrative ability of Mrs. Young were strong points in her favor. That they were strong enough to win in spite of sex and in the face of competition of a number of men of exceptional qualifications makes the honor shown her all the more notable. The choice of a Chicago candidate is gratifying. There is some advantage, at times, in introducing a leader from the outside. But every such choice is distinctly discouraging to the ambitious teacher or principal already in the ranks. The selection of Mrs. Young has a twofold interest. It is a recognition of faithful service in the Chicago schools. It will bring fresh inspiration and encouragement to women teachers all over the United States. The new superintendent has a great task before her. The wise administration of Chicago's educational plant demands the best that is in any individual. That Mrs. Young's career may be marked by wisdom, harmony, progress, and unquestioned success will be the wish of every citizen as she takes up her responsible work.

That the board of education made a thorough search for a competent person for the position is evidenced by the length of time spent in making the selection and the number of persons examined for the place. Furthermore, that her election to the position was partly felt by many as an honor to her long service in the schools is clear from the statement of a prominent citizen and a man in an official position in the city at the time. "We expected the board of education to honor Mrs. Young," he said, "by making her superintendent for a year while looking about for a man fully fitted for the place. But imagine our surprise when the schools began to move with unprecedented smoothness and rapidity in the right direction and we were compelled to recognize that instead of honoring Mrs. Young, we were actually learning for the first time how well the position of superintendent could be managed."

We have already pointed out the years of experience and growth of Mrs. Young during her connection with the public schools of Chicago. From the time she left the schools in 1899 until the time of her election to the superintendency she had been going forward in the study and interpretation of educational thought of this country and Europe. Her career at the University, as we have already pointed out, brought her into connection with John Dewey and his work as an educational thinker. From her year of travel in Europe she had gained insight into the practice of education in the principal cities of the world which in turn she could use for the administration of schools. In the Normal School she concerned herself directly with the teaching force of the city and found many occasions even before

she entered into the office of superintendent to help mold the trend of affairs in the schools. At no time after leaving the schools ten years before had she lost touch with the work, so that she needed to spend no time learning her position after being elected.

The work done by Mrs. Young during the six years of her office as superintendent cannot be told in a brief chapter. Like all of her other work, the great thing she did as superintendent was to mold and influence character. From the office boy or girl in her department to principals, from pupils to teacher, her influence was continually going out and touching vital spots and making life brighter for each one. In spite of the breadth of the problems and the intricacy of the tasks which Mrs. Young undertook during her administration, it is necessary to summarize in some fashion the main events of the period. The first chapter of this book gave a general summary of the period and showed that the movements in Chicago were really nation-wide tendencies. In the present chapter appear in some detail the actual accomplishments of Mrs. Young as a superintendent.

During the six years that Mrs. Young was superintendent the schools of Chicago grew very rapidly in numbers and in scope of work. A bare outline of the principal items of growth will suffice to show how great was the task of keeping up with needs of the city, to say nothing of making headway in improvements. However, Chicago schools have always had this race to keep abreast the growing needs of the population, so that the period from 1909 to 1915 is not unique in this respect. It is unique, however, in that it actually made

many revolutionary provisions in the education of the people. All of this will be mentioned as we proceed. The following table may serve to give some of the facts in the case:

#### MEMBERSHIP OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

1909	1915	..	INCREASE
Primary grades 135,490.3	Primary grades 147,473.8		11,983.5
Grammar grades 86,514.7	Grammar grades 101,630.7		15,116.0
Total increase in both grades 27,099.5.			

It is worthy of notice in this connection that the increase in membership during the six years is larger in the upper grades than in the primary grades. Undoubtedly, many of the improvements made in the schools during this period account for the continuance of children into the upper grades. The most significant thing of the work of Mrs. Young as superintendent was her insistent appeal to keep the children going on into the higher grades. A record of retardation during this time shows the same facts as to success of children in advancing as that of the table above. In a still more effective way the membership of the high school shows this point:

#### MEMBERSHIP OF HIGH SCHOOLS

1909	1915	INCREASE
15,687.6	25,322.3	9,634.7



The increase, in other words, of the primary department during the six years was eight per cent over that of the date previously, seventeen per cent in the grammar department, while in the high schools the increase during this period was sixty-one per cent. Such an increase in high schools was unprecedented in the city, though throughout the country high schools have been growing at a very rapid rate during the past ten years.

In the number of schools the city was acquiring there was also a rapid increase. In 1909 there were 239 elementary schools, while in 1915 there were 306; in 1909, seventeen high schools, and twenty-two in 1915. The number of rooms in the elementary schools in 1909 was 5,552, while in 1915 it was 6,815. Teachers in all schools in 1909 numbered 6,284; in 1915, 7,825, a gain of 1,541 during the six years. Manual-training rooms and cooking classes were added as rapidly as money could be found for them; in 1909 there were 159 manual-training rooms, 61 cooking rooms; in 1915 there were 231 of the former and 199 of the latter.

During the same period the cost of education, like the cost of everything else, increased. The fact that education in industrial and vocational lines requiring expensive equipment was growing so rapidly during this period, and the fact that, as shown above, attendance in higher grades grew so much more rapidly than that in lower grades, are further sufficient reasons why the cost of education in the city should go up at this time. The table showing relative percentage of membership in primary, grammar, and high schools and the total cost per pupil is here given :

YEAR	<i>Percentage in primary grades</i>	<i>Percentage in grammar grades</i>	<i>Percentage in high school</i>	<i>Cost per pu- pil in whole system</i>
1909-1910....	56.9	36.5	6.6	36.11
1910-1911....	56.5	36.5	7.0	37.52
1911-1912....	55.5	37.0	7.5	39.61
1912-1913....	55.9	37.4	7.6	40.85
1913-1914....	51.3	34.7	7.5	42.82
1914-1915....	50.21	34.6	8.62	42.38

In addition to all the work of the office of superintendent of schools, and in addition to the personal and professional work with teachers through regularly visiting schools and lecturing on educational matters, Mrs. Young found it possible to carry out a tremendous amount of constructive measures in all lines of administration. A mere list of her recommendations which were adopted by the board shows in some measure her activity during the six years of her connection with that office. Many other measures and improvements during the time were fostered by her and owed their success to her energy and foresight, so that the list here given of accomplishments represents only a part of her constructive work. Taken alone, however, the scope of recommendations in this outline marks Mrs. Young's work in the schools as an epoch. There is no attempt to systematize the recommendations, except that they are given in chronological order in time of their introduction to the board of education. They are as follows:

Recommendation to limit the amount of promotional work of a teacher in one year to two courses, a recommendation aimed against cramming, prevalent when she became superintendent.

Change the system of rating teachers from percentage to descriptive words—superior, excellent, good, fair.

Added oral reading to the subjects in examination for admission to Chicago Normal College.

To furnish teacher, equipment, books, educational supplies for the first open-air room.

To furnish teachers whose sole duty is to assist children to overcome speech defects.

To appoint extra teachers (principals' clerks) in all high schools and all elementary schools with a membership of 1,125 or more.

To appoint assistants to principals of high schools.

To limit the number of seats in classrooms of new buildings to forty-five (a recommendation which has not been followed; number now forty-eight).

To reduce the number of seats in classrooms in old buildings from fifty-four to forty-eight. (Some principals have held on to the fifty-four in order to keep up total membership.)

To adopt new sentence in the rule concerning deduction from salary on account of absence because of personal illness; pay refund of difference between regular salary and amount paid substitute from third to twelfth week of absence.

To introduce two-year vocational courses into high schools.

To introduce muscular system of penmanship.

Revise course of study in elementary schools.

Establish substitute centers in different parts of the city, instead of gathering substitutes in superintendent's office daily.

Grant one-year certificates to teachers of the industries without examination.

Appoint women teachers of physical education for girls in high schools.

Permit special social workers to study the causes of absences in one of the elementary schools.

Add a modern language that has a great literature to language course in any high school that has twenty-five pupils applying for the language.

Establish Lucy S. Flower high school—vocational school for girls.

Establish review summer-classes in three high schools.

Establish industrial course in grades 6, 7, 8 in certain

schools—number increased from three to twenty-five in three years.

Organize prevocational classes in technical high schools.

Elect councilors (deans) for girls in high schools.

Organize teachers' councils.

Submitted plan for presenting subject of personal purity to high-school pupils.

Recommended conducting high schools on six-hour-a-day plan.

That all schools be supplied and equipped with divided window shades.

Recommended the adoption of a rotary (modified Gary) plan in crowded schools.

Revised elementary course of study aiming to have greater concentration of effort—revision work done by committee of principals and elementary-school teacher and superintendents.

That high school gymnasiums be kept open ninety minutes after close of school, and elementary gymnasiums thirty minutes.

Reported on educational methods in Europe.

Submitted plan by which change in salaries would take place on either January or June first. (Recommendation was not adopted.)

That the bureau of vocational guidance be taken entirely into the school system.

Many of these recommendations were far-reaching in their effects upon the life of the teachers and children in the schools. Mrs. Young's ideals of reducing the numbers of pupils to a teacher, of keeping the children and teachers well physically, of placing handwork in all grades, particularly a kind in the upper grades that would have a vocational value for the children, of raising the intelligence of teachers by making them feel free to express their own ideas and needs, the increase of salaries to a point where teachers and principals were economically competent to live—all these ideals found expression in the acts which she advanced and fought for during her term of office. To say that the

schools have been transformed in some respects by her work is to put the gains of the city mildly.

As already pointed out, no change was greater than that of vocational work in the schools of the city. Advocates of vocational training under a separate system of schools, "a dual system," cannot realize in Chicago that the secondary schools here are already more largely vocational than they are anything else. In numbers, students pursuing vocational and technical courses outnumber those taking the purely academic subjects. Cost of equipment alone has stood in the way of pushing this kind of work far beyond its present status. A report made in March of 1914 showed the relative numbers of students pursuing the various courses offered in the high schools.

COURSE	MEMBERSHIP
Academic .....	13,063
Two-year college .....	276
Four-year vocational and technical.....	5,878
Two-year vocational.....	7,010
Prevocational .....	624
Apprentice .....	482
Unclassified .....	167
<hr/>	
Total membership.....	27,500
Total vocational.....	14,270
Per cent vocational.....	50
Per cent two-year vocational.....	25

In the above table the two-year vocational membership is shown as including one-quarter of the entire high school population. These courses were established in 1910, showing that they had grown with amazing rapidity to a place of such importance. A

summary of the vocational and technical courses in the school will show how completely Mrs. Young covered the entire field in the preparation of children for their life work. The list follows:

1. Industrial centers in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades in twenty-five elementary schools as enumerated above.

2. Prevocational courses in the technical high schools made for boys and girls over age but behind in their grade. Children might enter these courses after having completed the fifth grade of academic work.

3. Two-year vocational courses in the twenty-two high schools of the city. These courses number eleven, as follows: accounting, shorthand, mechanical drawing, designing, pattern-making, carpentry, machine-shop, electricity, household arts, printing, horticulture. Two or more of these courses are given in all the schools, and most could be given by practically all.

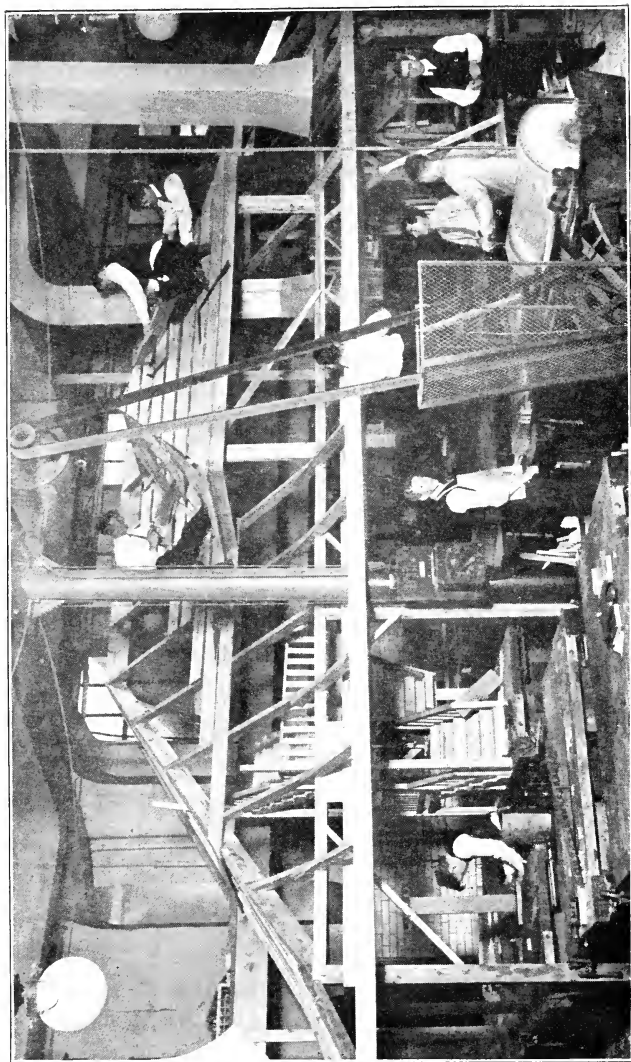
4. Four-year vocational and technical courses, as follows: commercial, office preparatory, technical, general trades, household arts, arts, and architecture. These courses are given not only in the technical high-schools, but also in most of the schools where the general, the science, and the normal-school preparatory courses are given. There are eight high schools in the city where the four-year technical courses are given. Mrs. Young believed very strongly in the so-called "cosmopolitan" high school, a school giving all lines of work, from Greek and art to cooking and agriculture.

5. Apprenticeship courses in many lines of industry, such as carpentry, electrical workers, plumbers, machinists, sheet-metal workers, bakers, and druggists.

6. Two-year college courses, or junior-college work, for technical education and engineering, in several of the high schools.

7. Evening school courses in more than twenty vocational lines of work.

Sufficient detail has been given in discussing the work of Mrs. Young for vocational training to show what the public schools can do under proper management to handle the preparation of children for industrial and



CARPENTER APPRENTICES IN THE LANE TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

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social demands of the time. In all this movement no one has grasped more fully than she the demands of the times for practical education and the responsibility of the public school to meet these demands. Her faith in the possibility of the school to do such a task seemed unlimited. In answer to the criticism of opponents of the school as it now exists, that it had been established for the narrower purpose of giving children power to read and write, she always insisted that the school belonged to the public and should be made to supply the needs of the people as they arose, rather than to try to hold to some supposed scheme held by men generations ago. It was this feeling that led her to build up, as far as money and school board would permit, a really modern educational institution during her six years as superintendent.

Not only did Mrs. Young work to advance vocational education, but she attempted to reorganize the academic work of the schools. In 1910 she called together committees of teachers, principals, and superintendents and gave over to them the charge of rewriting the course of study for the elementary schools, first outlining the ideas which she hoped to see advanced by the work. She arranged her committees by subjects in the curriculum. By this means she secured a course made out by a set of persons specializing in a particular line of study. For thoroughness the course surpassed anything done in the schools since the days when Superintendent Wells wrote out his course, based on oral instruction, in 1862. Each committee systematized the material in a given subject from the kindergarten to the end of the curriculum.

After a trial of three years on this course of study, Mrs. Young again called together principals, teachers, and superintendents and outlined a plan for concentrating effort in the grades upon particular lines of work. The plan was an "intermittent" one whereby a subject could be used intensively for a year and then dropped for a year, or rather used in connection with other subjects. Arithmetic was not to be studied as a separate subject every semester for eight grades, but was to be made auxiliary to constructive or handwork in some of the grades. The same was true of penmanship and some of the other branches. If a course could be worked out on this principle and thoroughly understood and appreciated by teachers, there is no doubt that much time might be saved and the work made more effective and real for the children. It follows the recent discussions of a locus for each particular study, making the material correspond to the interests and needs of the growing children, rather than following some preconceived logical arrangement of subjects.

In connection with her effort to make the academic as well as vocational work effective, Mrs. Young made the most systematic and tireless search for the best books for the teachers and children. Reading and spelling and penmanship were subjected to the most careful revision. After many years of experimental work on penmanship, she went back to the "muscular" form of writing which she had used and advocated at the time her work in the Skinner School won an annual prize in the subject. She set a committee to work on a set of school readers, after herself going over a large number of them. This committee selected a set of books

for the school which have proved adequate in teaching the subject in the grades. The unsatisfactory condition of spelling led, through her efforts, to the selection of a committee of teachers and principals to compile a book on the subject for the schools. It is evident that Mrs. Young in her zeal for vocational and technical education did not forget the academic needs of the schools at any time.

Even more anxiety was shown by Mrs. Young for the physical welfare of children and teachers of the schools. Her belief that health is a pre-requisite for learning and intelligence drove her to work at all times for this cause. Not only did she plan for those afflicted with diseases or with maimed bodies, but her greatest interest was to keep the sound child well and strong. In her lectures before the teachers of the city she was accustomed to say that "children come to school in September ruddy and strong and leave the schools in June pale and broken." It was her greatest wish that this condition might be remedied, that the school might itself be a place where the sick child might be made well and the weak child strong. She encouraged open-air rooms, furnishing teacher and equipment; she fought with engineers for a sensible arrangement of ventilation and for a chance to have the windows of the rooms opened frequently enough to furnish pure air. In the arrangement of windows for lighting she not only provided for the best kind of blinds, but in all the new buildings she insisted on the construction of a room that protected, as far as possible, the eyes of the children.

In the conduct of her office Mrs. Young's adminis-

tration was unique in the history of the Chicago superintendency. From her first day in office she opened her door to teachers and the public, and during the entire six years she was always accessible to anyone at almost any time. Not only did she keep open house in her office, but her policy was one of open publicity. The newspapers of the city were given every opportunity to print news of interest to the people on school affairs. Her belief that the best interests of schools were identical with those of the people led her to encourage in every way possible the general intelligence on public-school affairs. Her policy as an administrator was to keep in the open in all of her dealings. She refused to do anything that she could not freely discuss through the newspapers with the people whose children were in the schools.

Whether such a policy was easy every one can judge who has had any experience with an office hedged about as the superintendency is by political and private interests. A policy of publicity, of open dealing, is the most disconcerting arrangement to the management of politically controlled institutions. (Mr. Dewey's comparison of Mrs. Young and Mr. Roosevelt as to preparedness on the lines of their interests might well be continued in this matter of keeping the public informed as to policies through the daily press.) In Chicago the people know more about school affairs now, have a keener sense of the inside of affairs by far than they did six years ago. Bodies of public-spirited citizens have been taken into the responsibility for the welfare of the schools as they never were before in the history of Chicago schools. All of this spread

of intelligence has been a part of the effort of Mrs. Young in dealing with the educational problems of the city.

If one of the marks of leadership is the power to delegate responsibility to others and secure active and intelligent cooperation, Mrs. Young was a leader of high degree. She entrusted work to others and gave them free rein in doing it. Her democratic principles credited others with judgment and self-control, so, when she had assigned some person with a task to perform, she delegated responsibility for the finishing of that task. Hers was always the teaching spirit that asked for independence and loyalty in those with whom she dealt, always placing greater emphasis upon the worth of spirit shown in the performance of the work than in the job itself. But her confidence in the integrity of others often led her to make appointments to positions that failed to live up to the trust she reposed in them. She was not always fortunate, therefore, in the people she chose to do particular tasks. A politician binds his appointees to him personally, but Mrs. Young never tied strings to the jobs she filled. It happened more than once that she found herself beset by some of the persons she might have had reason to expect loyalty from in critical moments in the management of schools. Mrs. Young herself would be the last person to hold up to such a one his failure to live up to his obligations either to her or to the place for which he was selected. She hated the shirker and refused tolerance for work half done. In some cases where she made sacrifices to advance another to a post of prominence she found she had to count on enmity and sometimes treachery.

From the standpoint of current political practice Mrs. Young's management of the superintendency might be considered unique in its failure. Instead of building up a machine from her friends that she could rely upon, she even went to the other extreme in appointing to places of responsibility men and women who were opposed to her point of view and were often her antagonists. All persons were treated on the same level throughout her administration, so that at no time could she count on an official clique in her undertakings. Her own integrity and her own industry gave her confidence in herself to meet and handle above board all the problems of the office.

She failed even to provide herself with a secretary, as her predecessors had done, until the last year of her term of office, when the press of work became so great that she was compelled to have help. Her failure to build up a machine left her without that support needed to keep in touch with all the forces at opposition with the policy of an administration. The failure to provide adequate assistants for the carrying out of her ideas led directly to the attacks made upon her toward the close of her term of office. What Mrs. Young accomplished as superintendent of schools she did almost single-handed. No body of strong men and women advised her on financial and educational matters, except in friendly and disinterested ways. As pointed out by one of her political enemies a year ago, the greatness of Mrs. Young showed most clearly in her handling the tremendous load of financial, political, and educational sides of the administration without a single helper at a time when every ounce of energy of united

influences was against her. Doubtless with party organization she could have held her place of power with greater ease and for a longer time, but at no time in her life did Mrs. Young ever assume the rôle of dictator or boss. Her strength of character lay in her own integrity and her unwavering confidence in the integrity of others, a confidence that was often taken advantage of by those not deserving of it.

In the summer of 1914 Mrs. Young was sent as a member of a commission to Europe to study education and other conditions. Her investigations were confined in the main to vocational training in the public schools of England. On account of the outbreak of the war during the summer the investigation was cut short before reaching the Continent, except, briefly, Copenhagen, Christiania, and Stockholm. From the standpoint of broadening the scope of vocational education and suggestion for new lines, this report was very valuable, though its influence has not been marked on the schools of Chicago.

It is not alone in the United States that manufacturing and commercial interests have in the last twenty years aroused deep interest in industrial and vocational education. It is the subject that is uppermost in the minds of school boards and educators in England and Scotland.

For the day elementary schools and high schools the report gives only woodwork for boys and domestic economy for girls, though none of these offered the technical training of Chicago high schools. More attention was given to experimental physics and chemistry than in our schools. Some attention is given in day and evening schools to technical training, but

influences of employers have been against much extension of this work. It says:

To counteract conditions leading to dissipation of human life and power, trade or continuation schools are increasing in number and multiplying the facilities for city boys and girls to enter the skilled industries. Courses are offered in subjects that are close to the every day demands of society. The following courses have not as yet been included in our trade or industrial schools for boys between twelve and sixteen years of age: bakery and confectionery; carriage and motor-body building; hairdressing; professional cookery; professional waiting; silver-smithing, jewelry, and engraving; tailoring; training for metal trades. In evening continuation schools for apprentices work similar to that in our schools is found, but in addition the following courses are given: brass finishers' work; tinsmiths' work; mining; motor-car engineering; plaster work; upholstery; wood carving; coach trimming; bread baking and confectionery; tailors' work; tailoresses' work; flour millers' work; hairdressers' work; art metal work; stone and marble carving; forestry; ambulance; sick nursing.

During her superintendency Mrs. Young found time to write and lecture extensively. She gave several addresses before the National Education Association, among which her presidential address delivered at San Francisco in 1911 is the most conspicuous. In this paper on "Hypothesis in education," she contends that since science had moved from the conception of a static to a dynamic world, so education must move from "final determination of the ideal of education, which is destructive of life," to "the large ideals of education, with its many complexities, and the tentative conditions for which we watch and through which we adjust our ideals." Nowhere has anyone stated more clearly or comprehensively than in this address the demands of modern thought and conditions on education. In this



brief paper Mrs. Young shows that she had grown both in adequacy of expression and grasp of the modern point of view over some of her earlier writings. Her utterances on education are those of the pragmatist. In her statement of the evolution of life and reality she says:

In classic and mediæval times, nature was a world of permanent things, the problem of science dealt with essences, and even so late as the early part of the nineteenth century, heat was supposed to be an imponderable substance, and light to consist of luminous corpuscles. In the world of mind, the human race was supposed to be a special, final creation, and the problems of knowledge dealt with the fixed, the determined, the unchanging. And so the problem of education dealt with the acquisition of the formulations, the statements of great minds that had written and spoken. . . . With the introduction and dissemination of the hypothesis of evolution there is general appreciation, in varying degrees, of the fact that theories of nature and knowledge, that institutions of state and of social life, that methods in industry and in commerce, that ideals of education and of a worthy life, are all subject to change in a changing world; in brief, that finality both in the natural world and in the spiritual world is death; that change, adjustment, is life. . . . I believe that if we would rise above the idea of finality in things spiritual we might have the term the *educational imagination*, with a significance corresponding to that of the scientific imagination.

Probably the most important writing Mrs. Young has ever done is found in her annual reports as superintendent of schools. She spent a great deal of time in constructing these reports, and her ideas and recommendations form important landmarks in city school reports. As educational documents they rank with those of Wm. T. Harris when superintendent of St. Louis many years ago. Each year she takes up a new phase of the problem of administration and develops it in

such a way as to make it effective to teachers and patrons of the schools. It is impossible to give in detail the material written by her in these reports during her six years as superintendent, but a brief analysis of each one can be set forth.

For the year 1909-1910 Mrs. Young discussed questions of salary adjustment, revision of the course of study, and flushing the rooms with fresh air regularly. In the revision that had been made during the year under her direction she had tried to get a balanced amount of time for handwork. She says:

Every elementary school should be equipped with a manual-training shop, a kitchen, and a sewing-room. The work of the teachers in the classrooms and of the teachers of industrial arts can never be integrated so long as the pupils are sent away from the building to a distant school to be taught one phase of the integration, while the teachers, busy in their separate buildings, have no opportunity for conference and, at times, for cooperative work in class instruction.

Manual training and household arts, promotion and retardation, fresh air, physical education, athletics, technical training for girls, training in morality, adequate superintendence, and course of study are topics developed by Mrs. Young in her reports for 1910-1911. One sentence under the head of "Superintendence" reveals the belief of the writer in a democratic form of management: "Schools are unified, methods are harmonized, not through over-supervision by superintendent or principal, but by a truly democratic supervision which would make conscious and effective in every member of the education department the truth that the public school exists to strengthen character and efficiency in the individual, citizenship and activity

in the nation." She endeavored to make moral education a live issue in the schools, and emphasizes the value of environment of children. "In many of the day schools the social atmosphere has become natural and attractive to children, though there are yet schools in which the old type of repression holds sway."

In 1911-1912 the superintendent discussed the unification of the school system of the city, kindergartens, the course of study, the three R's, children with defective speech, high-school course of study, maximum membership of a school, use of the building during school hours, and sex hygiene. She returns to the question of integrating the academic and the industrial:

When our schools are so organized and equipped that the industrial and academic work enlighten and strengthen each other, the vague, the indefinite, will be almost an unknown element in our class work. - That they shall enlighten and strengthen each other, the industrial equipment must be in every school and the teachers of the industries must be recognized cooperative members of the school's faculty in which they teach—not peripatetics, who are rarely, if ever, seen by the academic teachers of the children whom they instruct.

She tried to bring about a closer relation between the kindergarten and the work of the grades than had existed before. Many of Mrs. Young's ideas as superintendent were too advanced for the schools of the city. The reconstruction of the three R's advocated by her, while criticized rather severely at the time, has been heralded as an "innovation" very recently in the work of educational writers like that of Abraham Flexner in the *Modern School*. Of arithmetic she says that—

The value of rapid, abstract work with whole numbers and fractions within the limits of the demands in the counting-house, the shop, and the factory, seem not to be esteemed in the American school. One who would clarify the American teaching mind so that the difference would be appreciated between drilling drill and enlivening accuracy would deserve lasting recognition.

In the English of the schools she found that teachers were very generally teaching grammar as an exact science rather than the living language.

If study of the native tongue does not lead to pleasure in testing its possibilities in conveying ideas, the school, through adherence to the study of a dead language, has undoubtedly failed to make the young learner conscious of the richness of life in the growing, changing, living language. Thus far, the teaching of English grammar in the public schools of America has been of slight value in developing an appreciation of shades of meaning as expressed through a nice use of auxiliaries and prepositions.

In 1912-1913 Mrs. Young deals with such subjects as modernizing and developing a school system, physical education, education for efficiency, textbooks, teachers' councils, and salaries. Her effort to concentrate attention of pupil and teacher on a few subjects during a semester is characteristic of her work. She wished to cut all subjects studied at one time to five, three of which should be "basic," a fourth to be physical education, and the fifth "cultural, recreational, occupational." She summarizes the progress of the year by stating the fight over vocational education. One party to the fight had extolled placing occupations in the school and insisted that academic subjects would take care of themselves, while the other party refused to entertain any ideas except of the traditional subjects,

and rejoiced over the recrudescence of the three R's in the schools. "Paradoxical as it may seem, the schools permeated with the spirit of progress have responded more quickly, more intelligently to the call for rejuvenation of the three R's than have the schools that are under the domination of the past."

Most significant in this report is Mrs. Young's position on the value of organization of teachers:

The evolution of group consciousness in the members of an educational body seven thousand strong brings to the surface tendencies sometimes ideal, sometimes dangerous. Chief among the latter is that of disintegration of the teaching forces into units so independent of each other that they become what Gompers terms "specialists in industry" and defines to be "those who know but one part of a trade and absolutely nothing of any other part of it." Chief among ideal tendencies is that of appreciation of the value of the work undertaken by the group.

Her insistence on democracy in school organization was common throughout her reports. She says in her report for 1913-1914 that—

Out of the custom that gave principals and superintendents the right to set standards there has evolved an ideal of administrative power as that which embodies the right to set all standards for everybody coming within its jurisdiction. This ideal was admissible in the formative stage of a great governmental institution, before an analysis of democracy in that institution was undertaken. That stage has been passed. We are now face to face with the fact that a democracy whose school system lacks confidence in the ability of the teachers to be active participants in planning its aims and methods is a logical contradiction of itself. A school principal talking about the desirability of constructing larger buildings, said "There should be forty-five divisions in a school. That would mean forty-five teachers for the principal to direct, just as each teacher has forty-five children to teach." This was the reasoning of a member of the ruling

class in an aristocracy. That teachers should be active in planning the course of study or the improvement of relaxation periods, was not written in the books of that principal; neither was the power of initiative written in the categories of school children's minds, as he would list them.

On the other hand, the long-accepted definition of the social duties of teachers—the development in their immature pupils of a spirit contented and willing, regardless of their desires and their intelligences—has tended to create a feeling of unrest in teachers when called upon to initiate, to construct educational plans outside of their individual classrooms. Sometimes they, like principals, superintendents, and board members, have feared anarchy as a resultant of the individual ideals clashing in the children upon transference from one teacher to another. That is exactly what does result under conditions in which teachers work out their individual preferences under regulation by the administrative officials. It is not a good-natured patting on the back, nor words of commendation given by a superior being to an inferior being that will make for a social harmony in a school or a system of schools. What must come, and is coming rapidly in the more progressive systems, is the contribution of the successful experience, the theories, and the doubts of teachers, in frank, open discussion in councils organized for freedom of thought and speech. Why talk about the public school as an indispensable requisite of a democracy and then conduct it as a prop of an aristocracy?

The report issued during the last year of her superintendency shows Mrs. Young at her best from the standpoint of a constructive thinker in education. In her discussion of the course of study she throws over the hackneyed arguments for enriching the work of the upper grades and plunges into the heart of the needs of children in the democracy as it exists now, overshadowed by the industrialism of the city. The difficulty with the over-age boy and girl, the misfits in schools, all lie in the fact that we are sending all children to school and therefore need a diversified curriculum. In

discussing the failure of Latin and algebra in "the lost effort to enrich the grammar-school course," she says:

This change is not so much a yielding to the preference for modern over classical study as it is the recognition of the difference in the type of mind which today is seeking an education. With the solution of the problem of education which America is attempting—the development of the endowment through initiation and individual endeavor—the difference in values of subjects exists not so much in the traditions of the subject as in its integral relations to all that is involved in the work which this type or that type of mind is carrying on. Vocational work will help to stimulate and strengthen the minds of children in upper grades.

But she says also:

The vocational departments in high schools, or any portion of them, should not be transferred to elementary schools. It is not for limitation of children to commercial or trade training that I plead; it is for fit preparation of our children before they narrow, as in time they all must, to the routine demands of trades and professions; it is for such an awakening of young minds to the laws of nature, the needs and possibilities of humanity, that in their future work they shall keep free from the limitations of bread-earning, and spirit shall never fail to catch glimpses of life and its meaning.

In recognition of the work she was doing for education, the University of Illinois honored Mrs. Young in 1910 with the degree of LL.D.

## CHAPTER XIII

### C-H-I-C-A-G-O SPELLS OPPORTUNITY

“**C**-H-I-C-A-G-O spells opportunity.” With these words Mrs. Young closed her work as superintendent of schools in Chicago. The sentiment expressed in these words was not a mere passing emotion, nor a sudden desire for trite saying. As stated in an editorial column of a daily paper—

Her final words of farewell are colored with the same good sense, courage, and hopefulness that have marked her entire life-work. Her message to the people had no resentful sting in it for those who at times opposed her administration. It contained none of the pessimistic sentiment which so often clouds the outlook of old people and makes them believe that the golden days all lie behind us. It had no tincture in it of the bitter spirit of social unrest and rebellion which obstinately refuses to see good and magnifies the evil aspects of the times. Speaking of the schools, for instance, she is confident that the school discipline and ideals are far better than they were fifty years ago; that the courses of study are now much better adapted to qualifying children for actual life than they used to be; and that an immense advance has been made in the schools in taking care of the physical condition of the children—a field wholly neglected when she began to teach. In fine, this veteran of the public schools is confident that Chicago’s school system is steadily improving in practical efficiency. Her notion of the possibilities of the coming generation who will live and work in Chicago is equally encouraging. She says “C-h-i-c-a-g-o spells opportunity.” It is a fine saying—worthy of becoming a municipal maxim. And it is a true saying. Mrs. Young’s own career is but one of innumerable examples going to show that a brave, patient, and rightly aspiring spirit can always find an honorable career in Chicago.



Not only has Mrs. Young worked in Chicago for more than half a century, not only has she found a home within the limits of the city, but her professional career and her very personality have been wrought upon by her love of Chicago. Time has turned her head gray in the service of the public schools of this city. Whatever grade of work in the schools she undertook has given her a new chance to serve the city she loved. Her faithfulness to the schools and the interests of the children of Chicago was not born of a mere sense of duty held in some exalted mood, but based on a real and abiding affection for the city itself and her desire to serve its interests. When she suggested to the board of education that rather than have salary schedules cut in order to meet a deficit in finances she would ask the teachers of the city to donate two weeks of time to keep the schools open, she had no doubt that such a request would meet with the teachers' approval. And her basis for thinking so was her own devotion to the welfare of the schools and her feeling that the teachers she had been working with for a lifetime would respond in the same spirit.

This love for Chicago has not been a matter of emotional effusion and gush. It was based on an exact knowledge of the life and growth of the city. From the very first of her teaching to the close of her superintendency she had kept in close touch with every social and civic movement of the time. When she first took charge of a school as principal, as already pointed out, she spent days and weeks studying the people and homes and industries and surroundings of her district. Every play place for children outside of the home was

known to her, and so was every place that might offer a lure for the youth of her neighborhood. Later on she kept in the same close touch with the movements of populations within the environs of the city, knew the new districts added, the foreign peoples, and the needs of each for accommodations in the schools.

No one appreciated more fully than she did the efforts of the crude overgrown hulk of a city to keep its clothes big enough to cover its growing body. When it was charged by members of the board of education that the demands for new school accommodations by those who were attending only part time could be satisfied if all available rooms in buildings were used, Mrs. Young pointed out that the empty buildings were in districts from which people had moved because they did not like the neighborhood, and it would therefore be impossible to force them to send their children back to those places. Encroachments of manufacturing and business were driving people to seek new quarters, and the schools would have to follow the people. "Until the city dies and remains at a standstill, this movement will go on, and we shall be compelled to meet it by building new schools." Even though the city was growing all during her period of service at an almost incomprehensible rate, and even though this meant uncouthness, still she found it a city where growth was in the air and there was a genuine effort at all times to compass the physical bounds set by the prairies and the lake.

This visible effort at growth offered to Mrs. Young a great problem, a game of the mind and the energies. She liked to see the struggles of wave after wave of population for a stable hold on life in the city. What



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Miss Jane Addams has said about people in cities not having learned to live together, Mrs. Young followed day by day for fifty years and strove with all her might to help them to learn. It was a struggle of social and industrial forces to adjust themselves to the limits of life in a new city, a city not much older than the life of a generation, and this struggle typified her own growing consciousness of the schools' share in bringing order out of chaos. Probably no one element in the education of the human mind has a greater place than that of space: to cover a large area with the mind means a real broadening of the mental horizon. The same thing is true of a growing social group where all is flux and undetermined. It was into this double kind of problem that life threw Mrs. Young. Her mind was ever alert for its solution. How could the schools bring nearer to the people the lessons of regularity and the message of service? Night after night she came back to her room after the day of work and set herself to find the answer. No one has ever devoted himself with greater singleness of purpose to the solution of this problem of wholesale education of people into a new kind of social responsibility—a problem in which foreign-born children were no more conspicuous elements than native people coming to Chicago from rural and smaller localities and struggling to adjust themselves to city life where standards of city life were in the making. With an almost feverish energy Mrs. Young devoted herself to the conversion of all such diverse elements into citizens and neighbors, not only of Chicago but of America at large.

Speed and energy in a great industrial center are

matters of marvel. Probably these two forces in Chicago had more influence in the formation of the ideals of Mrs. Young than any other. Unhampered by the traditions of an older and more formal civilization, Chicago pushed to the limit of her strength processes of competition and construction, often crude and ineffective, but nevertheless always at work. Minds are built out of the material on which they feed, and Chicago's growth since the beginning of the Civil War has been so stupendous that anyone keeping in active touch with it must have felt himself expand with the decades that have passed. Inventions and transportation have meant drains on the power of human minds. Calls upon an institution like the school for ever-new batches of human ore for the crucible of life have searched the ingenuity of teachers and superintendents at every moment. To a mind like that of Mrs. Young such an atmosphere could act only as a spur to great exertions. One can imagine her mind tingling with energy as she looked upon the accomplishments of the tremendous tasks of Chicago, the tasks of building a city out of the mud banks of a great lake and putting it in touch with all the streams of commerce passing from one ocean to another every moment. In her ability to keep pace with such a demand is shown the measure of Mrs. Young's power. In her love for the task she set herself is the measure of her singleness of purpose and her success in the undertaking.

That life close at hand is of most worth to each one was one of the fundamental tenets of Mrs. Young's philosophy. In Chicago she found all that men and women strive for the world over. Her writings and

her addresses and her work all point to her belief in the value of the immediately present experience as the object of life. She never sought outside her work for big, formal topics on which to write or speak, but found her material always close at hand. The growth of society, not in general terms, but in its human and direct sense, she found in her own school and city. Like the trained scientific worker, her mind probed into the material before her, but continually reached out for new tools and for every available idea to clear up the problems she was trying to solve. Because of her feeling of the value of the present, she always had time to stop to consider each detail carefully. No matter how busy she might be over administrative affairs, she kept herself open to every applicant for attention and listened to what each had to offer on the business at hand. She exemplified in practice the saying of Carlyle that "here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy ideal; work it out therefrom; and working, live, be free." Often in conversation her face lights suddenly at some passing remark of her interviewer which has struck out some suggestion of solution to a problem over which she has been brooding.

Chicago has meant so much to Mrs. Young, therefore, just because it has shown the way of life in its intricate organization and demands. It has been so sufficient that, no matter how tempting the opportunity offered elsewhere, she has not been attracted from her work. The attachment was more than merely working among one's friends. It was really a belief in one's own efforts rather than in place or opportunity. Doubt-

less if Mrs. Young had been reared and had worked in some other city in the world she would have had the same regard for that place that she has had for Chicago and its life. But it is difficult to separate her from the surroundings in which she has worked. In fact, her love for Chicago is peculiarly fitting to her own character and temperament. Wherever she has gone she has carried the needs and the desires and shortcomings of this big living embodiment of human strivings with her. In Europe she saw new movements in terms of the measuring-rod of Chicago practices and ideas. It was to bring back impetus for her own schools that she took trips. In other cities she found improvements for Chicago—in Tuskegee Institute she found posture and carriage of students an antidote for slovenly habits of high-school pupils of Chicago. Her life was centered on bringing back to her home the best available everywhere. The report of her last trip to Europe is directly bent on solving one of the hard problems of vocational education as practiced in the schools of Chicago. Her work in the University of Chicago never removed her from an active participation in bettering the teaching force and the school practice of the city.

During the past half-century, as already pointed out in this work, there have been vast changes in operation, transforming the forms of social forces in Chicago that this western civilization alone could furnish. The progress of these changes has made life for Mrs. Young the most fascinating game. Individualism has run riot in many forms in this period. Industrialism has raced after immediate and material rewards. Its eagerness for results has cheapened human life and at times



placed property above men. Administration of human interests has largely been in terms of economic standards, and each one has sought to place his own value at the highest point in the market of life. In contrast to this western individualism of Chicago the older world of the East has ordered the life of each one and rated him in terms of traditional standards. It has reduced men and women to items in the business of the state. Individuals have existed only to further the ends set by the overlords of society.

Between these two ideals of society, the one of rank individualism and the other of complete subjection of each to the demands of a superior, the past half-century has witnessed a third form of social organization incompatible with both. Mrs. Young has followed with the keenest study this conflict of social forces in her immediate community, and has perceived for many years the growing germ of real social control, a control based not on dictation of an outside governing class nor on self-seeking individualism, but a control growing out of the organization of the people themselves. In all her work in Chicago she has admired the push and initiative of the people. This initiative she has sought to cultivate in the young. Her belief that Chicago offered opportunity to the young was her faith in its encouragement of initiative in each one. But she did not stop with the encouragement of initiative. She has persistently insisted that children must be taught their responsibility to society. Each one must be made to feel that he owes to his city and community the best he has in him. Instead of merely seeking his own ends, he must be made to feel that there are forces bigger

than himself to which he owes allegiance. Chicago to Mrs. Young meant the balance between these two forces of initiative and responsibility in human affairs.

Even the politics and politicians of Chicago occupied a fascinating position in the mind of Mrs. Young. In her long experience with "influences" in school and social affairs she came to regard the play of these forces as a game. Moreover, she looked upon the political situation as a part of the education of men and women in self-control and self-government. The necessity for misunderstandings and for self-seeking formed a part of this scheme of things. Only when the vital interests of children were at stake did she rebel at the unwarranted assumption of power of some faction or person. Her interest was always a public one, and never for private aggrandizement, and she found it hard to reconcile herself to the predatory spirit in others. During the last two years of her superintendency, when she found political interests so strongly entrenched that every move she made for the welfare of the public school was blocked, her faith in our system of government was sorely tried but never broken. Only her long experience and her ultimate faith in the triumph of self-government held her to the end. The tragedy of her immolation and of her final withdrawal from public life will never be known, but, in spite of all her rebuffs at the hands of self-seeking forces, her love for the welfare of Chicago and its children kept her sane and single-minded throughout the struggle.

Mrs. Young never became lost in the maze of material growth and accomplishment, vast as such progress

has been. It was not to external forces, nor size, nor wealth that she gave her best energies and allegiance. Back of her love for Chicago lies her love for the human spirits of little children and the men and women who so unreservedly gave themselves to helping these children. The countless generations of young people leaving the schools to enter the work of life year by year stood for positive individuals to her, and she projected into them her own aspirations to conquer ignorance and immorality. That she remembered the names of her former students for many years afterwards was not an accident of memory, but a part of her real interest in keeping in touch with the work and lives of those she had taken some part in forming. Her love for Chicago thus had a large share of the personal element in it at all times. It was not the houses and streets and beauty of outlook that held her to this city, but the feeling that kindred spirits were striving, and it was her business to help them in their struggles. In her love for Chicago there was always this yearning of the mother-heart. She strove to make the way plain for the children of Chicago. Human souls constituted the Chicago that Mrs. Young loved, and all her work in education was in answer to her love for them.

This spirit of love for the young of Chicago led her to assume official positions in the schools. Office-holding was to her never an end in itself—merely holding an attractive job and drawing a good salary—but was for what she could do for Chicago in that position. In her readiness for the place to which she was appointed, already pointed out, her preparation was for the work she saw was needed to be done rather

than for the position of power. Her custom of leaving a position that had become restrictive was based on this principle of leaving the place that cut off avenues of service to the city. Opportunity to serve Chicago was never separated from a deep sense of responsibility for the welfare of its people.

Before Mrs. Young gave up her position as superintendent of schools she presented her worldly goods to the public. In comparison with the service of a lifetime which she has given, this act seems paltry. But it is markedly characteristic of her thoughts for Chicago that she should turn her books on education and philosophy over to the public library, there to be used by citizens and students. Her household goods she sent to the Mary Thompson Hospital. The intrinsic worth of the gift lies in the giving of her own personal and cherished goods, gathered during many years as treasures, to the public. That she should select public institutions to which to give her personal possessions is evidence that her interests in the welfare of Chicago were uppermost in her mind.

Her closing words to the newspapers when she left the superintendency sum up Mrs. Young's love for the children of Chicago and her inspiration in her years of service. They might well apply to any city and any age:

I believe that every child should be happy in school. So we have tried to substitute recreation for drill. We have tried to correct bad physical conditions. We have tried to abolish severe evening work. We have tried to recognize types of mind as a mother does among her own children. We were losing the majority of children at the fifth grade. By letting them do things with their hands we have saved many of them. In order that teachers may delight in awakening the spirits of children,

they must themselves be awake. We have tried to free the teachers. Some day the system will be such that the child and teacher will go to school with ecstatic joy. At home in the evening the child will talk about the things done during the day and will talk with pride. I want to make the schools the great instrument of democracy.

## CHAPTER XIV

ELLA FLAGG YOUNG

**I**N an editorial on October 23, 1915, the *Chicago Herald* said:

"Children and dogs know their friends," runs an old and true saying. The children of Chicago, so far as it has been their good fortune to come into any sort of personal contact with her, know they are losing a friend indeed from among the ruling powers of their daily lives, because after December 8 Mrs. Ella Flagg Young will be no longer head of the public schools.

About a year ago a certain small boy came home with shining eyes to tell about the lady whose acquaintance he had made while waiting at a suburban station for a train. He is a small boy, by no means humble of mind and not easily impressed with anybody's greatness. But that five-minute interview enrolled him as Mrs. Young's devoted admirer.

The incident excited curiosity and prompted enquiry. The judgment was found to be uniform. While it isn't easy to break through the reticence of childhood, this was found a subject on which expression was prompt and decided. From scores of children who had happened to meet her—and she seemed never to overlook a child anywhere near—came the verdict: "She's all right!"

From the day, over half a century before, when her mother had advised her against entering upon teaching as a profession, to the time when children instinctively knew her for their friend, there had been a marvelous transformation in character. The steps by which Mrs. Young grew from a retiring girl to a big-souled woman have already been pointed out. Likewise, the growth from the obscure teacher to the educator with national and international fame has been set out stage by stage. But the qualities that have given her fame in her line

of work, and for which she is recognized among her countrymen, should be known.

How has she attained eminence among people? Why is she pointed out among the crowd and kept in the public eye? Certainly not by the mode adopted by the headline-seeker after notoriety, for there is nothing more distasteful to her than to be conspicuous, and she craves to be let alone with her work. Many guesses as to the secret of power of great men and women leave us still in the dark. Intellectual supremacy, social standing, political acumen, wealth, heritage, democracy in spirit and practice, all have been offered to explain the preeminence of people under various circumstances. In the case of Mrs. Young one might apply several of these descriptive terms with certainty to the explanation of her character. Her intellectual power is unquestioned, her foresight in administration has been recognized as of high order, her courage and self-possession, her outspoken manner of expressing her convictions, her judgment in affairs, all belong in the first rank.

Whatever the secret of Mrs. Young's greatness may be, the fact that she is known through her efforts in education the length and breadth of the country gives evidence of her power. A summary of her activities as they are known will show a wonderful versatility of character and endeavor. As teacher, as administrator, as writer, student, club-woman and citizen, democrat—in all these capacities she has made herself felt by the age in which she has lived. She has had interests enough to have earned the title of "educational statesman."

As teacher Mrs. Young stands out conspicuously in the annals of American education. She loves teaching. Men and women hold her in cherished memory for the thrill of strength and ambition she stirred within them. She knows how to bring the latent power to effective realization in whatever subject she undertakes, whether with young or older people. To her students, it always appears that they themselves are developing the subject, so subtle is her power to draw forth their thoughts and feelings. No one could miss the tonic effects of her confidence. She speaks to the spirit and the response is complete. In her later years her zeal for teaching has increased rather than diminished, as is so often the case, and she lamented that duties of administration kept her from the direct work of the classroom. Her judgment of the school is always from the point of view of the health and happiness and response of the pupils. No matter what the grade of work, kindergarten or university, no matter what the circumstances attending the work, her eye is always clear to see the student's attitude toward life and its problems. The marvel expressed at her power to size up a schoolroom vanishes when one applies this simple test of the freedom and happiness of children to the teaching.

Next to that of teacher, Mrs. Young is known best to the world as an administrator. Sufficient has been said to make more than a reference to her position in this respect unnecessary. One class of administrators sees the big issues and principles, another holds the minutiae of details. Rare is the combination in one person of both of these powers in great degree. Mrs.





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Young was strong in both respects. She never lost the large perspective of public education in American cities, and at the same time she kept facts and figures at her finger-tips in the most intricate matters. In the finances of the Chicago schools she knew where every expenditure within her department went. Her handling of people was also masterful. Once she had assigned a task to some person, he was held responsible for that task. Her failures may be accredited to an over-estimation of the reliability of an agent whom she had selected, but the failure was always on the side of too great rather than too little trust. In all her work as an administrator she combined the power of a seer with the adroitness of a politician. That she, a woman, was allowed by the politicians of Chicago to hold a position of such value as that of superintendent for six years is the most searching test that can be applied to her ability to deal with difficult situations. She found it necessary many times to take "half a loaf" in improving the schools, but she never gave up a goal because it happened temporarily to be submerged by immediate difficulties. Her ideal of her office as an administrator led to a complete sacrifice of personal affairs and of all things except her ideals of what the office meant to the public good. Those she stuck to under all circumstances, to the point of giving up the job rather than compromise. In energy, in honesty, in fearlessness, in large-mindedness and public-spiritedness, Mrs. Young stands in the front ranks of great public servants of the present generation.

Mrs. Young is better known for her work as a teacher and administrator than as a writer. Since she

has never been a person of many words, her production is not voluminous, and consists of essays and public addresses on educational subjects. In these essays and addresses she is always the student, combining painstaking labor, profound and keen insight, and broad, critical reading. It will be found on examination of her work that she has considered in large measure the most vital of the questions which have arisen in the course of recent educational history—problems of school, theory and practice, management, of child- and teacher-welfare. Very little of what Mrs. Young has written has been put into an available form for general readers. Most of her addresses and contributions are found only in the proceedings of various associations or in official reports, and the collection of her papers into a single volume would be a distinct service to the progress of educational theory and practice.

Mrs. Young's style is that of the scientist. Because her grasp of her subject is detailed and definite, she speaks in a more or less technical way. She says all she has to tell in as few words as possible. On the other hand, it must not be supposed that her writings are formal or abstract because they are dealing with technical, scientific material. There are no bare generalizations nor formal declarations in her language. She never "preaches." To her the subject she deals with is as objective and plain as the experiment is to the scientist, and her descriptions of the material have all the definiteness and simplicity of scientific discussions.

When she speaks or writes Mrs. Young is not doing so to take up time, to conceal her identity, or to hide her position on matters at issue. She expresses always

definite and deep convictions, though she is never partisan or narrowly personal in what she says. Her thinking is clear and to the point, and her language says exactly what she thinks. As one who has known her for many years says, "Mrs. Young has a very clear, logical mind and a fine command of language. The logical mind is the more important, for one can have a good command of language without the clear mental action, and give only words; one can talk, and talk pleasantly, but give one's hearers nothing to carry away." People always carry away something after having listened to Mrs. Young or having read one of her essays. One difficulty, however, often presents itself to the average hearer or reader in getting her meaning. Her method of stating what she has to say is so simple and direct that she is likely to impress one with the feeling that she is dealing with mere commonplace matters, and even careful readers may pass over most significant material without noting its full value. There is nothing of the spectacular or sensational and dramatic, and people who expect this sort of thing are usually disappointed in reading her essays or addresses.

Four stages in the history of Mrs. Young's writings are well marked. The first covers the time before she entered the University of Chicago as a teacher, and includes several published addresses. The second covers the years spent in the faculty of the University, during which she wrote several essays and edited one of the magazines of the school. The third extends over her connection with the Chicago Normal School, where she established and edited the *Educational Bi-Monthly*. Finally, since becoming superintendent of

schools she has written annual and special reports and delivered frequent addresses. Each of these is a distinctive period in her literary work.

As a club-woman and advocate of the woman movement Mrs. Young is well known in Chicago and throughout the country. Her idea of equal rights for men and women has been clear and unmistakable for many years, though she has never been a "preacher" of the cause. What she has undertaken to do was to show the power of women in positions of public responsibility, work that she considered more important than talking in behalf of "votes for women." She said, in commenting on her position in the suffrage movement, "I have been too busy to talk about the equality of men and women, but what I have done ought to help secure for women recognition in civic and political affairs." Wherever given opportunity to vote on any public question she has exercised her prerogative. As a member of an active and powerful woman's club she has for years participated in movements for the improvement of civic affairs. Her position in this club and her work in the schools of Chicago and of Illinois have both been factors in the argument for suffrage. [The fact that women were already doing some of the most responsible of public work was an incontestable argument in behalf of the plea for votes. Mrs. Young had been pointed out as the highest-salaried woman in public affairs in the state of Illinois some years before she became superintendent of schools, and in the latter position she still held that place. In all her work for votes, as well as for education, she felt herself merely a representative of the great cause of public welfare.

She merged herself into the public movements of which she was a part, and never once undertook, through writing or through speaking in public, to exalt herself before the eyes of the country. What she did was always directed toward some definite movement and was not some side issue to bolster up her own interests or bring herself into prominence.

It was thus as a citizen of the commonwealth that Mrs. Young regarded her own work and her own place in society. When the attack of the board of education was made on the teachers' organizations, she fought it on the ground that teachers were citizens of the community and no one had the right to infringe upon their standing as such. She jealously guarded her own freedom in matters of public opinion and public activity. That she never became merely an advocate for votes for women was explained by the fact that she saw a wider field of cooperation in public affairs where men and women should be equal in the sense that sex should not serve as a bar against any kind of public work for which one is fitted. Being a citizen meant neither one nor the other sex, but a human being with the right to help in the direction of affairs of interest to all. By years of patient endeavor she built up an impregnable fortress for loyal citizenship in Illinois. Not only, therefore, can she be appropriately called "an educational statesman," but she deserves the title of *leading citizen*.

It has already been pointed out that Mrs. Young is, above all, a democrat. Without a clear understanding of this democratic character one is not in a position to understand her power as a leader. Democracy, of

course, is a word to be conjured with. It undoubtedly involves freedom to act. But, to Mrs. Young, freedom to act is only an external manifestation of freedom of intellect and spirit. That the democratic spirit of Chicago was the principal element in her love for the city has already been shown. Here she found it possible to belong to a society that did not place an iron band about her head. Each one is given his chance to feel his own way to reality and stand on a foundation of his own building. He is an essential part of the social whole and finds every avenue open to him to do his share of the work needed, yet he is free to determine his share. It was in this freedom that Mrs. Young placed her deepest faith. Education meant to her just such a plan for giving freedom to the minds of children that they might go forth fully aware of their power of mind and responsibility in life. From democracy as she found it in Chicago she projected a democracy of the spirit. To her this spirit was never a tame thing, but was full of fight and energy. She, herself, was a lover of fighting, providing the fighting was the "give and take" that develops the spirit. People have wondered that she was not embittered by the opposition she met in the working out of the plans she had cherished for years. As a matter of fact, she felt that democratic principles demand such opposition and foster this possibility for each to carry his ideas to the bar of public necessity and there fight for the issues he considers most essential to the well-being of the whole. Her philosophy of life, therefore, kept her sane in the face of most vicious attacks on her personal as well as professional integrity.



Back of all this wonderful wealth of objective accomplishments as teacher, administrator, writer, citizen, and as exponent of democracy, lies the fountain of Mrs. Young's strength in her devotion to study. She is always the student. Her mind is ever busy with some immediate or remote question. She has kept in touch with the latest books and ideas on literature and science. She began as a young woman to read history as a part of her weekly program, and that habit has persisted. When the recent Balkan difficulties arose, she said one day to a friend, "If you want to understand the meaning of this trouble, read the new book of Professor Bury." At the time of this utterance she was in the midst of most trying difficulties in the administration of schools. She was able through her marked power of concentration to see at a glance the meaning of the written page. Her power to carry over for a period some conversation or some piece of thought was the acquisition of years of practice in this direction. Months after a conversation or a request for information, she would come back at one with, "I have not forgotten your question. It seems to me," and then would follow an exposition that showed that she had brooded over the case during the interval. Besides being a student of books and ideas, she was a student of human nature. Her interpretation of people was undoubtedly a feminine intuition, but was also the result of most careful study and analysis of individuals. Her continued insistence upon "types of mind" was not an academic consideration, but was the result of watching individuals and their mode of reacting. Above all, Mrs. Young was a student of society. She applied

all her powers of mind to understanding the group with which she had to deal. In her classroom she was constantly watching group-psychology, the effects of people on each other, and the values set by the class upon affairs.

Doubtless the effect on persons, be they individuals or groups, measures in large degree the worth of a man or woman. Mrs. Young has succeeded in impressing people with her strength and has won respect for her power. In her long career she has made enemies. To many she has seemed hard and unsympathetic, a person whose mind was made up and determined at any cost. Often such an estimate has been made through a misunderstanding of her motives or her manner; often, of course, as the result of opposition to her policies; often as an echo from past days when this feeling was more common than in recent times.

For it is true that time has softened Mrs. Young and has made her a more highly social person. There was a time when she was diffident about attempting to speak or act openly to others for whom she might feel the keenest sympathy, merely because she found it hard to show her feelings. The change observable in her bearing is typical in her dress. All descriptions of her as a young woman emphasize the severity of her dress. No doubt styles affected by women have softened; no doubt a girl desiring to succeed then in a business career preferred a severer style. But neither of these considerations is sufficient to explain the metamorphosis that has taken place. Diffidence of manner has given way to ease and cordiality, and the severe business woman is now the well-dressed woman of the world.

This estimate by the world, based on accomplishments as teacher, administrator, and woman of affairs, is incomplete without the view Mrs. Young holds of herself and her career. Were one to ask her the secret of what she has done, one gets the wholly unexpected answer that her success is due to the help of others. So keen is her sense of obligation that it is akin to gratitude to others and to Chicago for the opportunities she has had. Deepest of all, perhaps, lies her regard for the help of her mother, a feeling almost of reverence. The men and women who in the course of her life have been closest to her and have helped her are never forgotten, and to them she gives more credit than the ordinary person does. Even politicians of Chicago, she feels, have put her under obligation for her chance to serve the city and accomplish her work. To the women of the city and the country she feels a deep debt of gratitude. More than once she has uttered the words, "I'd like to do for the women of Chicago what they have done for me in the past in giving me my chance." From step to step in the history of her work in various walks of life Mrs. Young has been able to inspire friendship, and to such friends she has turned in later years as the source of her power. Nothing in her lies deeper than the sense of loyalty which she shows to such persons.

In her private life Mrs. Young has had time, aside from her busy professional activities, to surround herself with intimate friends who have stood by her loyally in all of her trials. To many people she has given the impression of being masculine. Her strength of mind and her tremendous executive capacity and indomitable

courage have appeared to the observer more than feminine qualities. To her friends, however, she has always stood for the distinctively feminine. There is almost a pathetic note of dependence upon others shown in some of her characteristic moods. She is, in fact, moody at times, and extremely sensitive about her own private interests. All her life she has devoted every ounce of her strength to her work. It is embarrassing to her, therefore, to have people turn back to ask about her personally. She eludes her interviewer and turns his attention to the things she is interested in.

Her absorption in her work has on many occasions led her to seem hard, and has alienated people from her, when, as matter of fact, she has meant nothing more than a desire to be let alone or to have others see the problems as she sees them. This retiring and sensitive spirit in matters where her private life is concerned is one of her striking characteristics. When her friends, during the last days of her superintendency, dined her and praised her for what she had done, she continually reiterated, "People will soon forget me. My head is not being turned by what you say." Then her sudden departure from the city, when she left the office without a word to anyone as to her destination, served again to mark her distaste for publicity. The strange contradiction in her open public life and her intense desire for privacy is explained in the habit of a lifetime of devoting herself to the consideration of her work and the interests of others. Her mind had been trained to handle affairs, consequently she resents any attempt to turn this faculty to the study of what she considers petty personal matters. In most of such

questions, however, her keen sense of humor prevented her from becoming morose or suspicious.

Mrs. Young's nature is intensely religious. In a mind like hers, religious beliefs are closely akin to æsthetic feeling. The order and perfection of life, the entirety of human endeavor, are really founded on a faith in the rightness of the world of man. Her religion was closely akin, also, to her doctrine of democracy. Unity of mankind is found in the independent judgment of each in matters that concern all. One of her beliefs was that of the sacredness of the individual's right to judge and to live according to his judgments.

This brief review of the interests of Ella Flagg Young must suffice to show the multiplicity of her interests and, at the same time, the singleness of her purpose. Seldom does one find a character of man or woman that represents the devotion of a long life to one end as in the case of Mrs. Young. From whatever angle she has worked, she has seen ahead for the interests of the public schools. Her whole soul has been wrapped up in the solution of the question of the education of the young in Chicago and the nation. A tremendous variety of human interests, a multiplicity of lines of work and investigation, and a diversity of experiences, but with all these interests and variations the possession of a completely unified purpose and outlook upon life which have never wavered in whatever situation she found herself, characterize her life. Her success is to be measured in terms of civic enlightenment of the future, but her efforts of more than half a century have a directness and a vision that point to a great mind and a strong heart.



## APPENDIX

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### I

#### ELLA FLAGG YOUNG'S WRITINGS AND ADDRESSES

That Mrs. Young has thought out and discussed some of the most vital modern educational issues, the following bibliography of her addresses and books will show. While the list is not a long one and while the individual contributions are usually brief, each one is packed with the thoughts and the struggles that go to solve new problems.

Beginning in 1887, Mrs. Young has a long series of addresses delivered before the National Education Association. These are arranged in chronological order. In addition to these addresses she has contributed a great number of speeches and short papers to other educational bodies, all of which have appeared in newspapers and educational magazines, only a few of which are listed here.

The most ambitious of Mrs. Young's writings consist of the four monographs published in 1902 while she was in the University of Chicago. And, finally, her reports as superintendent of schools form an important unit in her educational writings.

"How to Teach Parents to Discriminate Between Good and Bad Teaching." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1887, pp. 245-249.

"Grading and Classification." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1893, pp. 83-86.

"Literature in Elementary Schools." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1896, pp. 111-117.

"Isolation in the School." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1901, p. 363.

"Saving Time in Elementary and Secondary Education." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1903, pp. 322-328.

"The Influence of the City Normal School or Training School." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1906, pp. 121-124.

- "The Educational Progress of Two Years." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1907, pp. 383-405.
- "Reciprocal Relations Between Subject-Matters in Secondary Education." *Educational Bi-Monthly*, Vol. iii, p. 75.
- "The School and the Practice of Ethics." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1908, pp. 102-108.
- "Hypothesis in Education." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1911, pp. 87-93.
- "Present Status of Education in America in Elementary Schools." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1911, pp. 183-186.
- "Vocational Training of Girls." *Proceedings of National Education Association*, 1915, p. 125.
- "Democracy and Education." *Journal of Education*, July 6, 1916.
- "The Secular Free Schools." *School and Society*, July 15, 1916.
- Ethics in the School*. The University of Chicago Press. 1902.
- Some Types of Modern Educational Theory*. The University of Chicago Press. 1902.
- Scientific Method in Education*. *Decennial Publications of the University of Chicago*, Vol. iii. The University of Chicago Press.

In the *Proceedings of the Board of Education* for the years 1910 to 1915, will be found the reports made by Mrs. Young while Superintendent of Schools.

## II

### THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND COURSES OF STUDY IN 1861 AND IN 1916

The following exhibit makes clear the remarkable progress made during the last half-century in the opportunities for education provided by the Chicago schools. The extraordinary development was one in which Mrs. Young shared, and which she did much to initiate and develop.

In 1861 Chicago had one high school; today she has twenty-two. The total number of the different courses given in the high schools today is twenty-one, whereas in 1861 there were



but three, and they but partially differentiated. In 1861 there was no laboratory or shop work offered in any of the schools, while now equipment represents an expenditure of many thousands of dollars.

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## HIGH SCHOOL COURSES IN CHICAGO IN 1861

### FOUR-YEAR COURSES

English or General.  
Classical, differing from the English by offering Latin in the first two years.

### TWO-YEAR COURSE

Normal Training Course.

Work in all courses was wholly academic and required. There was no laboratory or shop work.

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## HIGH SCHOOL GENERAL COURSE IN 1861

### FIRST YEAR

First Term....Algebra, German or Latin, Descriptive Geography.  
Second Term..Algebra, German or Latin, English Grammar.  
Third Term...Arithmetic, German or Latin, Physical Geography.

### SECOND YEAR

First Term....Algebra, German or Latin, Universal History.  
Second Term..Geometry, German or Latin, Universal History.  
Third Term...Geometry, German or Latin, Universal History, Botany.

### THIRD YEAR

First Term....Geometry, German or Latin or French, Physiology, Rhetoric.  
Second Term..Trigonometry, German or Latin or French, Natural Philosophy, English Literature.  
Third Term...Mensuration, Navigation and Surveying, German or Latin or French, Natural Philosophy, English Literature.

## FOURTH YEAR

First Term...Astronomy, German or Latin or French, Intellectual Philosophy, Constitution of United States, Bookkeeping.

Second Term...Chemistry, German or Latin or French, Logic, Political Economy.

Third Term...Geology and Mineralogy, German or Latin or French, Moral Science, Political Economy.

Note.—A limited amount of English Literature was provided for two terms. All science was taught from textbooks. The course was well named "general" and was planned to offset the narrow classical course.

## GRADED COURSE OF STUDY ADOPTED IN 1861

This was the first graded course in Illinois. It was much in advance of the times and was largely merely a paper course, expressing theory of a course rather than the actual practice.

Grades ten to one, beginning with the tenth or lowest primary—

Tenth grade, primary, required six months to complete:

Oral instruction, talk about objects.

Reading, charts.

Arithmetic, numerals 1 to 10, addition.

Drawing from tablets, printing.

Physical exercises.

Ninth Grade, required eight months to complete:

Oral instruction.

Reading, primer.

Arithmetic, numerals 1 to 100.

Drawing as above.

Physical exercises.

Eighth grade, required eight months to complete:

Oral instruction.

Reading, spelling.

Arithmetic to subtraction.

Drawing.

Physical exercises.

Seventh grade, required nine months to complete:

- Oral instruction.
- Reading, first reader finished.
- Spelling.
- Arithmetic, addition and subtraction.
- Drawing.
- Physical exercises.

Sixth grade, required nine months to complete:

- Oral lessons.
- Reading, including spelling, half of second reader.
- Arithmetic, first book finished.
- Script and drawing from tablets.
- Physical exercises.

Fifth grade, required one year to complete:

- Oral lessons, including some unorganized history and geography.
- Reading, spelling, second reader finished.
- Arithmetic, Colburn's *First Lessons*; multiplication to  $12 \times 12$ ; division to  $144 \div 12$ .
- Drawing.
- Physical exercises.

Fourth grade, required one year to complete:

- Oral lessons, mainly talks about physical facts and objects.
- Reading, portions of third reader.
- Spelling.
- Arithmetic to long division.
- Drawing.
- Physical exercises.
- Construction of sentences, beginning grammar.
- Geography.

Third grade, required one year to complete:

- Oral lessons, historical and physical facts.
- Reading in third and fourth readers.
- Colburn's *Arithmetic*.
- Drawing.
- Physical exercises.
- Grammar.
- Geography and history, map drawing.

Second grade, required one year to complete:

Oral lessons.

Reading, fourth reader finished.

Colburn's *Arithmetic* finished.

Grammar.

Geography, map drawing from memory.

History of United States.

First grade, required one year to complete:

Oral lessons, collection of general facts from astronomy to manners and morals.

Reading, analysis of words.

Arithmetic reviewed.

Grammar, parsing and composition.

Geography.

History of United States finished.

Music once a week in all grades.

Note.—Work in this outline was wholly academic. The names of courses given here mean much less than they do now. For example, drawing was very elementary and mechanical. Reading, too, was confined entirely to the text and did not include a wide acquaintance with literature as it does now.

## HIGH SCHOOL COURSES IN CHICAGO SCHOOLS IN 1915-1916.

### FOUR-YEAR COURSES

General course.\*  
 Science course.  
 Normal preparatory course.  
 Commercial course.  
 Office preparatory course.  
 Technical course.  
 General trades course.  
 Household arts course.  
 Arts course.  
 Architectural course.  
 Pharmacy, college preparatory.

### TWO-YEAR COURSES

Accounting.  
 Shorthand.  
 Mechanical drawing.  
 Designing.  
 Carpentry.  
 Pattern making.  
 Machine shop work.  
 Electricity.  
 Household arts.  
 Printing.  
 Horticulture.

\* In addition to the above twenty-two courses, Chicago high schools offer two-years' junior college courses, thus adding two years to the regular four-year high school work; courses for apprentices in many lines of industry; prevocational courses, offered for children over age for grades.

## GENERAL COURSE, 1915

## REQUIRED

## FIRST YEAR

<i>First Semester—</i>	Per.	Cr.
English .....	5	.5
Foreign Language (a).....	5	.5
Algebra .....	5	.5
Physiology .....	5	.5
Drawing .....	2	.1
Music .....	2	.1
Physical Education .....	2	.1
	<u>26</u>	<u>2.3</u>

*Second Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Foreign Language (a).....	5	.5
Algebra .....	5	.5
Physiography .....	5	.5
Drawing .....	2	.1
Music .....	2	.1
Physical Education .....	2	.1
	<u>26</u>	<u>2.3</u>

## SECOND YEAR

*First Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Foreign Language (a).....	5	.5
Geometry or Ancient History.....	5	.5
Drawing .....	2	.1
Music .....	2	.1
Physical Education .....	2	.1
	<u>21</u>	<u>1.8</u>

*Second Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Foreign Language (a).....	5	.5
Geometry or Ancient History.....	5	.5
Drawing .....	2	.1
Music .....	2	.1
Physical Education .....	2	.1
	<u>21</u>	<u>1.8</u>

Pupils in the General Course must take at some time in their course Algebra or Plane Geometry, and a year of History.

At the beginning of the third year the pupil may select either of the two courses given below.

## THIRD YEAR

## (a) Language and History

*First Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Foreign Language (a).....	5	.5
Foreign Language (b) or History.....	5	.5
Physical Education .....	<u>2</u>	<u>.1</u>
	17	1.6

*Second Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Foreign Language (a).....	5	.5
Foreign Language (b) or History.....	5	.5
Physical Education .....	<u>2</u>	<u>.1</u>
	17	1.6

## (b) Science

*First Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Choose two sciences or one science and mathematics, or one science and technical work .....	14 or 12 or 17	1.0
Physical Education .....	<u>2</u>	<u>.1</u>
	21 or 19 or 24	1.6

*Second Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Choose two sciences or one science and mathematics, or one science and technical work .....	14 or 12 or 17	1.0
Physical Education .....	<u>2</u>	<u>.1</u>
	21 or 19 or 24	1.6

## FOURTH YEAR

## (a) Language and History

*First Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Foreign Language (a) or (b).....	5	.5
Foreign Language (b) or (a) or History and Civics .....	5	.5
Physical Education .....	<u>2</u>	<u>.1</u>
	17	1.6

*Second Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Foreign Language (a) or (b).....	5	.5
Foreign Language (b) or (a) or History and Civics .....	5	.5
Physical Education .....	<u>2</u>	<u>.1</u>
	17	1.6

## (b) Science\*

*First Semester—*

English .....	5	.5
Choose two sciences, or one science and mathematics, or one science and technical work.....14, 12 or 17		1.0
Physical Education .....	<u>2</u>	<u>.1</u>
	21 or 19 or 24	1.6

Choose two sciences, or one science and mathematics, or one science and technical work.....14, 12 or 17		1.0
Physical Education .....	<u>2</u>	<u>.1</u>
	16 or 14 or 19	1.1

In addition to the required studies given above, students must complete satisfactorily enough optional studies to make seventeen credits at the close of their high school course.

\* The elective work in this course is large. All science courses include laboratory work.

ELEMENTARY COURSE FOR CHICAGO SCHOOLS FOR  
1915-1916

ACADEMIC COURSE

SUBJECTS BY GRADES AND HALF-YEARS

FIRST GRADE

FIRST SEMESTER

English, Spelling  
Song Singing  
Art-Construction  
Physical Education

SECOND SEMESTER

English, Spelling  
Song Singing  
Art-Construction  
Physical Education

SECOND GRADE

English, Spelling  
Song Singing  
Art-Construction  
Physical Education  
English, Spelling

Number through Art-Construction  
Song Singing  
Physical Education  
Teacher's Selection

THIRD GRADE

English, Spelling  
Mathematics  
Song Singing  
Art-Construction  
Physical Education

English, Spelling  
Mathematics  
Song Singing  
Physical Education  
Teacher's Selection

FOURTH GRADE

English, Spelling  
Mathematics  
Song Singing  
Art-Construction  
Teacher's Selection

English, Spelling  
Mathematics  
Song Singing  
Oral Geography  
Physical Education

FIFTH GRADE

English (a)  
Spelling  
Mathematics  
Music  
Art and Industrial Arts  
Physical Education

English (b)  
Spelling  
Geography  
Music  
Physical Education  
Teacher's Selection

(a) Emphasis upon oral and written composition.

(b) Emphasis on Literature.



## SIXTH GRADE

English (a)	English (b)
Spelling	Spelling
Mathematics	Oral Arithmetic
Art and Industrial Arts	Geography
Boys' Woodwork	Music
Girls' Cooking	Penmanship
Physical Education	
Teacher's Selection	

## SEVENTH GRADE

English (a)	English (b)
Spelling	Spelling
Geography	Mathematics
Penmanship	Art and Industrial Arts
Music	Boys' Woodwork
Physical Education	Girls' Cooking
Teacher's Selection	Penmanship

## EIGHTH GRADE

English (a)	English (b)
Spelling	Spelling
History and Civics	History and Civics
Geography (Including Chicago Course)	Mathematics
Music	Art and Industrial Arts
Physical Education	Boys' Woodwork
	Girls' Sewing
	Teacher's Selection

German optional in grammar grades.

Humaneness and Moral Training incorporated in English and History.

A two-year kindergarten course precedes this elementary course.

There is departmental work in the upper grades.

## THE INDUSTRIAL COURSE

FOR SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH GRADES IN SELECTED SCHOOLS

Classes taking this course will devote approximately two hours a day to industrial work, two hours a day to academic work and one hour a day to physical education, music, study, recesses and general-work.

The industrial work is under the supervision of the Departments of Manual Training and Household Arts. Details of projects to be undertaken and plans of work will be determined by the Supervisors of these Departments.

Art is transferred to the industrial work.

In the academic subjects the teachers are directed to follow the outlines in the elementary course, making treatment in each subject less detailed. They give special attention to penmanship and the writing of business letters. In arithmetic, the problems are connected closely with the work in the industrial subjects. The commercial phases of geography and history are emphasized.





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