

Educating the Night School Principal

By Grace MacCormack and Susie Corpstein, San Francisco Public Night Schools for Adults.

DOES THIS title seem a bit presumptuous when handled by teachers of evening schools with regard to their superior officer? Perhaps not so much when we consider that, almost invariably, the principal of the evening classes is one who has himself had no experience with foreign groups. For this reason the problem of training the principal is oftentimes as serious a problem for the teacher as that of the teaching itself.

All too frequently the teacher and her Americanization class are regarded as an isolated factor in the school organization. Especially has this been true up to the present. But education of the foreign born has now become such an extensive field of endeavor that it is no longer simply a local classroom affair. It involves the whole school realm, principal and teacher alike. Let us say that the first qualification of a successful evening school principal is sympathy, that beautiful quality which makes the whole world kin. The principal who shows the human side is the one who best reaches the heart of the foreign born. He who would have his influence most felt must radiate sympathy at every turn, yet never in a patronizing manner.

A principal must manifest leadership. Nothing so arouses admiration as this quality. The student looks past the teacher to the principal for leadership. To the foreign born the principal is the medium between himself and society. The principal who is a leader, who, when he comes into the room makes his personality felt as such, is the popular principal. Therefore it may be said that the successful principal is the popular principal.

The personal contact between principal and student affords one of the most effective aids toward promoting higher citizenship. The principal should evince a friendly spirit, letting the students see that he is vitally interested in them as human beings and as valued prospective fellow citizens. Of a successful principal of foreign born students we heard it said, "He calls the men by their first names and they just love him."

Too often the blame for nonattendance is attributed to the teacher. Some responsibility rests with the principal. Where the principal is awake, where his interest is keen, the school is throbbing with life. A leader whose personality emanates sympathy, genuine interest, fellowship, has unlimited influence in attracting and holding.

Now as to our subject—Educating the Principal—how shall it be done without apparent insubordination? Lucky is that principal who has on his teaching staff a wise, tactful teacher who may school him without his knowing it. The education and making of a good principal lie with the classroom teacher more than is realized.

Frequent visits to the classroom is the first step. The teacher may invite the principal to speak on topics of interest. She may hold conferences with him about her pupils, asking his advice on outside occupations, advancement based on former education,

home life, etc., anything to get the principal's interest aroused to obtain coöperation.

The social side is a very vital factor. Arrange a musicale or theatricals and invite the principal. Show him what talent is in the class and what means are necessary to bring it out. Let pupils extend personal invitations to the principal—the personal appeal always has its reward.

An occasional trip to the theater is a very necessary part of the foreign born students' education, but the way must be paved for the principal's approval of taking the time off. A tactful teacher will study the wisest method of approach. It all depends upon circumstances.

Concerning a principal whom his night school teachers regard as ideal, we are free to state that he made it a habit to go into the classrooms and occasionally discuss the lesson with the students, to talk with them informally in the halls, and of him it will long be remembered that he came in costume to their Hallowe'en party and joined heartily in the merriment. Real personal interest in the welfare of these foreign born students places Mr. James E. Addicott of Polytechnic High School, San Francisco, in a class of principals far advanced on the road of progress in Americanization.

Perhaps, after all, principals are born, not made, but an enthusiastic teacher, alive to her responsibilities, may go far in convincing the principal that his is the peculiar privilege to interpret to new citizens the ideals of our finest American life.

THE BEGGARS

They beg to inquire and they beg to state,
They beg to advise and they beg to relate;
They beg to observe and they beg to mention,
They beg to call your kind attention;
They beg to remark and they beg to remind,
They beg to inform and you'll herein find;
They beg to announce and they beg to intrude,
They beg to explain and they beg to include,
They beg to acknowledge and they beg to reply,
They beg, and they beg, and they beg, oh why!
They reluctantly beg for a moment of time,
They beg to submit you an offer sublime;
Till I wish I could put the annoying array
Of beggars on horseback and send 'em away.

—Carolyn Wells.

SYMPATHY

By EDGAR A. GUEST

If riches made men kindlier, or fame
Or pomp or place were fellowship's first need;
If culture all that's gentle must precede,
Then wealth were good and lack of it were shame,
But in true living all men are the same;
The poorest man may do the kindest deed;
A mind unschooled may better live its creed,
Than that which shines with learning's brilliant flame.
True sympathy is not a grace acquired,
Brave hearts and good untutored may remain,
Though culture is a charm to be desired
Rough hands, dull minds, undying love may gain.
Wisdom and skill for silver may be hired,
Only great souls can feel another's pain.