

Finding the Way

A MONG THE many encouraging signs that are indicating that the Americanization and adult elementary education movement is destined to have an important place in the public mind in America from now on, is the growing interest among the school people throughout the country, who are taking up the work with an enthusiasm that in many instances is marked by a willingness to sacrifice compensation for the privilege of performing a service in education that is more urgent and more immediate.

The utter helplessness of the alien people in particular who are being crowded by public sentiment in the general direction of the naturalization court, has become so appalling, coupled with the inadequacy of the volunteer teacher without any standard in methods or plans to follow, that the professional teachers have gradually come to look upon adult elementary educational work as a specific branch of public school education that requires even maturer and keener minds, with special training, if the situation is to have the attention which national safety demands.

Specific standards in teacher qualifications, methods, classroom organization, grading, subjects to be taught, etc., have been worked out and is being improved upon in proportion as the field observations of the keener minds are being submitted. The importance of imparting to an alien a fair measure of intelligence about American citizenship has become more widespread in the same proportion as the knowledge is becoming more general of these strangers within our gates, whose persistent efforts and repeated appearance in court, despite their intellectual handicap, for want of practical training, is sufficient to kindle deep sympathy.

In the important economic, political and social adjustments that must be made as we go along, America will need a greater civic intellect if the requirements are to be met in a satisfactory way.

Americanization and adult elementary and citizenship education is the answer.



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