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SUPERINTENDENT ACKERMAN TELLS OF EDUCATIONAL TENDENCIES IN OREGON

An interesting account of the condition and progress of education in Oregon was given by State Superintendent of Public Instruction J. H. Ackerman, at this morning's session of the Inland Empire Teachers' association. The subject under discussion was educational tendencies and Prof. Ackerman had been preceded by representatives from Washington, Idaho and Montana.

He spoke in part as follows: The existing organization of public education in Oregon is the result of a long evolutionary progress reaching back to the date of the legal establishment of our school system. It has been adapted at this point and that to existing needs as public interest in education has waxed and waned. It contains some adaptations to needs which no longer exist, and new adaptations to existing needs are slowly being made, both through legislative progress and through changes in the work of the school room.

I will attempt no historical study of this progress of evolution, but will confine myself to mentioning some of the existing results of the progress.

In any statement of progress it is difficult to separate means from ends--actual items of progress believed by the speaker to be progressive. In an effort dealing with such highly complex sociological problems as does the public school system, becomes almost impossible to say with assurance just what gains have been made in the ultimate purpose of the system, namely, the making of good citizenship. If, however, we set out to accomplish results without public school system, we are at least bound to scrutinize its parts and see whether they are working as contemplated. For instance, if we find that a large proportion of pupils are attending school, a larger proportion remaining in school and a larger proportion entering and graduating from the high school, then we know that the public school system is at least leaving its mark upon a larger proportion of our prospective citizens.

Attendance at Schools.

The first question which naturally occurs is, How large a percentage of the total number of children of school age are going to school? The statistics of Oregon do not constitute any range of ages as "school age," unless the census requirements "between the ages of four and twenty" constitutes such a school age. Under the former system of reporting attendance, the

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Hyomei will cure a cold in one day, it will relieve you of disgusting sniffles, hawking, spitting and offensive breath in a week.

Hyomei is made chiefly from eucalyptol, a soothing, healing, germ killing antiseptic, that comes from the eucalyptus forests of inland Australia where catarrh, asthma and consumption were never known to exist.

Hyomei is pleasant and easy to breathe. Just pour a few drops into the hard rubber inhaler, use as directed and cure is almost certain.

A complete Hyomei outfit, including inhaler and one bottle of Hyomei, costs only \$1 at druggists everywhere and at Tallman & Co. If you already own an inhaler you can get an extra bottle of Hyomei at druggists for only 50c.

returns were not at all reliable, but under the present arrangement, although far from being strictly reliable, the returns are a vast improvement on those previously made. From these reports it is safe to conclude that at least 84 per cent of all children in the state between the ages of four and twenty are or have been regularly enrolled in some educational institution, either public or private. Altogether the attendance record of our schools is one in which we may take a genuine and well founded pride. Few items speak better for that purpose which is, if not fundamental, at least of primary importance, for there can be no expectation of efficient schooling, no matter how excellent the teaching, unless attendance is regular.

Why Children "Drop Out."

A matter which has been raised to great prominence in educational circles has been the extent to which children drop out of school. It has been pointed out many times that comparatively few children ever get beyond the lower grades, and the question has been raised, Is not our whole American system seriously, if not fatally, defective?

Unquestionably, a smaller proportion of children pass completely through the system than we could wish. It is not fair, however, to consider the subject from data at hand during any one year. Rather viewed from the consideration of many years so as to find the trend, would seem to be the only just method. It is, for instance, a dispiriting thing to find that the number of pupils who reach high school is only a small per cent of those who might have done so, but a very encouraging thing is to find that the enrollment in American secondary schools has increased 150 per cent, while the population has been increasing 20 per cent. In the nation at large, between 1890 and 1900, this ratio of increase held true, giving evidence that a constantly larger proportion of pupils were passing through the entire course from primary to college.

Length of Year Gauges Progress.

The length of the school year furnishes in practice a rough gauge by which to report progress. True, it is often argued that a school of twenty weeks with a good teacher is better than one of forty weeks with a poor teacher. The argument would be sound if there were in practice so great a difference in available teachers. Under existing conditions about the same grade of teachers will be found in a given district, whether the school year is twenty weeks in length or forty weeks. This being the case, the longer school year is to be taken as evidence of better schooling for the children, particularly as better teachers and improved teaching are usually found in practice to go hand in hand with the longer year. The Hawley bill, passed by the last legislature, in which provision is made for a minimum term of six months' school in every school district, tells the story of progress in this direction.

In turning to seek the causes of the general and steady improvement along the lines of attendance and lengthened schooling, it is natural to refer to legislative enactments which are calculated to produce these results. The most important among these have been:

Legislative Enactments.

1. The revision of the school code, which code has served both as a unifying and a stimulating force throughout the past ten years with a constantly widening activity.

2. The adoption of the uniform course of study. The inevitable effect of this in encouraging attendance and regularity and lengthening

the term of years during which the individual could attend school is too obvious to require comment.

3. The high school act has not only been effective both in the notable increase of the proportion of children availing themselves of high school education, and in the stimulation of the organization of many new high schools, but also of exciting schools to better adapt themselves to the needs of the immediate constituency.

4. The ten cent library law and the organization of the Oregon library commission have been potent factors in improving both attendance and regularity.

5. The compulsory attendance law may be viewed as the final act in putting us in full command of our problem of attendance, so that the same may now be looked upon as practically solved.

All these causes working together

have probably afforded such a stimulus to the quality of school room work as to make a force for betterment, much beyond the aggregate of their individual effects.

Work of Teacher and Pupil.

In estimating the work of pupil and teacher upon the studies and exercises of the school room, it is impossible to arrive at any such definite conclusions as those presented relative to attendance and regularity. In the first place, in the absence of any regular inspecting system, the superintendent of public instruction can only draw inferences from the character of the work in such schools as he has seen, believing the latter to be typical of their classes. In the second place, it is difficult to speak with assurance of progress for the reason that what knowledge is of most worth to one generation is apt to be all unknown to preceding generations.

It is often stated that our schools

are inferior to the schools of former days, because the children do not know so much. The statement is worthless in any case, because no living person has access to data which would justify any such positive generalizations, either one way or the other. The school masters and the governing boards who preceded us, left scarcely a scrap from which we can learn what they taught, or what or how thoroughly the pupils learned.

Comparisons Not Equal.

Analysis of the assertion to which reference has just been made usually discloses that the person making the statement has a conception of useful knowledge entirely different from that which guides the modern teacher, and furthermore he is almost always apt to be comparing intellectual giants of the past generation with the average pupil of today. For instance, he asserts that his son knows no geography because the latter cannot compete with his father in giving the names of the capitals of all the states or a list of the capes on the coast of Africa. It may be, if asked to compete with his son as to the knowledge of why and wherefore of wind and water supply, of great population centers, of trade routes, etc., he would at once reply that they do not teach such stuff when he went to school. Which knowledge is of the most worth?

Again, the father is proud of his accuracy as a speller, provided he is not put to the test, and of his past ability to parse English sentences at the drop of the handkerchief. He avers that the son is poorly schooled, because he cannot do what the father thinks he can. But the boy loves good reading, knows a host of the great names of literature, can enjoy something else than the newspaper, and can express himself in tolerably good English.

And so on--with arithmetic where the father is likely right, with history, which father committed to memory, with the study of the human body, which father "never had." Again which knowledge is of most worth?

Idle Assertions.

And so it is idle to assert that in quality the best schools of the states

are either better or worse as a class than they were last year, or the last decade, or the last generation. Nobody knows.

What is their condition today is to some extent another question. Even upon this point we can do little than guess our way along, for lack of adequate, impartial, scientific inspection of all local systems.

In connection with other duties, I have visited school rooms observing the conditions of buildings, outhouses, school rooms, and sanitariums, the attitude and spirit of the children, the subjects taught, the methods of the teacher and in a large number of instances I have tested the children's attainments. These schools have ranged from what seem to me to have been the best, to what seems the worst school I have ever seen. The schools were of all types, city, village and rural, graded and ungraded, supervised and unsupervised, under normal graduates, and under persons ignorant not only of teaching but of the subjects taught.

School Districts Classified.

I should divide the districts represented, as to the excellence of school work, into two classes. The first class would contain all those schools in which an effort seems to be made by the teacher to stimulate pupils to think with, or course, varying degrees of success. The second class would include those schools in which the teacher appears to have no conception whatever of his or her office, merely mills for grinding out memorized recitations, schools in which if the pupil grows at all in power to think he does so in spite of the school rather than with the help of the school. The remark of one teacher as I left the school is significant of the attitude of these teachers as a class. She said, "They would be all right if they would get down to study." It seemed not to have occurred to her that it was in any way a part of her duty to make them "get down to study."

Of course a dividing line cannot be drawn so that it can be said that schools of the first class all occur in certain districts and schools of the second class in certain other districts. Schools of the second class may be dismissed from further discussion, for, as to schoolroom work, there is little in them worthy of the name of teaching or study.

Importance of Reading.

In most of the districts of the first mentioned class reading is taught in such a way as to give the pupil power to read the thought from the printed page, a rare accomplishment with adults. This once done, it becomes increasingly easy, especially in a state so plentifully supplied with literary books, to arm the pupil with the love of good reading, one of his best future safeguards. This is the aim of the state and the record of children's use of the literary books, shows that it is taking effect.

Again, to a greater or less extent music and drawing are being made parts of the regular round of work in these schools. The broadening and refining influence of these studies is well known and the effect can hardly fail to be a pronounced uplift to the public taste in the next generation.

The character of the school buildings and school rooms is constantly improving. The new buildings are almost uniformly erected with an eye to architectural beauty as well as hygienic excellence, with a commendable degree of success. The interiors of the school rooms are usually decorated by the teachers themselves or by the pupils, with results often crude it is true, but a marked improvement over the squalid neglect formerly so widely prevalent and still so prevalent in districts of the other class. A tasteful school room can hardly fail to exercise upon the home of the future and in the direction of enhanced sweetness and refinement in the character of the coming generation.

School Management Good. The school management of districts

of this class is most universally good. I have been profoundly impressed in districts of this class with the extreme scarcity of evidence of turbulence among the pupils, and of contentious, fretful dispositions among the teachers. The wellnigh universal rule seems to have been good will between pupil and teacher. In this connection, it is interesting and significant to note the disappearing hostility of children to schools. Whereas a generation ago the boy who was fond of school work was a sort of monstrosity, today there seems to be very little pronounced dislike to school. All this must make for an increased ability of the neighbors of the future to get on well together.

Subjects such as history and geography, particularly, I found to be taught with a constantly increasing emphasis upon an understanding of the facts presented as distinguished from mere memory of such facts. Vast improvement still needs to be in this direction, but in this better class of districts improvement seems to be steady.

"A Stubborn Cinderella."

Mr. Mori H. Singer, with the aid of the successful authors, Messrs. Hough, Adams and Howard, has produced numerous successful musical comedies at his beautiful Princess theater, Chicago, notably "The Prince of Tonight," "The Golden Girl," "Honey-moon Trail," "The Goddess of Liberty," etc., etc., but the greatest of all was his musical show, "A Stubborn Cinderella," in which Mr. Homer B. Mason is the bright, particular star and which will be seen at the Oregon theater on Tuesday, March 23.

This clever play had a run of over one year in Chicago, continuing on its merry way a year ago last summer after the torrid weather compelled the closing of the doors of every theater in the city. Last summer it duplicated its Chicago experience in Boston.

"A Stubborn Cinderella" is woven around the fairy tale, and in the second act is introduced a dream miniature that is the feature of the play. A short scenario of the play follows:

Lady Leslie is the daughter of a Scotch earl and is traveling under espionage in America. Very innocent of the ways of the world, she falls in with the boys and girls of Columbus College, meets "Mac" who is the life, and in fact the "whole works" of the college, and deluded into the belief that he is a great sculptor, falls in love with him, unknown to her guardian. The "sculptor" travels with the party and, in a beautiful scene in the second act, he weaves the Cinderella spell over her. In the firelight Lady Leslie sees the minut. Her sweet-heart leads her through it, only to disappear. "But my prince came back" is her dream. And then follows the awakening. In the last act Lady Leslie is to pledge her hand to her royal suitor, Grand Duke Bovis of Russia, by drinking from the loving cup, but she turns from it impulsively and gives her hand to her poor suitor. The scenic effects are magnificent and novel. The second act set on the Mexican border is worthy of Belasco. The hotel natatorium scene in the third act is an orange symphony. The local management gives every assurance that the same big production seen at the Princess theater, Chicago, will be shown here in its entirety, requiring three baggage cars to transport all its scenery and effects.

The seat sale opens Monday, March 22.

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NOTICE OF PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF JANE STREET BETWEEN BLUFF STREET AND HIGH STREET BY BUILDING SIDEWALKS THEREON.

Notice is hereby given that at a regular meeting of the common council of the city of Pendleton, held March 16, 1909, the following resolution was unanimously adopted, viz.:

Be it resolved, by the common council of the city of Pendleton that it is expedient to improve, and it is hereby proposed to improve Jane street in the city of Pendleton from the south line of Bluff street to the north line of High street, by constructing sidewalks and crosswalks along the west line thereof, such improvement to be made in accordance with the ordinances of the city of Pendleton, and the cost of making the same to be charge and lien upon the lots and parts of lots and parcels of land in front of which such improvements shall be made, as provided by the charter of the city of Pendleton, and the owners of lots, parts of lots and parcels of land fronting upon said streets where such improvement shall be made shall be liable for the payment of the portions of such improvements in front of their respective lots, parts of lots and parcels of land.

And be it further resolved, that the recorder of the city of Pendleton shall cause a copy of this resolution to be published in the East Oregonian for a period of ten days, and all persons interested in said improvement will govern themselves accordingly. Dated this 17th day of March, 1910. THOS. FITZGERALD, City Recorder.

Every Woman is interested and should know about the wonderful Whiting Eye Marvel Douche. Ask your druggist for it. If he cannot supply the MARVEL, accept no other, but send stamp for illustrated book--sealed. It gives full particulars and directions for using the ladies. MARVEL CO., 44 E. 23d St., New York