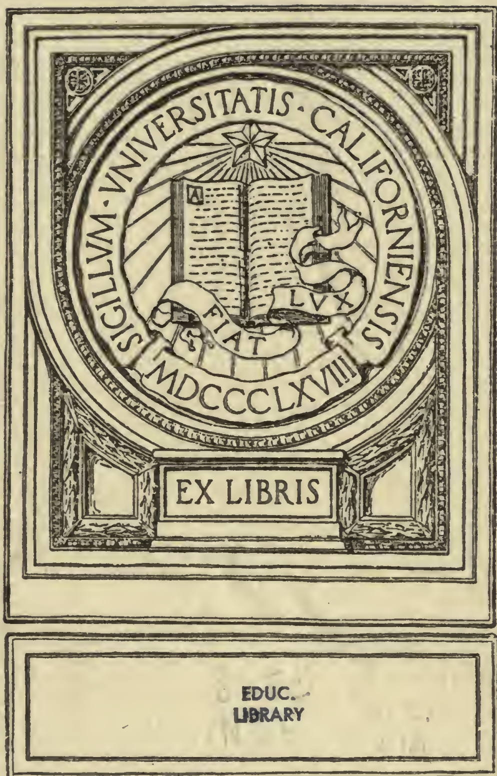

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Published February 1913

UNIV. OF
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Composed and Printed By
The University of Chicago Press
Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

III. RURAL SUPERVISION IN NEW ENGLAND TOWNSHIPS AND UNION DISTRICTS

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I

The Massachusetts law provides for the expert supervision of all public schools. It requires that all towns (townships) of $2,500,000 or less assessed valuation shall unite in unions of two or more towns, for the purpose of the employment of a superintendent of schools. There must be not less than twenty-five or more than fifty schools in a union at the time of its formation. Any four towns (townships), however, may form a union, though the combined number of schools may be less than twenty-five. The superintendents are elected by the school committees of the union from a list of candidates certified as qualified by the State Board of Education. The minimum salary is $1,500, of which the state contributes $1,250. The term of office is three years.

Although the law makes the superintendent of schools the executive officer of the School Board, each superintendent really exercises such powers as the local authorities in their wisdom may see fit to confer upon him. In most cases they are allowed to examine, nominate, and direct teachers; to prepare or adapt courses of study; to supervise the daily programs of the schools; to attend to the grading and promotion of the pupils; to recommend, purchase, and distribute textbooks and supplies; and to have general charge of school property, attendance of pupils, and the enforcement of school laws. In fact, they usually have all the powers which it is desirable that they should possess.

The other New England states have modeled their systems closely after the Massachusetts pattern. This plan has three distinctive features:

It is professional in character.

It is largely supported by the states.

It gives each superintendent a small number of schools to direct.

Every rural superintendent has to pass an examination and receive a certificate of fitness from the state department before becoming

eligible for election by the local authorities. In Massachusetts the original certificate is for one year. Renewals are for one, three, or five years, the duration of the certificate depending upon the candidate's success in supervisory work. Most of the superintendents are college graduates (in Massachusetts about 80 per cent). Many have taken graduate courses in the educational departments of Clark, Harvard, Columbia, or other universities. Nearly all have had a more or less extended experience as teachers. Each state makes some provision for the training and improvement of the superintendent after he begins work. Massachusetts conducts a summer school for them. It also employs inspectors (agents), whose duty it is to visit the schools, to observe the manner in which the superintendent is meeting the problems of administration and instruction, to inspire, stimulate, and advise him, and finally to report on his work to the State Board of Education.

The liberal state contribution makes it easy for the unions to pay fair salaries. Connecticut pays one-half the salary, but not more than $800 to any one union; Maine, twice the aggregate sum paid by the towns, in no case to exceed $800; Rhode Island, one-half the total salary of the superintendent, the state's share being limited to $750; New Hampshire, one-half; Vermont, $1,000, if the salary is $1,250, and one-half of the amount of salary above $1,250, the additional apportionment by the state to be restricted to $300.

The small number of schools in a union makes possible a type of supervision unknown in any other section of the country. The superintendent may become really the principal or head teacher, and look after the details of administration and instruction in a way which is not approached in effectiveness in any place where the county, with its large number of schools, is the supervisory unit. Rural supervision in New England has aroused greater public interest in education, lessened the friction in school management, and has given the schools a broader and richer program, a more regular attendance of pupils, a longer school year, a more liberal supply of textbooks and educational material, and better schoolhouses and grounds. So strongly have its fruits appealed to the good sense of the people, that it is soon likely to become universal and compulsory in all of the New England states.

The administrative side of supervision has been so fully treated in university courses and professional literature, that the remainder of this paper will be devoted to a brief discussion of the rural superintendent

as a trainer of teachers: the need of such training; the preparation of the superintendent; suggestions as to the methods by which the best results may be secured. This is done with the firm conviction that the rural superintendent should put most of his time, thought, and energy into helping his teachers to become better teachers.

I. SUPERINTENDENT AS A TRAINER OF TEACHERS

Need.—The need of systematic training is very apparent where teachers are employed who are young, inexperienced, wholly untrained, or lacking in native capacity.

The young graduate of the normal school usually enters upon her work with enthusiasm and high ideals. Her training, however, has been incomplete because of her own immaturity, the wide range of subjects which the ever-increasing demands of the profession are forcing upon the normal schools, the shortness of their courses, and the inadequacy of the facilities for practice teaching. The superintendent of schools should continue the training begun in the normal school.

One principal, who keeps track of the graduates of his normal school, writes: "The normal-school graduates need symapthetic and definite suggestions as to how to improve their work and to hold them up to the standard which they had when they left the normal school. Often they will start in well, but are left so entirely to themselves that they fall back into routine methods, when some specific suggestions from their superintendent would change the whole character of their work."

Close, intelligent, and sympathetic direction is also necessary if the teachers long in service are to maintain the highest standards of efficiency. Very few people in any occupation do their best at all times, unless conscious of the oversight of someone who appreciates their best efforts and is aware of their failures. This is peculiarly true of teachers, for the routine of the classroom tends to fix habits, to lessen adaptability, and, possibly, to deaden ambition. Teachers cannot stand still; they must advance or decrease in skill and power. All teachers will grow in effectiveness, if helped, instructed, energized, and inspired by a capable superintendent.

II. THE PREPARATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

To train the teachers while in service, the superintendent must be something more than a *school inspector*. As an inspector, he may view the work and, out of his wider knowledge, pronounce it excellent, fair,

or poor. Mere inspection does not, however, carry with it the idea of showing the teacher how to improve. Constructive supervision, on the other hand, possesses some of the qualities of foremanship. The constructive supervisor feels a false note in the schoolroom as keenly as a master musician does a wrong touch on the piano. Like the musician, he points out the mistake, and has the exercise repeated until every defect is removed, harmony is restored, and the execution is perfect. A school inspector may discover and recommend the removal of the poorest teachers. With unlimited money at his disposal, he may hire a few superior teachers. He does nothing, however, to make the average teacher more efficient. The work in his schools will always be mediocre.

The constructive supervisor will be quick to appreciate and commend the good. He will be as prompt to point out and correct a violation of the principles of sound pedagogy or anything bad in the details of the practice of teaching as he has been to sympathize with and encourage the best efforts. Such a supervisor will bring the whole teaching force to a high standard of efficiency. No other type of supervision can ever be very effective in the New England unions where teachers' salaries are necessarily comparatively low.

To become a constructive supervisor and to have something of value to offer the teachers, a man should give his attention to the following lines:

1. He should fit himself to be really the head teacher, the master of the details of teaching reading, writing, arithmetic, and other subjects. He need not be appalled at the idea of mastering the many subjects that make up the curriculum of the modern elementary and secondary schools. He is not expected to know them all at the beginning of his work. He must learn them one at a time, and in the order in which he emphasizes them in the schools. The first year he should take one subject—possibly reading—talk about it in his teachers' meetings, give it a large share of attention in his visits, and gradually raise the schools to a high degree of effectiveness in handling this study. The next year he should take another subject. Each year, while keeping the old work up to the highest pitch of efficiency, he will concentrate upon some new line. In this way he will not only accumulate knowledge and capacity for helpfulness, but will be guiding his teachers step by step—the only way in which they can progress to higher efficiency and greater usefulness.

2. He should study children. He will find it a decided advantage if he has taught young children before beginning supervision. He

certainly should study the psychology and pedagogy needed in such teaching. He should continue to observe children and measure the work of the schoolroom by its effect upon them. It will help him to keep sympathetic and intelligent relations with the children, if he himself teaches whenever favorable opportunities offer.

3. He should set aside time for the study of the journals, magazines, and books relating to his profession.

4. He should keep informed as to the spirit and aims of the nearest state normal school, and especially of the methods followed in the training departments.

5. He should spend at least one day each month in visiting the schools in other towns or cities; the town of A., because elementary agriculture is there taught exceptionally well; the town of B., for the geography and history; C., for the free-arm, muscular movement writing, or to observe some other notable feature.

6. He should gain inspiration and power by attending summer schools, superintendents' conferences, and general educational meetings.

III. METHODS OF HELPING THE TEACHER

The superintendent will assist his teachers chiefly by his visits to the schools, by teachers' meetings, and by reading clubs, or by other forms of directed reading.

1. *Visits to the schools.*—The superintendent should minimize and so arrange the other duties of his office that he may spend most of the time during school sessions in the schoolrooms, giving his personal help and direction to the teachers. There is no other way in which he can really come to know his schools. Plan books, records, and the endless reports with which many teachers are burdened are but a poor substitute for a visitation. The accurate knowledge gained by frequent visits should enable a superintendent to diagnose a bad school situation and prescribe the remedy with greater accuracy than that with which the physician is able to deal with his cases. The superintendent should make visits of an hour or an hour and one-half in each school, once in two weeks. A shorter visit is rarely desirable; a longer one is unnecessary. New teachers should be visited at least once a week until safely established. The visits to a school should not be made at the same hour of the day, or invariably on the same day of the week. It is better not to have a fixed day or days for the several towns in a union, unless it is necessary to keep regular office hours in each town. The

superintendent should make his schedule sufficiently flexible to permit him to give his help where and at the time it is most needed.

a) *Using the visit to improve the conditions under which the teacher works.*—The superintendent should observe the conditions as to heat, ventilation, light, seating, cleanliness, sanitation, and everything that affects the health, comfort, happiness, and convenience of the school. He should see that the teacher corrects those defects for which she is responsible—regulating the ventilating system, adjusting shades and seats, and maintaining pleasant relations with pupils and parents. He should make a record of those things which should be brought to the attention of the school committee, and later press gently, persuasively, and persistently until the board takes action. In this way, the superintendent's visits will result in a steady improvement of the conditions under which the teachers work.

b) *General help.*—The superintendent should note the progress of each class and exceptional children; search out the causes of every case of retardation; examine attendance records; discover the reasons for faulty management or discipline; and get at the actual conditions in each school. His broader experience, observation of the treatment of similar problems in other schools, and study of the literature of education should enable him to give sensible and pertinent advice in these matters to the harassed teacher.

c) *Help in making the program.*—The program of the school should be studied carefully. Inexperienced teachers always need help in program-making. The following are a few of the tests which should be applied to the program:

Does it include all the lines of activity desired?

Does it provide work enough each day for every group of pupils and for the brightest children?

Are the recitations so distributed as to give the pupils suitable intervals for study?

Is provision made for educational seat work for the younger children?

Is the program arranged to give the beginners the reading when the children are at their best?

Does it reduce the number of recitations where desirable by a combination of classes?

Does it provide for the conduct of two or more written spelling exercises at the same time?

Does it provide for hearing two or more small classes in arithmetic simultaneously—one grade doing written work, while another is explaining a problem or reciting orally?

Does it provide for an occasional written exercise for one grade, to allow time for a longer teaching exercise in another grade?

Does any part of the program include a period of forty or forty-five minutes to be allotted to two or three grades according to their varying needs—a five-minute recitation for a grade whose seat work can be tested and a new lesson assigned in that time; and the remainder of the period for the development teaching required by the taking-up of a new subject in another grade?

Are the time allotments in the program justified by the conditions existing in the school?

d) Improving the teaching.—The superintendent should observe closely the teaching of each exercise, to see that the methods and devices used are pedagogically sound and adapted to the age and development of the children; to see that they are economical of time and energy; to see that the teacher connects new subjects of instruction with the child's knowledge and experience; to see that she is vivid in her teaching; to see that she emphasizes the vital things and does not give too much prominence to unimportant details; to see that she gives enough drill on the purely mechanical parts of reading, the number combinations, and other work in which memory is the chief factor; to see that she reaches every pupil.

In a union of large area with poor transportation facilities, it may be impossible to hold many meetings, and the visits may be about the only way in which the teachers can be instructed. In such cases, the superintendent can present during his visits the successive steps to be taken in teaching any phase of reading, writing, and arithmetic, or the methods to be used in history, geography, or other subjects.

Example.—The Ward System of reading may be taught so well to an inexperienced teacher in a few visits that exceedingly good results will be obtained.

1st weekly visit.—Give instruction and illustrations for teaching objectively, in sentences, the name words of the first vocabulary of eighty-three words.

2d weekly visit.—Have a new word taught. Give directions and illustrations for teaching a verb and presenting sentences in which all the words are known to the children.

3d weekly visit.—Hear the class go through the steps already presented. Make corrections and have the exercises repeated until executed perfectly. Give the order and method of teaching the thirteen phonograms.

4th weekly visit.—Have every step repeated. Commend the good and suggest improvements.

5th weekly visit.—Have a new word presented to the class. Hear a review of all words learned from drill cards. Hear the phonograms already taught, and as much sentence reading as time will permit. Teach the "blend." Say to the teacher: "I hope to have Mr. A. of the School Committee hear this class next week. Please be ready to show him how the Ward System should be taught."

6th weekly visit.—Have the teacher show Mr. A. or some other visitor how new words are taught, the devices for word and phonetic drills, the "blend" or word-building by means of which the children gain the power to get new words for themselves, and sentence reading with fine expression. Be sure that the sentence is made the unit, and word naming is never allowed.

If this demonstration for the benefit of a visitor is a success, the teacher will feel a pride in handling every detail with the highest skill and the pupils will advance rapidly.

Continue the general plan here outlined until the teacher has mastered the system. Use visitors and other means to make the teacher anxious to use the system a little more effectively than others have done.

e) *Making suggestions to the teacher.*—As soon as possible establish relations that will permit of a frank discussion of the methods and work of the teacher. The teacher will welcome criticism offered in a kindly and sympathetic spirit if she sees that she is being helped and strengthened. Suggestions may be made at recess or at the end of the session, and new ideas as to methods and devices may be presented during the exercise to which they may be applied. A carefully prepared teaching exercise may be given, or pupils may be questioned by the superintendent, to furnish models for the teacher.

General criticisms should be avoided. If the superintendent says, "The reading is very poor," but fails to point out the particular in which it is at fault, or to offer a remedy for the weakness, he merely discourages the teacher without helping her to improve her work. A clear, definite statement of the trouble and a suggestion for its cure, however, will encourage the teacher and help the children.

Illustrations: "The children do not know the 'sight' or 'stock' words. Drill on the 'sight' words, and they will read without hesitation."

"The reading-book contains too many new words. Young children need a great deal of easy reading. I would suggest using———" (naming the book).

2. *Teachers' meetings.*—Teachers' meetings may be made an effective means of giving inspiration, promoting professional improvement, and furnishing instruction. These meetings should never be called, however, unless the superintendent is sure that there is a message ready for the teachers. Aimless meetings, or conferences which settle nothing, are worse than useless, for they not only are a waste of time, but they serve to lessen respect for the ability and efficiency of the superintendent. For this reason it is safer for the young superintendent to hold meetings as occasion requires, leaving the planning of the regular yearly schedule of meetings to the superintendent who, from experience, knows the needs of the teachers and who can take time for adequate preparation.

The number, time of holding, and character of the meetings must depend largely upon the size of the union, facilities for transportation, equipment and experience of the superintendent, and other conditions. The aim of general meetings should be to inspire, broaden the outlook, and advise in those matters which concern the whole force. The superintendent can usually call to his assistance in the conduct of these meetings a local physician for talks on the hygiene of the school, a dentist on the care of the teeth, an oculist on his specialty, a business man on the kind of education required for commercial life or some phase of business activity, a traveler, author, scholar, or professor of agriculture on some appropriate topic, and other superintendents, normal-school teachers, special teachers, and others on educational subjects.

Small groups, consisting of rural grade or high-school teachers, may meet to discuss matters which particularly affect them. This is the place for directions and conferences on methods and devices, program-making, and courses of study. Superintendents, normal-school teachers, and experts from publishing houses may be used to advantage in these meetings. Teachers who are doing exceptionally well may also be invited to present model lessons. Such lessons may be written out by the teachers, and after being inspected and approved, rehearsed with pupils before the superintendent. The lesson may then be given with another group of children before the other teachers.

3. *Directed reading.*—The value of teachers' reading circles, magazine clubs, and other organizations for professional study and improvement, have been too little appreciated in the past. The plans outlined below are now in successful operation in various parts of the country. The adoption of one of these plans, or a combination of two or more of them, will be of advantage to any superintendency union.

First Plan: A voluntary organization of the teachers is formed, with a president, secretary, treasurer, and rules for procedure. Three books are selected, to be read by the teachers during the year. One book is usually chosen which deals with general pedagogical principles, as Bagley's *The Educative Process*, Murray's *How to Study;* one with the subject-matter and pedagogy of some particular topic, as Davenport, *Education for Efficiency;* Massachusetts Board of Education, *Agricultural Projects for Elementary Schools;* Warren, *Elementary Agriculture;* some books on the Methods of Madame Montessori; and one on some biographical or literary subject, as the life of Horace Mann, Froebel, or Pestalozzi. The books are owned by the teachers. The work is divided into as many parts as there are months in the school year. The first part is assigned to the teachers, to be read, considered, and finally discussed at the monthly meeting. The meetings are held evenings or Saturday mornings at the superintendent's office or home, or in some cases at the homes of the teachers. If held in the evening, light refreshments and a social hour sometimes follow the study period.

Second Plan: Topics for study are chosen by the superintendent or a committee of teachers. The material bearing on these topics is divided among the teachers. One of these references is assigned to each teacher to read and report upon at the monthly meeting. By this plan a wider range of information is gathered, and it is possible for each teacher to present something entirely new to the other teachers in the discussion.

An Act of the Massachusetts legislature (1911) provides that "Any free city or town public library may lend its books or other library material to any other free public library in any city or town under such conditions and regulations as may be made in writing by the Board of Trustees or other authority having control of the library so lending. Any city or town may raise money to pay the expense of so borrowing books and other library material from the library of any other city or town."

The Library Commission, State House, Boston, will furnish lists of the best books published on any topic, and also give the names of

libraries willing to assist the smaller libraries by loaning books. This makes it possible for the smallest free public library in the state to supply any book called for by its patrons. The School Department of any town would be justified in assuming the expressage if provision has not been made by the town for the payment of such charges by the local library. The Woman's Educational Association, Boston, Mass., will loan selected libraries upon application.

A few topics for study:

Organized games.

Vocational guidance.

The relation of agriculture, cooking, and sewing to life and to the other school activities.

The responsibility of the teacher for the health of her pupils.

Language teaching for (*a*) accuracy in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and construction; (*b*) conciseness, discrimination, and ease in expression.

Third Plan: One or more of the correspondence courses given by the North Adams State Normal School are taken by the superintendent and teachers. The courses include work in history, English, practical arts, and other subjects. The books are furnished by the Normal School without expense to the students. Many of the questions and suggestions deal directly with the school problems of the local community. The work is discussed at monthly meetings.

Fourth Plan: Two educational magazines, *The World's Work*, *The Literary Digest*, *The Outlook*, or *Harper's Monthly*, are read, reported upon, and discussed at the monthly meeting.

Fifth Plan: Three books are studied, as in the first plan, the superintendent questioning the teachers on the subjects treated on his school visits. This plan may be used in communities where it is practically impossible to hold meetings.

II

The superintendent with a thorough knowledge of the technique of education should, on his visits to the schools, in his teachers' meetings, and by the directed reading courses, gradually train the teachers to a high degree of efficiency:

I. In the teaching of reading, writing, number, and formal language.

II. In the teaching of geography, history, physiology, and other subjects in which somewhat similar development methods are desirable.

III. In the teaching of the practical arts—paper folding, cooking, sewing and mending, knitting and darning, agriculture, wood, metal, and leather working.

IV. In the teaching and directing of organized games and folk-dancing.

INTRODUCTION

I. The chief work of the elementary schools is to furnish the child with a mastery of the three R's, the tools by which he may educate himself. These subjects should be taught as quickly as the natural development of the child will permit, and so effectively that he will use them automatically. They are somewhat formal in their nature. The processes of teaching them have been analyzed and so arranged as to eliminate nearly all waste efforts. To secure the highest efficiency in teaching them, one of the definite, complete standard systems dealing with these subjects should be adopted and closely followed.

The "Aldine," "Progressive Road," and "Ward" methods of teaching reading, the "Gray," "Bigelow," and "Walters" plans for number work, and the "Palmer," "Natural," "Whitehouse," and "Ginn" systems of penmanship are worthy of consideration in making a choice. Each of these systems is pedagogically sound. The details have been thought out carefully, the exercises logically arranged and accurately graded, and devices planned to arouse and maintain the interest of pupils. A manual of instructions accompanies each system. These manuals are so clear and definite in their directions that an intelligent and painstaking teacher will be able to get good results without other guidance.

A superintendent who understands one of these systems and possesses some elements of leadership can secure nearly uniformly excellent work from all of the teachers. Each of these systems has its peculiar advantages and each has its faults. For example, it might be possible to select more desirable rhymes or cumulative stories than those used in the "Aldine" and "Progressive Road to Reading."

However, until someone does make such a selection, present a comprehensive plan for using them, and print a set of books whose vocabulary will be covered by the rhymes or cumulative stories and the accompanying phonetic drills, the wise superintendent will turn a deaf ear to the critics. He will select the best systems of reading, number,

and penmanship published, master them himself, and teach the teachers how to use them effectively.

By following this policy, one superintendent has developed a free-arm muscular movement writing system to such an extent that the pupils are able to write legibly and elegantly in one minute and thirty seconds the twenty spelling words for which in many schools a twenty-minute recitation period is allowed. Another superintendent accomplished as much in eight weeks with beginning classes in reading as some others in two years. Still another has schools in which we find the third grades have the number concept as highly developed and a more complete knowledge of the number combinations than many fifth and sixth grades.

READING

The first step in introducing the "Aldine," "Progressive Road to Reading," "Ward," or whatever system may be selected, is to secure a specialist from the publishing company to present the subject to the teachers. The manual explaining this system should then be placed in the hands of the teacher for study. This should be followed by informal conferences in which the superintendent, having completely mastered the subject, should give definite instructions to his teachers how to begin the work. The instruction should be along two lines, (1) general directions for handling beginners in reading; (2) directions for teaching the system chosen.

1. A few illustrations of the kind of general direction, about which there is a substantial agreement among well-equipped superintendents and skilful teachers, are given below. The superintendent must discover the principles upon which the best practices are based by getting into close touch with the children, by observing the work of good teachers, and by conferences with superintendents and others. He must explain these principles to the teachers, and in his frequent visits to the schools see that his directions are followed.

Illustrations.—(*a*) The length of the recitation should be from ten to fifteen minutes, with two or more recitations daily. This time should be devoted to reading, and should not be taken up with the phonetic drills. Such drills may be better given in separate exercises.

b) The recitation should occur early in the session, when the children are at their best. A few teachers still give the number work precedence

over the reading. Reading, however, is entitled to the best place in the program, as the chief subject of the language group of studies which is most important at this stage in the development of the child.

c) Not more than ten or twelve children should be placed in one division. In any case, it is usually necessary to divide the entering class into two or three groups, on account of the differences in the ability of the children. If the school contains several grades and many classes, it will still be better to make these divisions of the beginners, so that the work of each group may be adapted to the development of the children in it. Progress will be more rapid with such an adaptation of the work, though the time devoted to each group be shortened.

d) The classes should be gathered about the teacher, standing or seated in kindergarten chairs. Close proximity strengthens the influence of the teacher, brings the children into a favorable position for blackboard or chart work, and enables the teacher to sense the individual needs of the pupils and supply the help required.

2. The second line of instruction should include equally minute directions for (*a*) teaching the first vocabulary; (*b*) dramatization; (*c*) seat work relating to reading; (*d*) devices for word drills; (*e*) phonics; (*f*) beginning to read from books; (*g*) order in which reading material should be used; (*h*) amount to be read.

The following brief discussion of a few phases of the subject may suggest some of the points upon which the superintendent should give explicit directions.

Manual.—To secure the best results with any system, it is important that the method be followed as outlined in the manual. A mastery of the manual is essential, in order that the purpose and value of the various processes may be clearly understood and thoroughly appreciated. Frequent teachers' meetings, in which the various phases of the work are discussed and experiences exchanged, are also desirable.

Story.—The work begins with a story in the "Aldine" and "Progressive Road to Reading." Every good primary teacher must be a good story teller. If she has not learned that art, she should be encouraged to try at once. Practice will generally give the teacher power in this direction. Above all, insist that she keep in mind the purposes of the story, which are to arouse the interest and enthusiasm of the child and put him in a favorable attitude for his own reading, which is to follow. Incidentally, it facilitates the memorizing of the rhyme or cumulative

story around which the story centers, and in order to make this effective, the rhyme or cumulative story should be given proper emphasis in the telling. Many variations of the stories may be given, each utilizing the *exact* wording of the rhyme. Other stories may also be told if the teacher keeps in mind the object for which they are used, and does not tell them for mere entertainment.

Initial stock of sight words.—The memorizing of the rhymes or cumulative stories furnishes the child with the initial stock of sight words. The stories, the rhythm, the arrangement of the words, pictures, and dramatization give these sight words a vivid meaning and help to fix them in the minds of the children. As fast as the rhymes are taught, the charts containing them should be hung from the chalk trays or the rhymes may be written on the blackboard. Having memorized the rhyme, the teacher should be told that she should rarely, if ever, tell the child a word which can be found in the rhyme. He should always be led to find it for himself, thus developing self-reliance.

Pictures.—The pictures in the books and on the chart may be used to arouse the interest and enthusiasm of the child, stimulate his thought, increase his understanding of the story, and improve his expression in reading. Other pictures of children and of things in which children are interested may be collected and used with advantage.

Dramatization.—Dramatization is another effective means of securing a better understanding of thought and good expression. The teachers must be made to see that dramatization is a means and not an end in itself. It should be natural and spontaneous. Used intelligently, it will be found very helpful.

Non-English-speaking children.—With non-English-speaking children, a liberal use of objects, pictures, action sentences, and the right kind of dramatizing will soon establish a working vocabulary.

Phonics.—Most manuals of reading present complete systems for phonetic teaching. No part of the work is more important, and no part is more liable to be slighted by teachers who are having inadequate supervision. Each step should be studied by the superintendent, discussed with the teachers, and watched in operation in the schoolroom. If this is done, nearly uniform results will be secured in all of the schools and the children will gain the power to get new words for themselves. Begin with daily drills of initial consonants. Every child should be led to recognize the consonants or combination of consonants at a glance.

Poor or insufficient drill at this point will cause trouble later. When the time arrives for the teaching of phonetic families, see that the teacher follows the instructions given in the manual as to the order of taking up the series and for the use of the phonetic chart. Not only see that these instructions are observed by the teacher, but see that she understands the use of the type word and realizes the importance and value of giving all the drills suggested, and as much more as are needed to make every child instantly recognize every word in any series that has been presented to him.

Mechanics.—While reading should never be made mechanical, a certain amount of drill on the purely mechanical phases of reading is absolutely necessary, and this, like everything else that is worth doing at all, should be done thoroughly. Much of this form of drill is best given in exercises entirely distinct from the reading lesson itself. Separate periods, though they may be short, will answer for this work. Where a multiplicity of classes makes this next to imposible, a portion of the reading lesson must be set apart for this drill. In the first two grades, every reading lesson should be prefaced with a thorough and rapid drill of sight words. During the primer period this should include the entire vocabulary of the child. The new words which have been presented to the child by the story and in the rhyme are first drilled upon from a blackboard. They are then added to his previous stock of sight words and abundant drill given by sight word cards. This cannot be done too thoroughly.

Silent reading.—Silent reading is vastly more important than oral reading. All oral reading should be thought getting, and thus lead to enjoyment in silent reading. Frequent exercises in silent reading should be given in grades above the third. One method of conducting such an exercise is to give the class new material—books, magazines, or newspapers— and after allowing time for a silent reading of the paragraph or page, books are closed and the children are asked to express the thought in the fewest possible words. In the intermediate grades silent reading contests may be used to arouse the competitive and play instinct. Sides may be chosen and credits given to the quickest and best reports.

Training for expression in the upper grades.—A good way to improve the expression is to use two recitations a week for drill on a few choice selections. The reading of these pieces should be studied as carefully

as is the declamation in preparation for the prize speaking contest. The selections creditably read serve to establish standards by which the pupil judges his own and others' efforts. Thorough training on a few selections will improve all the oral reading.

Another way to secure good reading is occasionally to have two, three, or four pupils read or recite to the class or school the articles in which they have found pleasure. The children will make their own selections from newspapers, magazines, or books. This plan presents the conditions favorable for good oral reading—an interested reader, attentive listeners, and a selection suited to the age, understanding, and taste of the company.

WRITING

Experience is demonstrating the fact that business writing may be successfully taught in the public schools. The steps necessary to success are: (1) the adoption of a good system; (2) mastery by the superintendent; (3) study and practice by the teachers; (4) systematic work in the schools.

That mastery by the superintendent is an essential thing is shown by the following statement by an energetic, capable, Massachusetts superintendent: "I introduced the ——— system of writing. The work dragged and the results were discouraging. I learned the system myself and gave lessons in the schools and at the teachers' meetings. In a few months the writing had improved wonderfully and teachers, pupils, committees, and parents were enthusiastic."

After the teachers understand the system and begin to get good results from children, the superintendent can arouse a proper spirit of emulation by collecting and exhibiting samples of the writing of individuals, grades, or schools. He must continue to manifest the keenest interest if the work is to be kept up to the standard. Superintendent C. says: "I used the ——— system of writing for three years with excellent results. Then I became interested in other things and ceased to call for samples of writing or observe writing lessons. Near the close of the year I awoke to the fact that in consequence of my neglect the writing of the pupils had deteriorated 50 per cent."

It is now comparatively easy for a superintendent to start the free-arm muscular movement writing, for four of the state normal schools are graduating students who are capable of teaching the writing in a

school, or with a little help, of taking charge of the writing in a building or instructing the teaching corps of a town in the subject.

NUMBER

One of the several highly developed number systems should be chosen and taught to the teachers in the grade meetings and in the school visits of the superintendent. The ease with which this may be done is shown by the analysis of the Gray System given below.

Explanation.—The aim of the Gray System is to give the child true concepts in number and a knowledge of the so-called "number facts" and to make him, so far as possible, self-educative in the matter of acquiring them—to provide a means of learning through doing.

In form, the method is objective. It provides seat exercises in counting so arranged that the child makes and uses again and again objective and written expressions of "number facts." Through this work the child gradually comes to remember one after another of these "facts" and acquires clear and accurate number language and imagery.

First step.—The first step in the method (*Manual*, chap. i) is the development of the oral, written, and objective language of the + and × "facts." This is *language* work pure and simple. The author assumes that before the child begins to learn that $2+3=5$, $3\times2=6$, etc., he must know what $2+3$, 3×2, etc., mean objectively. This step requires six to eight weeks. When it is completed, the child is ready for seat work in the construction of expressions in which that language is used.

Second step.—(*Manual*, chaps. ii and iii.) This requires about four to six weeks to complete, consists of seat work in + and × language. Its aim is to give the child a ready knowledge of the language through experiences in using it accurately. There is no memory work, no recitation work, connected with it. If the objective work is done accurately and afterwards written correctly from the objective work on his desk, the purpose of the work is being fully served.

Third step.—(*Manual*, chap. iv.) The child is given seat objective work in which he uses this + and × language. The aim is to give him counting exercises the character and form of which lead him to discover and rediscover and remake the "number facts" again and again until they begin to find a place in his memory.

Fourth step.—In the same manner use is made of "take away."

Fifth step.—"Has how many."

Sixth step.—Tens language.

Seventh step.—Tens counting.

Eighth step.—Partition language, etc.

Caution: A most important part of the system—a part that, if neglected, would leave the work barren of results—is the daily oral recitation work called "memory tests" (*Manual*, chap. v) which begin after one or two weeks of work under the third step. These are oral exercises in which, in response to questions, the pupil tells the teacher what he remembers of his counting experiences. The more often he is given an opportunity to relate his experiences, the more indelibly fixed in his memory the experiences become.

As each new counting step is taken up (take away, has how many, etc.) these daily memory tests are broadened to include that subject. As the work advances, all past experiences are included in these drills, no line of past work being overlooked during the year for more than a few days at a time. It is the teacher's means of fixing indelibly in the child's memory what he has discovered in his seat counting work. Without such drills many of the "facts" would be but fleeting visions soon to be forgotten.

FORMAL LANGUAGE

The generally accepted idea in language teaching is that ease and facility in oral and written expression be developed before much attention is given to spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammatical construction. Stories, plant and animal studies, games, the manual activities, and other means are used to fill the child with thoughts which he is so eager to express that he looks upon the oral or written language of the school as an opportunity and privilege. Fixing his thought upon the mechanics of language is believed to lessen his pleasure in, and retard his power of, expression. Accuracy may be promoted without interfering with freedom:

1. By making the most of the child's imitative instincts. He should never see an incorrect sentence, or, if it is possible to prevent it, hear one.

2. By giving dictation, language drills, or other drill exercises to fix habits of good expression at periods distinct from the recitation which is devoted to the study of literature or expression.

II. In the teaching of geography, history, physiology, and other subjects in which somewhat similar development methods are desirable. To teach these subjects in the best way, the teacher should know children, be familiar with the subject-matter, and understand the pedagogy of each study. Good courses in a state normal school are the best preparation for this kind of teaching. Experience under wise supervision has fitted many to do strong work in these lines. A superintendent can help the teachers materially by studying with them the pedagogy of these subjects and the methods and devices used in presenting them. Good lectures or courses in reading will also serve to broaden the outlook of the teachers and increase their ability to interest and instruct the children.

Carefully prepared model lessons given by the superintendent or teachers will set standards which will be imitated and improved upon by other teachers.

III. In the teaching of the practical arts—paper folding, cooking, sewing and mending, knitting and darning, agriculture, wood, metal, and leather working. Each year the manual activities are assuming a larger share of the school program. The schools of Gary, Ind., devote half time to them and still keep their children up to the grade in the book work. All progressive school systems give them a place in the curriculum. Rural and village school programs should allow at least two hours a week of the teacher's time for these subjects. The children are so interested in them that they will study their lessons diligently to earn extra time for the manual work. They should be encouraged to do this. Any child will teach himself much if given the opportunity to express his thoughts with his hands in a creative way. These subjects appeal strongly to the children. The knowledge acquired in their study is of much value in itself. It is excellent material for educational purposes, tends to give pupils the right attitude toward manual labor, and helps to bring about sympathetic relations between the home and the school. All that is needed to supervise this work effectively is interest in the subject, fair intelligence, a desire to serve the community, and a willingness to study a few books on agriculture, courses of study in cooking, and any one of the several books which give explicit directions for sewing.

BOOKS ON COOKING

Domestic Arts Book, North Adams Normal School.
The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book, Little, Brown & Co.
Elements of the Theory and Practice of Cooking, Macmillan.

BOOKS ON SEWING

Goodwin's Course in Sewing (3 vols.), Frank D. Beattys & Co., New York.
Scientific Sewing and Garment Cutting, Silver, Burdett & Co.

BOOKS ON AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Projects for Elementary Schools, Massachusetts Board of Education.

Elementary Agriculture, Hatch & Hazelwood; Row, Peterson & Co., Chicago.

IV. In teaching and directing organized games and folk-dancing, progressive superintendents are making an increasing use of the play instinct in the educative processes.

Game	Reference	Author	Publisher
Three Deep Herr Slap Jack Black and White Partner Tag Beast, Bird, Fish Hound and Rabbit Club Scratch Muffin Man Gardener and Scamp Animal Blind Man's Buff Circle Zigzag Over and Under Relay	Games for Playground, Home, School, and Gymnasium	Jessie H. Bancroft	Macmillan
Vis-à-vis All Up Guess Ball	One Hundred and Fifty Gymnastic Games	Carrie A. Harper	George H. Ellis, Boston
Simon Says Weathercock Have You Seen My Sheep? Cat and Mouse Center Base	Education by Plays and Games	George E. Johnson	Ginn & Co.
Runner's Choice Corner Ball Last Pair, Pass	Indoor and Outdoor Gymnastic Games	Maria Grey	Freidenker Pub. Co., Milwaukee, Wis.
I See You	The Folk-Dance Book	G. W. Crampton	A. S. Barnes, New York
Rabbit in the Hollow	Popular Folk-Games	Mari R. Hofer	A. Flanagan Co., Chicago

Organized games are made to insure healthful and pleasurable activity for all of the children. School grounds are being equipped with

swings, teeters, sand pits, tether balls, volley ball outfits, croquet sets, and other simple and inexpensive apparatus. Most of the apparatus may be devised and made by the pupils under the direction of the teachers.

Games are made the means of teaching manners, self-restraint, regard for the rights of others, and in short, bringing about those right relations between children which constitute good morals. Some superintendents are using play to establish habits of correct expression and action, and even in the acquirement of knowledge.

Organized games and folk-dancing should supplement, not supersede, free play. They should form a part of the physical exercises given during school hours, and of the plays of the recess and noon intermissions. Supervised play is almost a necessity when children spend the noon hour on the school premises.

The names of a number of games, with a list of the books in which they are described, are given on page 48. Some of these games are suited to the schoolroom, others to outdoor use. Appropriate ones should be selected and discussed, and the teachers encouraged to make the most of this approach to the child's mind and heart, and of this means of promoting happiness and healthful development.

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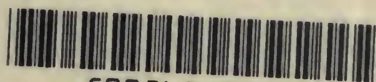
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