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ILLINOIS.

SIGNIFICANT EXPERIMENTS IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

FRANKLIN W. JOHNSON, A.M.,
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Five typical communities of schools have been selected: (1) Morgan Park, (2) Decatur, (3) Chicago, (4) De Kalb Township High School, (5) The University High School.

IN THE SUBURBAN VILLAGE

I. Morgan Park, a suburban village of four thousand inhabitants just outside the limits of Chicago.

In the elementary schools the plan instituted by Miss Brownlee, in the La Grange School, Toledo, Ohio, is closely followed. A few minutes daily is given in each room to instruction according to the following outline:

September—*Kindness*. To mother, father, sisters and brothers; to the aged and helpless; to teachers; to playmates, companions, and strangers; to birds, pets, and other animals.

October—*Cleanliness*. Of body; of mind; and of language.

November—*Obedience*. In the home; at school; to physical law.

December—*Self-Control*. What is self-control, and how may it be cultivated?

January—*Work*. Its necessity; different kinds of work; what work is honorable?

February—*Loyalty*. To the home; to teacher and school; to state and nation.

March—*Courtesy and Civility*. To parents, teachers, janitor, servants; to a body of persons in public assembly; to inquiring strangers; to pedestrians.

April—*Cheerfulness*. Why do we like cheerful people? Why do we avoid the grumbling and discontented? Value of cheerfulness in pain, sickness, or disappointment.

May—*Honesty*. How pupils express their opinions of honesty and deceit; honesty in language; its relation to public opinion.

June—*Review*, showing that good manners and good morals follow the possession of these qualities.

In the high school there is no formal plan for moral instruction. Two or three times each week the opening exercises of fifteen minutes

are given to talks by teachers and others on ethical subjects. An interesting feature is the annual supper attended by all the school boys at which one of their number presides as toast master and speeches are made by the boys, the teachers, and men of the village. At a recent supper the following topics were discussed: The value of music, the school and athletics, impurity. Frequent group meetings are held at which matters of moral import are treated in a more intimate manner than is possible in these larger gatherings.

These methods have been employed in the elementary and high schools for three years. The children of the village are said to be unusually free from immoral practices. To what extent this is due to the moral instruction given in the schools it is of course impossible to determine. Mr. J. H. Heil is superintendent of schools and principal of the high school.

IN A SMALL CITY.

II. *Decatur*, a city of about twenty-five thousand inhabitants.

A very interesting experiment in "motivation" is in progress here under the direction of Superintendent H. B. Wilson. An article describing this appeared in the March, 1909, number of *Home and School Education*, written by Sarah M. Imboden, principal of the Oakland School.

In all the schools the morning exercises furnish occasion for moral instruction. Cabot's "Ethics for Children," extensively supplemented, furnishes the basis for these exercises. On four mornings of each week in each room there are exercises consisting of songs, stories, the presentation of some of the best work of children in the same or other rooms, or the reading of some bit of literature suggesting a significant spirit or example. One morning each week an entire school assembles for a similar carefully prepared program. Material selected from the children's work of the present semester exhibits clearly the remarkable spirit and conduct which result in the schools. It is evident that regularity and punctuality in attendance, good deportment in class room and corridors, neatness and proper care of the school premises, and everything that makes for the well-being of the school community are matters of vital interest and concern to the children. An organization of the children with representatives elected from their number secures an effective method of self-government. A sense of obligation to the community for the material equipment of the school is based upon a knowledge of the system of raising and spending of the public funds for education in the city. Not only in these special ways are motives established which tend to habits of accuracy,

honesty, politeness, and consideration for others, but in the more formal work of the class room in history, literature, and other subjects a carefully considered effort is made to establish right motives and habits of conduct.

IN A LARGE CITY

III. *Chicago*. The course of study adopted in June 1910 for the Elementary Schools of Chicago makes provision for moral instruction under the heading "Humaneness and Moral Training" as follows:

"Formal Instruction in Virtues Not Desirable. The danger of setting apart a single virtue as a subject of study lies in the tendency to make the teaching of it formal and intellectual rather than vital and related.

"The Motive. The educational value of the course planned lies in its contribution to the broadening of the interests and sympathies of children rather than in the consideration of what constitutes justice to animals.

"Material and Occasions Ample. In the regular school work the material is found to be abundant and easily accessible. More than half the selections in the regular readers contain exactly what is required. The pictures in the primer now used are excellent for the purpose. In the supplementary reading and library books, the sources of material are practically inexhaustible. Nature study, history, and civics afford occasions for practical work. The work also blends easily and naturally with exercises at the opening of schools, with Friday afternoon, holiday, Arbor, and Bird Day exercises, and with memory gems and songs.

"Use of Stories. A good deed done or told gives joy to children; a bad deed is hateful. Thus their feelings influence their judgment. For this reason the story is the best means for making strong and lasting impressions.

"Practical Work to Be Encouraged. While children naturally love the good and hate the bad, and while this natural "feeling" for righteousness can be fostered and strengthened by its imaginative exercise, yet ethical quality resides in good deeds and not alone in noble feelings and the avoidance of evil. A feeling of kindness for example, does not grow into kindly habits unless there are occasions for its exercise in actual deeds of kindness, with the consequent joy to the doer. The school life affords opportunities for such exercise, and other occasions may be created or suggested, but such occasions should not be obviously made, for children are thus made self-conscious in well-doing.

"Influence of the School Life and of the Teacher. In any plan for humane education and moral training of school children one thing must be kept in mind which cannot be made a part of any formal scheme. This is the influence of the school life itself, together with the personality of the teacher, on the formation of character. When under the care of a good teacher the children's tendencies in the school life are toward honesty, obedience, attention to duty, respect for the rights of others, self control. If long under a good teacher, habits of right doing and right feeling are formed. The terms kind, sincere, and strong, when applied to the character of the teacher, express the elements of all that is fine and high. In the presence of such a teacher the desire to do right grows, and high ideals are formed. For the most part this influence cannot be analyzed, or attained by conscious effort on the part of the teacher, but it is the strongest and most vital of all the forces of the school. Books and nature supply material, work and play afford proper activities, but the spirit that gives beauty and power comes in the giving of the teacher's life.

"An Outline Course Suggested. As a possible aid to unity and enthusiasm in this work the following suggestions are offered in the light of what has been said above. It is not intended to prescribe a set order for consideration of any of these topics, but to suggest what may be done with and as an integral part of the regular studies.

"Grades One and Two. Care of pet animals, their food, drink, habits. Giving help to wild animals, feeding birds, squirrels. Treatment of domestic animals. Usefulness of animals. Kindness to playmates, brothers and sisters, parents. Telling stories, showing mutual assistance and sacrifice. Relating experiences, reading stories, songs.

"Grades Three and Four. Personal relations with, and treatment of schoolmates and other people. Fair play in games. Return of found articles. Calling attention to examples of cowardly conduct, such as snow-balling teamsters, old people, or smaller children. Home relations; ways of showing helpfulness to others. Study of familiar animals, their habits, relations to man, loyalty. Encouraging birds to live and nest in neighborhood. Animal stories; "Black Beauty," "Beautiful Joe," "Dog of Flanders." Stories and poems; relating experiences; fables.

"Grades Five and Six. Continued study of animals, particularly the native birds. Stories of heroism and humanity selected from history and literature. Classic tales of knighthood and chivalry—relieving suffering, distress; showing loyalty to right; heroism in com-

mon life. Considerate treatment of others, strangers, peddlers; street manners of children.

"Grades Seven and Eight. Emphasis on duties and privileges of a citizen, qualities of a good citizen. The individual's relation to family, city, state, and country. The great cost and wrong of anti-social actions. War and peace. Compare expenditures for war with those for agriculture and education. Advantages due to co-operation among individuals and countries. Brief treatment of laws relating to child labor, and laws providing for health and safety of people employed in the industries. Brief treatment of laws for preservation of wild birds and animals and for humane treatment of domestic animals."

A valuable list of one hundred and nineteen "books that teach Humaneness" follows this outline of the work.

There is no general plan for moral instruction in the high schools of Chicago. The Lake View High School began in the autumn of 1909 a graded course in humanities designed to cover four years. In order that there might be no repetition of work in the several years a graded course has been adopted with different subject matter for each year. These courses are:

First Year. Relation of birds and other animals to man with special stress upon humane treatment.

Second Year. Treatment of children, child labor, personal and community health, and kindred topics.

Third Year. Conservation as it deals with every phase of man's well being.

Fourth Year. Ethics in all its bearings.

Complete outlines have been prepared for the first three years. In brief form these are as follows:

First Year. I. Birds and their relations to man: (1) Birds and the farmer; (2) birds, parks, and trees; (3) how to encourage birds; (4) birds in domestication; (5) game birds; (6) injurious birds; (7) government bird preserves; (8) birds and the aesthetic; (9) birds and personal adornment; (10) bird laws; (11) study of birds in school; (12) birds in literature.

II. Other animals and their relations to man: (1) Reptiles, amphibia, and the lower forms of life; (2) animals for food; (3) the homeless dog and cat; (4) overloading animals; (5) necessity for water; (5) animals and pellage; (6) over-cruelty; (7) the game hog; (8) zoölogical collections.

Second Year. Treatment of children, child labor, personal and community health, and kindred topics:

(1) Overt cruelty to children; (2) labor of young children; (3) child mortality; (4) sweat shops; (5) tenements; (6) street dirt; (7) pure water; (8) home sanitation; (9) ventilation; (10) street car abuses; (11) smoke; (12) contagious diseases; (13) forced education; (14) food adulteration; (15) pernicious drugs; (16) pernicious literature; (17) the nickel show; (18) the city beautiful.

Third Year. Conservation as it deals with every phase of man's well-being:

(1) Conservation of physical powers; (2) of mental powers; (3) of income; (4) of home life; (5) of forests; (6) of water power; (7) of coal and mineral lands; (8) of natural beauty spots; (9) of ancient land marks; (10) of aboriginal remains; (11) of game resources; (12) of national feast days; (13) of food supply.

Instruction according to this outline is given by addresses or readings by the teachers or by persons from outside the school, by work assigned to the pupils and by programs conducted by the pupils. The school assembly each Friday devotes thirty minutes to this work. The principal, Mr. Benjamin F. Buck, reports that the results of the first year of the course have been most encouraging.

A TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL.

IV. *De Kalb Township High School.* This is a typical township high school, in which for several years considerable attention has been given to moral instruction. An interesting feature of the regular school program is the weekly meeting of the upper classes in which the principal, Mr. F. M. Giles, attacks the problem of moral attitudes indirectly through the discussion of the choice of a life work. Consideration of the various occupations and professions affords an excellent opportunity for the informal discussion of the vital moral questions involved. The students show a lively interest in these meetings which frequently lead to more intimate and personal interviews regarding the life problems of individual pupils.

A SPECIAL HIGH SCHOOL.

V. *The University High School.* This school is a department of the School of Education of the University of Chicago. While it is not a public school, it approaches its problems from the democratic point of view of the public school and offers an exceptional field for the experimental study of school problems. An experiment in social organization which has been in progress here for several years was described in detail by the writer in the *School Review*, Vol. XVII, pp. 665-680 under the title "The Social Organization of the High School."

This has an important bearing on the question of moral education in that it consciously aims at the development of morally efficient leadership through the numerous forms of social activity of adolescent boys and girls. A careful study is now being made to determine the exact condition among the pupils as regards such fundamental moral issues as honesty, personal purity, etc. As soon as the conditions of the problem have been defined plans will be carefully formed to meet the situation.

A KENTUCKY EXPERIMENT.

GOLDEN DEEDS—THE LEXINGTON PLAN

MASSILLON ALEXANDER CASSIDY, M. A.
Superintendent of Schools, Lexington, Ky.

Dr. Andrew D. White in an address to the students of Cornell University said: "The great things needed to be taught in this country are truth, simple ethics and the distinction between right and wrong. Stress should be laid upon noble deeds in history, biography and in the life of the present as set forth in current literature. Every noble life, properly studied, has a subtle and salutary influence."

I read this some eight or nine years ago and it gave me the idea of the plan of character building which has been in operation in the Lexington, Ky., public schools for seven years.

The great and noble ideals, past and present are ever the teachers of the young. In some measure to meet the demand for ideals in the lives of the Lexington children, thus helping to model their own, and so help them to become better men and women by the subtle inculcation of moral and civic righteousness, we have had, for several years, in every grade of our Public Schools, a Book of Golden Deeds. This is only a blank book, of moderate size, with "Golden Deeds" printed on its cover in letters of gold.

In their reading, in their study of history and biography, and in their contact with life, the pupils are encouraged to treasure in their minds the good deeds and noble impulses which they may discover, and recite them to their companions in the grade. Ten minutes are daily devoted to this as an opening exercise. The deeds found and brought to the grades by the children are illustrative of obedience, honesty, truthfulness, unselfishness, sympathy, consecration to duty,