

BOOK REVIEWS

A Brief Course in the Teaching Process. By GEORGE DRAYTON STRAYER, PH.D.
New York: Macmillan, 1911. Pp. xiv+315. \$00.

Professor Strayer's book is a concrete, practical discussion of the general principles of method with a wealth of illustrative material drawn from the work of elementary schools. It is the culmination of several years of instruction as a member of the Department of Elementary Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. This fact explains the almost complete omission of discussions of the problems of teaching in high schools. The general organization of the book will be familiar to Professor Strayer's former students and to others who are acquainted with Teachers College syllabi, since it is largely a discussion of the points outlined in the same author's *Syllabus of a Course on the Theory and Practice of Teaching in Elementary Schools* (1909).

The book is intermediate in character between McMurry's *Method of the Recitation* on the one hand and Bagley's *Educative Process* on the other. It is like McMurry's book in the direct practical bearing of most of the points made, in the wealth of concrete illustrations from actual elementary-school practice, and in the ease with which most of it may be understood. The field covered, however, is much broader. It is like Bagley's book in its range of topics, but is unlike the books of Bagley and Colvin in the small number of specific references which it contains to the results of educational and experimental psychology. Perhaps the book that it resembles most is Charters' *Methods of Teaching*.

Seven chapters out of the total of nineteen are devoted to a discussion of different types of lessons, namely, drill, inductive, deductive, appreciation, study, review or examination, and the recitation lesson. The other chapters deal with the aim of education, the factors conditioning the teaching process (largely a discussion of instinct and interest), the teaching process (primarily a discussion of the Titchener-Bagley types of attention), questioning, the social phases of the recitation, the physical welfare of the children, moral training, class management, lesson plans, the teacher in relation to supervision, the teacher in relation to the course of study, and measuring results in education. About two-thirds of the book consists of the author's own text and about one-third of quoted material. The latter includes an appendix of 43 pages, consisting of syllabi on the teaching of English, arithmetic, geography, and history by the heads of the corresponding departments at Teachers College. Forty-eight pages are devoted to sample lesson plans and seventeen pages are quoted from Stone's study of *Arithmetical Abilities*. At the end of each chapter is a list of exercises which involve application by the student of principles learned in the chapter.

The author's point of view is eclectic. The selection and organization of the main points show evidence of the influence of Bagley, Thorndike, McMurry, and Dewey. Of these, perhaps the influence of Dewey is greatest, as shown in the reiteration of the necessity of organizing school work on the basis of a co-operative social situation in which the teaching processes start with the conscious needs of the children.

To those readers who approach the consideration of methods of teaching primarily from the standpoint of educational and experimental psychology, Professor Strayer's book is slightly disappointing. From this point of view it would seem that more definite and frequent references to such material as Professor Colvin summarizes

would give the book a more satisfactory and probably more valid scientific character. As it is, one feels that the book might have been written on the basis of an elementary knowledge of such a text as James's *Briefer Course* or Titchener's *Primer*.

On the other hand, it is interesting to note that while much of the material is of the same elementary character as McMurry's *Method of the Recitation*, the content and form of Professor Strayer's book were developed to suit the needs of mature, experienced teachers who were doing senior college or pseudo-graduate work. If the book is really on the plane of such persons, some of our method books which are interpreting teaching in terms of advanced educational psychology are shooting far over the heads of the students for whom they are intended.

S. CHESTER PARKER

Songs of a Little Child's Day. Words by EMILIE POULSSON; music by ELEANOR SMITH. Springfield, Mass.: Milton Bradley Co.

This book is a distinct addition to the simple musical material for the home, the kindergarten, and the first grades of the elementary school, and must be counted as one of the best six books of songs for young children. Here is a collection which realizes the demand which has theoretically been accepted for some time, that songs for little children should be simple in idea, short in expression, attractive in melody and rhythm, and easily learned. The composers have put their ripest products into this volume, and the home and the school are richer for it.

P. W. DYKEMA

Colonial Carols; Dutch Ditties; A Chinese Child's Day. Three books of children's songs. By ANICE TERHUNE. New York: G. Schirmer. \$1.25 each.

It is but faint praise to say that this collection is above the ordinary of those not especially compiled for school use. They are still too much like the usual combination of careful printing, adequate binding, and pretty illustrating bestowed upon mediocre literary and musical material. Some of Mrs. Terhune's words, however, are of real worth. The music, though too often approaching close to a cheap, popular style, and now and then becoming frankly this, forms in a few instances a real contribution to the list of children's songs. It is unfortunate that the composer has, through a serious ignorance or a wilful disregard of the lower limits of the child's voice, for which these songs are obviously intended, made the already small proportion of good songs even smaller. Most of the compositions run below the staff, several down to B, and a few down to G. In each of the three volumes are some bits characteristic of the types discussed. While the books are not to be recommended for general school use, when music descriptive of the children of China, Holland, and our own early colonies is desired these volumes may be resorted to for interesting suggestions.

P. W. DYKEMA

Child Life in Song and Speech; Tone Plays for Children. By ALICE E. BENTLEY. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.

These two pamphlets of twenty-four and of twenty-eight pages by the supervisor of music in Washington, D.C., should be in the hands of every teacher or parent of young children. They furnish an inspiring guide to a point of view regarding song