

Ten Points of Progress in New York State Program, 1915-1925

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(Special for The United American)

1914-1915

THE FIRST SURVEY of state conditions in Immigrant Education was undertaken in New York in 1914 to 1915. During the same period the first Teacher Training Institute was conducted at Albany State College for Teachers. The city of Rochester appointed a local Director of Immigrant Education the same year.

1917

New York became the first state in the Union to appoint a Supervisor of Americanization.

1918

In 1918 the New York Legislature enacted into law a State program, which provided for:

- I. Trained Teachers.
- II. Opening of Public School Facilities.
- III. Compulsory attendance of non-English speaking and illiterate minors 16-21.

1919-1920

A State-wide drive in opening up opportunities for foreign-born, and providing specialized organization and supervision of smaller centers, were some of the outstanding developments in 1919 to 1920 in the state of New York. Simultaneously a zoning system was placed in operation to meet emergency conditions, with a Director and Teachers placed under authority of the State Department of Education.

1921

In 1921 the New York Legislature enacted a reimbursement law to assist local communities to appoint teachers and authorized the State to pay one-half of the salaries of teachers up to \$1000. local communities taking over State Directors or appointing local Directors.

Under this law, over one hundred communities have appointed Directors, Supervisors or Teachers in charge of the work; two thousand teachers conducted classes; and last year, over 100,000 pupils attended some class in Evening School, Factory, Home or Neighborhood.

1922

LITERACY REQUIREMENT FOR NEW VOTERS

A Literacy qualification for New Voters was submitted in 1922 and passed by an overwhelming referendum vote. This law has been satisfactorily adminis-

tered for the past two years. The administration of the literacy test is in the hands of the educational authorities of the State, and since it is based upon an intelligent reading and writing of English, it goes one step in advance of any test administered by any of the other twenty states now requiring literacy as a test for voting. This requirement has influenced the night school attendance and efficiency for good.

The above dates represent the outstanding events, so far as state legal machinery is necessary to embody a State Program of Immigrant Education.

They do not tell all the story of New York's progress. This is based upon the belief that ability to speak English and training in Citizenship is necessarily the first, but not the only step in the Americanizing process. It seeks to enlist the prospective citizen in those forms of civic duty and community participation

without which, the republic must fail and the democracy for which America stands, meaningless.

It translates the forms and machinery of the governing processes into cooperative service. It interprets the life of America to the immigrant in terms of the larger life of which we are all a part.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS

The special training of teachers engaged in this delicate task of adjusting the foreign-born to his or her new environment has always been considered a keystone of the arch. It recognizes that a technique is necessary if the pupils are to get the things for which they, as adults, come to school, perhaps at a time of life when their only adventure in education is fraught with great power for success or tragedy—the tragedy of disillusionment at the great gateway to opportunity.

RECOGNITION OF GIFTS OF FOREIGN-BORN

"They came bringing gifts." Each immigrant in his or her own way. Pupin his relay coil making long distance telephoning possible. Steinmetz, his wonderful experiments resulting in myriad fruits of the electrical currents. Marconi, his wireless. Riis, his social service. Schurz and Kosciuszko, their patriotic fervor, and a thousand peoples in their valuable contributions of unanswerable loyalty on a war worn battle-

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AMERICA'S MAKING

By RABBI A. H. SILVER

GOD BUILT him a continent of glory and filled it with treasures untold;

He studded it with sweet flowing fountains and traced it with long winding streams;

He carpeted it with soft rolling prairies and columned it with thundering mountains;

He graced it with deep shadowed forests and filled them with song,

Then He called unto a thousand peoples and summoned the bravest among them,

They came from the ends of the earth, each bearing a gift and a hope,

The glow of adventure was in their eyes, and in their hearts the glory of hope,

And out of the bounty of earth and the labor of men;

Out of the longing of hearts and prayer of souls;

Out of the memory of ages and the hopes of the world;

God fashioned a nation in love, blessed it with purpose sublime and called it AMERICA.