

State Superintendent Makes Plea for More Normal Training

Lack of Normal Facilities Hampers State School Work; War Makes Increased Educational Work Necessary

By J. A. Churchill, Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The public schools of Oregon employ not less than one thousand new teachers each year. The large majority of these without experience are employed in the rural schools.

As soon as the teacher without normal training has had sufficient experience she will secure a position in the village school, from there she will go to the larger town, and then to the city. The result is that a large number of teachers secure their experience and training for their work at the expense of the children in the rural schools.

There are, of course, exceptions to this rule, for some teachers prefer to work in a rural school, and these teachers are rendering a valuable service. As it always has been, however, these exceptions simply emphasize the rule that the rural school serves as

a training school for teachers in a town where there is a lack of normal schools.

Every state has its rural problems and much has been accomplished in recent years in the way of providing modern school buildings, adequately furnished, and having large, well-equipped playgrounds. The rural school, however, cannot give a satisfactory service, until teachers have been trained before they undertake to do their work.

Cost of Untrained Teachers.

Through a questionnaire sent out by the state department of public instruction to school superintendents and supervisors it has been ascertained that there are about 25,000 pupils in the schools of this state who fall each year to make their grade, and are, therefore, required to repeat their year's work.

It costs \$10.00 per capita each year

to educate a child in the elementary schools. Therefore, the annual cost for those who must repeat their work is about \$1,000,000. Much of this, it is true, is caused by sickness or other unavoidable circumstances.

There is, of course, no way to determine exactly what proportion is due to these causes, and what part to the untrained teacher, but from my knowledge of the schools and from many conversations with school superintendents, principals and supervisors, I am convinced that at least 40 per cent of the repetition is due to incompetent teaching. This means that it costs the state of Oregon approximately \$400,000 annually to employ teachers who have not been trained for their work.

The tax provided in the bill for maintaining two more normal schools would produce about \$75,000. By establishing normal schools sufficient to

give all our schools trained teachers, the state would save the difference between \$400,000 and \$75,000.

Present Normal School Facilities Not Sufficient.

The maintenance fund and the normal school facilities at present provide efficiently for about 250 to 400 students. Whenever the present normal school desiderata to provide for more more, there is danger of lowering its efficiency.

From this enrollment we cannot expect more than 150 to 200 graduates each year. Every school, too, is lost in its enrollment.

The closer a school is to a community, the more there will be who will take advantage of it. Within a radius of fifty miles of any higher educational institution will be found the homes of most of the students enrolled in such institution.

Last year there were not more than three student enrolled at Monmouth from eastern Oregon. This is a nat-

ural condition, as the students of the eastern counties of the state would have to travel from 200 to 600 miles to reach Monmouth. Most mothers hesitate to send their daughters so far from home as it would be difficult to go to them in case of sickness, and the children could not be at home for Christmas holidays without a great financial sacrifice.

There are about 1600 teachers in eastern Oregon. A normal school in eastern Oregon would by the end of the first year, have an enrollment of 200, and would, in my judgment, be furnishing the state with not less than 150 teachers trained for rural school work.

What is true of eastern Oregon is also true of southern Oregon, and for these reasons both the normal schools should be established.

Supplying our schools with trained teachers is a matter of national importance, and in this work, Oregon should do its share. President Wilson, in a recent letter to Secretary Lane approving the secretary's plan

for a comprehensive campaign in support of the schools, said:

"After the war, there will be urgent need not only for trained leadership in all lines of industrial, commercial, social and civic life, but for a very high average of intelligence and preparation on the part of all the people. I would, therefore, urge that the people continue to give generous support to their schools of all grades and that the schools adjust themselves as wisely as possible to the new conditions to the end that no boy or girl shall have less opportunity for education because of the war and the nation may be strengthened as it can only be through the right education of all its people."

The work of reconstruction after the war is going to call for a highly trained and educated citizenship. Unless we have a sufficient number of trained teachers to conduct efficiently our public schools, we cannot keep up the enrollment in our technical schools and our higher institutions of learning.



SOLDIERS OR WHEAT? French Poster demands food economy to save ship-room

Aux Travailleurs de la Défense Nationale (TO THE WORKERS FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE)

Restreignez-vous pour hâter la victoire. (Curb your appetites to hasten victory!)

Ne jetez pas un gramme de pain. (Do not throw away a gramme of bread!)

Economisez 100 grammes de nourriture par jour. (Save 100 grammes of food a day.)

Cela suffirait pour augmenter d'une Division par mois l'arrivée des renforts américains. (This will suffice to add a division to the arrival of American reinforcements each month.)

En économisant sur votre nourriture vous économiserez des mois de tranchées à nos ennemis. (By saving your food you will shorten the time our soldiers must spend in the trenches.)

LOUCHEUR.

OU L'UN, OU L'AUTRE. (ONE OR THE OTHER.)

Français, choisissez! (People of France which shall it be!)

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