

ADULT EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA

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these classes under the direction of Miss Ethel Swain, who is the instructor, have been published by the state.

III. The function of a State Department of Education is to keep a long look ahead. In California, although we still have much poor teaching and many communities where classes have not been established, we feel that the machinery for carrying on Immigrant Education has been very largely perfected. We see that our greatest losses from classes are from those groups which are most advanced. We have learned how to teach English but we have not learned how to supply subject matter in that English of a sufficiently vital character to hold men and women in school after they have learned to speak our language—this in spite of the fact that all over the world Adult Education is the watchword of the hour.

The State Director of Education, therefore, spent a few months in Europe studying the later developments of Adult Education in order to see whether the education of the immigrant might not be but the beginning of a larger and more important movement which would embrace both the immigrant and the native born. There was abundant first-hand evidence in the classes visited in Europe that adults with very limited elementary education can concern themselves with problems which only mature minds could comprehend. Every adult who has had the experience of looking for work, establishing a home and a family, coping with the problems of unemployment, meeting the political issues of his day, can be interested in the causes and relations of the principal problems of his life.

Classes in Economics, Political Science, History, Industrial Problems and Psychology, as well as non-technical courses in Science, can all be presented, not as they are done in the universities, but as a way of explaining to the uneducated man both himself and his universe. This need for reaching the people and stirring their interest to a better understanding of all the vast unfolding of knowledge which has come in our generation has been well presented by James Harvey Robinson in his "Humanizing of Knowledge."

The Department of Adult Education in California is setting itself to a greater task than supplying the elements of English to the few who need it, or preparing for the naturalization examination those who wish to become citizens. It is leaving to those better equipped the training of adults who wish to increase their vocational fitness. It is undertaking, however, to accept its responsibility for developing and stimulating the intellectual life of all the people of the state.

To his end, evening high schools are attempting to turn themselves into popular universities. Here short-unit courses are to be presented in all fields of human knowledge, in order to discover in what subjects the people of the community are interested. The people chosen to give these courses may or may not be teachers. They will be people with a vast enthusiasm for the subject which they present and a degree of scholarship which will insure high standards. The University and the schools will cooperate closely in this effort, although it is recognized that only a very few selected university professors are qualified to teach classes of this sort. A university professor is often

more of a research student than a teacher and cannot deal with the subject matter of his specialty in a way that is interesting or stimulating to an untrained mind. The task of discovering people who have a genius for "humanizing knowledge" is not an easy one.

In order that the state as a whole may have a program which it can put in effect for the year 1925-26, as well as a goal for the distant future, a conference is being held in August under the auspices of the State University, the State Department of Education and the State Library. The subject of this conference will be "What shall California adopt as a program of Adult Education?" To this conference we have invited successful teachers of adults from the University librarians who have been working in this field and the directors of Adult Education in the schools.

This is our next step forward and probably we will have nothing spectacular to show for some time to come. We have always believed that the immigrant should be made an asset in our community life. We have too little utilized the great gifts that he brings us. With pageantry and drama we can depict his fine historic traditions and save them for the future of America, but the best thing he brings us is his intellectual curiosity, his interest in philosophic discussion and his belief that the first aim of education is not to train a man to earn a living but to enrich the hours when he is not earning a living. If America can use the immigrant to bring this new note into our national life, he will have indeed justified the hope of those who have wanted to keep our doors open.

ADULT EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

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hensive and effective program of adult education, gives full credit for the success of its initial extension education legislative program to the splendid cooperation of the leaders in extension education throughout the state. One hundred percent cooperation has characterized the attitude of those interested in this field of endeavor, and no expense in effort, time or money has been withheld to bring Pennsylvania as a state to realize the need for a comprehensive program and constructive effort in this field. Thanks to the united effort of all, for the first time in the history of Pennsylvania, definite provisions for adult education have been written into the School Law of the State.

HAVE A PURPOSE

Live for something. Have a purpose
And that purpose keep in view;
Drifting like a helpless vessel,
Thou canst ne'er to life be true.
Half the wrecks that strew life's ocean,
If some star had been their guide,
Might have long been riding safely,
But they drifted with the tide.

PRACTICAL VS. ORNAMENTAL EDUCATION

A tramp once begged a breakfast at a farmhouse. Before leaving he wrote on the bottom of the tin plate he had used a correct Greek sentence, which, translated, said: "I would not have been where I am now if my parents had given me a practical, instead of an ornamental education."