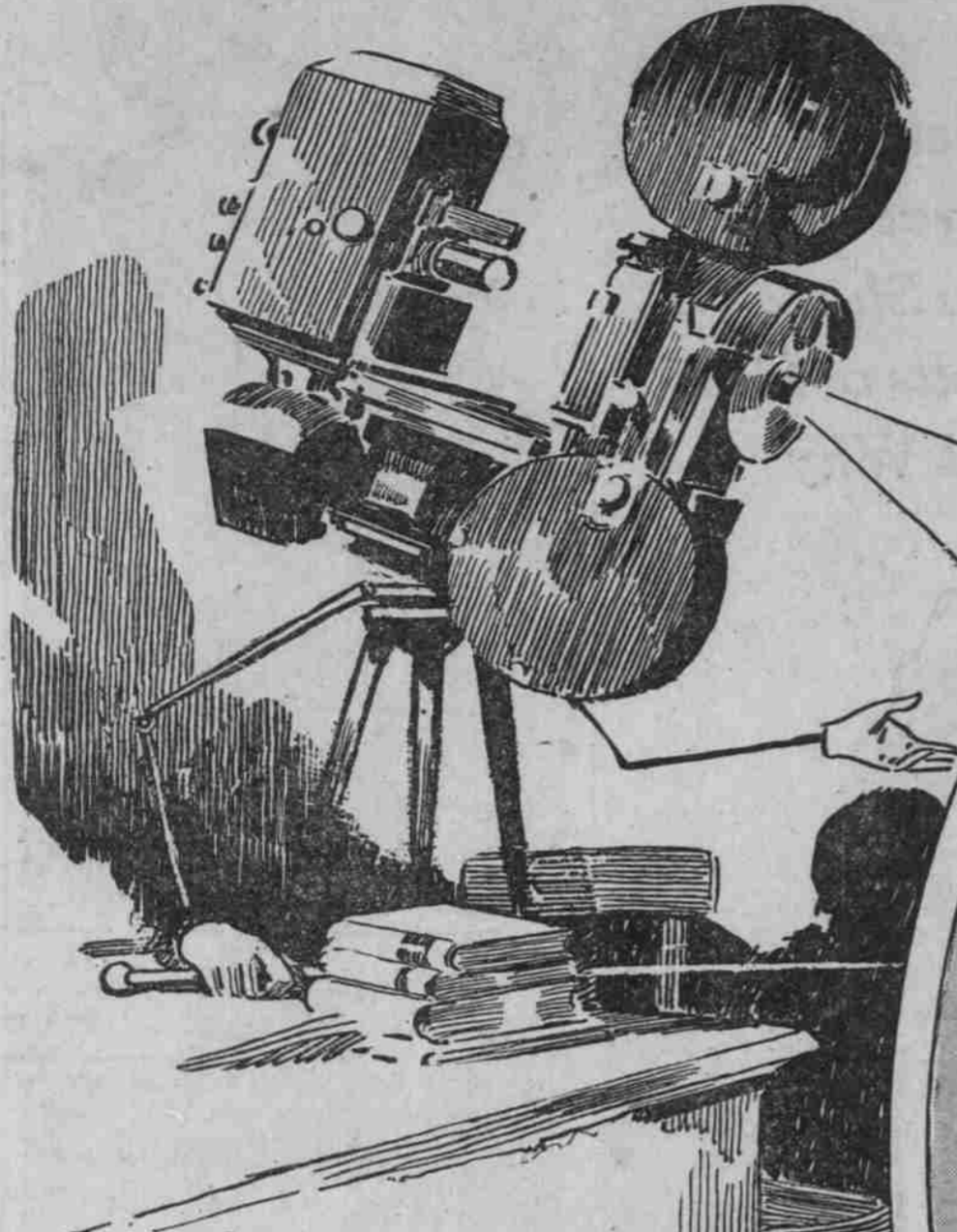


THE MOVIE CAMERA, THE SCHOOLMASTER OF TOMORROW

An Interview With the New U. S. Commissioner of Education, Who Points Out the Opportunity Which the Cinema Opens in School Work—Knowledge Gained Through the Eye Remains Fixed



BY CHARLES W. DUKE.

“CLASS in history, attention! The lesson for today begins with the engagement at Belleau wood, in the battle of the Marne. Watch close now, for we will have an oral quiz after the review of this film.”

Clickety-click! It is the zero hour. Great guns are shown in action laying down a barrage against the German entrenchments. There is a close-up of General Pershing and his aides. The scene shifts to the trenches, where the American troops are kneeling on the firing step awaiting the word to go. Not a comedy, but an honest-to-goodness trench in actual time of warfare.

“Over the top,” is the command. Away go the “devil hounds,” scrambling out of the trenches, charging across No Man’s Land. The eye of the camera lifted over the edge of the parapet, shows the Yankee fighters in full cry, the battle-scarred Belleau wood dimly shown in the background. As the Germans retreat and the Americans pursue the motion picture camera follows on and reveals the marines in the new position they have occupied, the trenches held a few minutes ago by the enemy.

“That will be all for this morning,” says the teacher. “Now for a quiz on what you have seen. From the captions and the pictures you have learned all the salient facts of the battle of Belleau Wood. I want to see how much of it you remember. Tomorrow we will take up another phase of the American drive in France during the summer of 1918.”

For the future it is more than likely that history will be taught thus. Dr. John James Tigert, the new United States commissioner of education, whom President Harding recently installed into office, is an ardent advocate of “visual education.” Henceforth, he believes the motion-picture film and camera will play a potent part in education.

“Eighty-five per cent of all our knowledge comes to us through the agency of the human eye,” Dr. Tigert told me when I called on him in Washington the other day. “Nine per cent filters in through the ear and the other 16 per cent through the remaining senses. Too long we have been using the ear instead of the eye. I am for visual education. Man, pre-eminently, is a sight-seeing animal.”

Six million feet of film made during the war did more to educate the people to the needs of food conservation and the like than any other agency. With motion pictures, he believes, it will be possible to wage the battle against illiteracy as it has not been possible with any other educational equipment. Popularized as a recreational and entertaining medium, the motion picture for the future will become more and more an educational medium.

“In nearly every small town and village anywhere and everywhere you go throughout the country,” says Dr. Tigert, “you find the movies. They have come to stay; they are a part of our life; they are constantly being enlarged and improved. What can be done with them as a means of imparting knowledge already has been

demonstrated; it is for us to utilize them on a larger scale and adapt them to the peculiar purposes of education. Within that celluloid film lies the most powerful weapon for the attack against ignorance the world ever has known.”

In pictures, argues the new commissioner, there is psychology. What we see, in the aggregate, is more impressed upon the mind than what we hear. The child who is too indifferent or too thick-skulled to comprehend the spoken word will grasp the meaning of a picture, particularly when it is a picture in motion. The child will remember the story it has seen in the movies more readily than the story it has heard from the teachers’ rostrum—comprehending it better and remembering it longer. It is Dr. Tigert’s contention that the Bible story unfolded on the film sticks more tenaciously in the juvenile mind than the Sunday school lesson explained by the teacher.

“It is an age of pictures,” he says, “and I, for one, am convinced that for the future the motion picture is to forward our campaign against illiteracy as nothing else that has been adapted to the schoolroom in this era of new-fangled things. Already the movies have invaded the schoolroom. They have come to stay and to render us invaluable aid. In spreading the doctrines of Americanism I know of no better way to drive home the truth than with the screen and the camera. We have 3,000,000 feet of film in the department now ready for that very thing.”

For the future it will not be necessary to darken the schoolroom for lessons that are to be imparted with the motion picture camera. Dr. Tigert has seen demonstrated a new translucent motion picture screen invented by Thomas A. Edison and others by means of which a motion picture can be shown without darkening a room. The new screen has been demonstrated to President Harding and government officials and by experts pronounced an unqualified success. No matter how bright the day, how strong the sunlight, the picture can be shown in all detail without any strain of the eye, without a drawn window shade. By means of this invention it will be possible to introduce “visual education” in the public schools of the country.

A champion of modern education, Dr. Tigert proposes utilization of every new instrumentality for the spread of education. Born in a college dormitory, raised in a school environment, educated first in domestic and then in foreign schools, the president of a college at the age of 27 years—there is not much the new federal commissioner has missed in the way of education. That he must have had rare qualifications for the position was evidenced by the fact that when President Harding set out to find a successor to Philander P. Clark,

young man Tigert entered immediately Vanderbilt university, qualifying for the Latin and Greek entrance prize. In 1904 he was selected the first Rhodes scholar from Tennessee. In 1907 he took a second class in the honor school of jurisprudence at Oxford and received the degree M. A. (Oxon) in 1915.

Tigert was an all-around college man, proficient in other attainments than booklore. He had time for athletics and won distinction on the playground. At Vanderbilt he was on the varsity football team for three years as an all-southern fullback.

In 1911 he accepted the position of professor of philosophy and psychology in the University of Kentucky at Lexington, Ky. When the department was divided in 1917 he was offered his choice of the chairs of philosophy and psychology and accepted the latter. The position he held until President Harding nominated him for the national commissionership of education.

During the war Dr. Tigert took a leave of absence and went abroad for service. Serving with the Y. M. C. A. in educational work, he was stationed for a time in the north of Scotland near the naval bases, where the mine barrage was laid across the North sea from Scotland to Norway.

Later he was transferred in charge of army education at aerodromes in the vicinity of Oxford, England, and was then transferred to France with headquarters in Paris. With the formation of the army educational corps he was detailed as a lecturer with the army of occupation and served in all the divisions with the single exception of the 4th. One month was spent in the school center of the 1st division at Arzbach, Germany.

The new commissioner is married and is the father of two children. His wife was Edith Jackson Bristol of Chicago, the daughter of a Western Union Telegraph company superintendent. Dr. Tigert is the author of many works, probably his best known work being in the line of commercial applications of psychology, especially in the field of the psychology of advertising. He is a member of many educational and scientific organizations. As a lecturer he is widely known all over the country.

“The first aim here in the administration of my office is the same as that of my predecessors in office—the aim of interviewer. The army tests showed conclusively to the pub-

lic that many thousands of our people are deficient in the most elementary points of education. What we must do is to get every single child in the country into a school and see that that child is given an education.”

It was pointed out that of 27,000,000 children in the country, 20,000,000 are enrolled in schools, but only 15,000,000 are in actual attendance. The other 5,000,000 are either delinquent in attendance or barred out by the scarcity of schoolroom facilities and the dearth of teachers.

“Things are swinging back to normal as regards teachers,” says Dr. Tigert. “The teachers are going back to their old jobs. During the war and the high-wage period following the war teachers went out of their classrooms by the thousands. But now they are beginning to come back. Wage scales are being adjusted. People are out of work. Those teachers who were economically forced out of their positions during the war will fall back upon their old jobs and be glad to get them. But they will be better off than they formerly were, for the reason that teachers’ salaries are being increased. It is right that they should be increased, for our teachers long have been underpaid.”

“Yet the teacher must be on the job in order to merit this new increase in salary. They will have to be more efficient. The average elementary school teacher should be better equipped in point of education. She should have at least a high school diploma—that, if nothing else. As a matter of fact, she should have a normal school education or a college education. The normal school and college graduates generally rise higher in their profession.”

“Something must be done in this connection. The demand for teachers for our high schools is all out of proportion to the available supply. By the latest count we were 15,000 high

school teachers short. This administration will work toward this end of getting more and better teachers. It is one thing to build new schools and another thing to put good teachers in those schools.

“Our rural schools are inadequate very often, out in the country, we find it takes a country child four or five years to get what it could get in one year in a city school. The average length of the rural school year, too, is too short. It’s time to take care of the country schools along with the city schools.”

Diamond Shares Soon on Market. NEW YORK.—If negotiations now under way are carried to a successful conclusion, the New York stock exchange will soon add to its fast-growing list of international securities the shares of the Anglo-American corporation, diamond producers of South Africa. The desire of the Anglo-American corporation to list its shares in this country is based largely on the fact that the major portion of its product is purchased by American dealers in precious stones.



Dr. John James Tigert, the new United States commissioner of education, who predicts the movie camera will be the history book for school children of the near future.

ton he disregarded the suggestions of advisers to select a candidate from the “seat of learning” in the classic New England college country, but reached out into the middle west and put his finger down on a son of Kentucky and Tennessee.

“I was born in Tennessee,” said Dr. Tigert, a tall, lean southerner, with a delightful drawl. “My grandfather was the first president of Vanderbilt university. He was Bishop H. N. McTyeire, and they do say he was the man who went out and got Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt to give a million dollars with which to found Vanderbilt university. Grandfather McTyeire was a leader in the affairs of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. He wrote a complete history of Methodism.”

“My father was John James Tigert, a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and a writer of some note, his works mostly religious. He was for 12 years editor of the Methodist Review, in Nashville. Grandfather was the first president of Vanderbilt and the first president of its board of trustees. My father was for a time professor of mental and moral philosophy in Vanderbilt and it was there I was born, the first child born in Wesley hall, one of the large college dormitories. So I reckon I was just naturally born to education.”

Dr. Tigert began his educational career in the public schools of Kansas City in 1890, at which time his father was serving as pastor of the Troost-avenue church. The family later moved to Nashville, where the boy completed his elementary education. He then entered the famous old Webb school at Bellbuckle, Tenn., the founder, Webb, being known affectionately all over the south as “Old Sawney.” Graduated in 1900, the

captain-elect of the football team in 1904, for three years on the varsity basketball team and captain in 1903. At Oxford he represented his college, Pembroke, in rowing, tennis and cricket and was a member of the All-Rhodes scholar baseball team.

Thoroughly equipped in educational training, he came home from Paris to assume immediately a full professorship—and he never fell below that rank. His first position, from 1907 to 1909, was professor of philosophy and psychology in Central college, Fayette, Miss., after which he was called to the presidency of the Kentucky Wesleyan college at Winchester, Ky., at the age of 27 years.

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She made no answer. She waited until she was in her own room, at the end of a scolding day’s work. Her lips were white as she slipped the sheet from the envelope and read the words that had come from Lon’s heart.

She read the letter over again with quickly responding spirit. But the

sparkle and glow of love’s first happy hours had been sorely dimmed by toll and disappointment.

Once more, with a new season, the resurging force of spring pulsed in Lon’s veins. The man who drops seed into freshly stirred depth of Mother Earth cannot help counting on the harvest, however often or bitterly she has flouted him. This year the winds were gentle, rain came at the right moment, the sun was tempered. The yield was so abundant that the one railroad could not move trains fast enough.

That fall Lon Baxter bought and hauled lumber. Through the winter, with his own hands, he built his house.

The home for Edna was ready. Lon rolled a window shade back and forth with a touch of pride as he remembered the green paper shades

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THE CYCLONE—BY ROSE L. ELLERBE

HOW LON BAXTER, PIONEER, CONFRONTED THE FATE OF LOVERS WHO WAIT TOO LONG

(Continued From Page 3.)

this nonsense. “Her’s a Lem Randall ready to marry ye at the word. He’s got 320 acres as good land as there is in the state of Iowa, and I’ll give him another quarter when you are married. You take him and git into a home of your own, I tell you.”

“Lem thinks a lot more about that quarter section of land than he does about me,” Edna retorted. “You can give him the land if you want to, but I’m not a prize package to go with it!”

“He swore at her. ‘Why? What good does his land do her? He won’t even buy her a washing machine.

She’s an old woman at 33,” Edna responded with spirit. “And what do you think you’ll be, slaving for a man without a cent?”

“Lem will never be as mean to me as Ed is to sister. He will never let me milk 10 cows.”

In the strength of her sure love and hope it has been easy to defend her lover and herself. Her father’s most savage attacks, the sneers of her sisters, the questioning or pitying glances of her girl friends, all passed her by. But as the years slipped away it was only the deep, strong current of her love and the steadfastness of her nature that held Edna up under the hardness of her life.

Goodrich, when he found that Edna would not consider Randall, nor accept the attentions of other men tentatively offered, declared: “Well, if you think I am going to keep on sup-

porting you in idleness until Lon Baxter can make enough to feed two mouths ye’re mistaken. Hatty can go and you can do her work.”

“But pa,” Mrs. Goodrich pleaded anxiously, “it takes all three of us to feed and clean after four men, and take care of the milk, and the chickens, and the garden, to say nothing ‘bout feedin’ pigs and calves. We all o’ us—Edna does mor’n her share by rights now—we all o’ us work hard the better part o’ 14 hours a day.”

Yet, though “Ma Goodrich,” by her weight and her rheumatism, and her long years of service, was entitled to relief rather than new burdens, her husband carried out his threat. Hetty, who had “helped” since Edna was a child, was dismissed. Mother and daughter were compelled to do the drudgery that eats the vitality out

of the most robust body and the most hopeful soul.

Lon had no suspicion of what life had come to be to the overburdened and much harassed girl. She had been pretty and popular, had sung in the choir of the Baptist church, and been counted in for all merrymakings. He thought of her still as the village belle, before whom he had trembled. He was still wondering how she had ever come to favor the big, awkward lout he felt himself to be.

In her own heart of late Edna had found herself fearing that Lon had changed—that he no longer wanted her. It was in despair that she had determined not to answer his last hurried note. She would put him to this test: if he did not speak she would admit that it had all been a blunder and try to gather up her life and make something of what was

left, after she had torn her one love out of her heart. Day after day passed with no letter. It was the feverish, hurrying time of harvest and she had few spare moments—nor had Lon, she told herself. Yet, with slowly dying faith, she waited and feared and tried to hope.

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