

commercial elimination of Germany in peace, as well as toward her military defeat? Neutrals cannot accept the former end as a legitimate ground for action subversive of their interests.

Granting that there are neutral interests arbitrarily prejudiced by belligerent action, what could a congress of neutral nations do about it? It could examine, one by one, the various restrictions placed upon neutral trade, and call upon the belligerents to offer evidence that such restrictions subserve a legitimate military purpose. And here the question obtrudes itself: What if the belligerents refused to take cognizance of such a congress? This they could not afford to do if the United States assumed the leadership. The Allies need our goods, and they need our financial reserves. The latter need is sure to become more intense as the war proceeds. Accordingly they could not safely assume an air of cynical indifference to the proceedings of a congress for which we stood sponsor. Neither could the Central Empires ignore such a congress. As matters stand, the Allies are most active in the arbitrary disposition of neutral interests, and the Teutonic Powers would not be likely to disregard the opportunity of making out a good case against their enemies at the bar of neutral opinion. In so far as the policies of the belligerents bear the character of reprisals, the congress would be competent to suggest reciprocal concessions. Thus it would assume the rôle of a medium of communication between the warring nations. What is more important, in discussing with the belligerents the legitimacy of certain practices as appropriate means to national ends, it would compel a definition of those ends, and thus play its part in preparing the way for the compromises that will have to be made before peace can be reestablished.

No one doubts that the nations of Europe are already weary of war. Nine-tenths of the population of each of the belligerent states would gladly accept any peace terms consistent with national honor. Less and less is the national honor of the one party conceived of as implying the subjugation and humiliation of the other. The time will come—perhaps it is at hand—when each of the belligerents will realize that further fighting cannot possibly produce gains commensurate with its costs. Yet neither party will dare to make overtures for peace, lest it weaken its moral position and still be forced to fight on. The initiative must come from the neutrals, pressing their claims upon both parties with equal force. And if, when the time of compromise has come, the neutrals have not formed an organization appropriate to the work, the guilt for further bloodshed will at least partly rest upon them—most of all upon the United States, designated by its geographical position, its ethnical com-

position, its wealth and its power, for leadership in the enterprise.

The Democratic School

A RECENT article by Dr. Thomas S. Baker, Headmaster of the Tome School, contains an able pedagogical criticism of the Gary school which is typical of the general attitude towards the Gary idea on the part of conservative schoolmen. Nothing could bring out more clearly the difference in educational values between this professional teaching opinion and the broad social vision of Superintendent Wirt. Dr. Baker admits the impressive social effectiveness of the plan. It is "the last development in socializing the schools." Mr. Wirt is "not only an educator, but also a social reformer, a city worker." But Dr. Baker's argument is really the specialized pedagogical one against the social. Where Mr. Wirt sees the school as a community center, a children's world, Dr. Baker sees it as an educational factory. "The social value of the Gary schools," he says, "is beyond question. Its pedagogic excellence has still to be determined." From his point of view, a school is not so much a place to train effective citizens as to make "thorough scholars." He questions whether "these side issues in the scheme of child-training"—the gymnasias, shops, laboratories, which the Gary school contains—"are really essential in mental development." He is afraid that the young citizens of Gary learn more from their industrial shops and science laboratories than from their books.

Dr. Baker's guarded argument is really a glorification of "intellectual discipline" as against an intelligent capacity to lead an organic life in a modern society which needs above all things resourceful adaptation and social appreciations. It is a question of ideals, and no more important issue was ever put to a people than this one of how we want our next generation trained. The school is not only the one institution which assimilates all the people, but it is the most easily modifiable. It is not only the easiest lever of social progress but the most effective, for it deals with relatively plastic human material. To decide what kind of a school we want is almost to decide what kind of a society we want.

If we only want that kind of a school which would "make hard-working and accurate scholars and produce thoughtful men," we must resign ourselves to a progressive softening of the fibre and capacity of the mass of our people. The average educator acts as if he thought of his child-world as a level plain of capacities. There is the mass of unskilled, unawakened minds; here is the level of scholarship, knowledge, civic virtue, appreciations. Education is to him the process of lifting up the

mass from their primitive level to the higher one. The public school is the elevator into which all are to be shoveled and transported to the upper story. And the American public school in the last fifty years has been faithfully following this ideal.

The truth is, of course, that mental aptitude is not any such level desert, but rather a series of inclined planes. When we try to educate all the children of all the people, we are not dealing with a homogeneous mass, but with sliding scales of capacity. A mental test of the school-children of a state would reveal an incline extending in orderly gradation from the genius down to the imbecile. A physical test would give us a different slant, a test for artistic or mechanical capacity another. Stand at the center of divine average and try to lever any of these slopes into a horizontal position and you find half of your society squatting heavily at the lower end. You may ascribe it to race capacity, personal heredity, social environment, malnutrition, defective nervous organization or anything you please, but the fact remains that the greater part of the human raw material will be permanently resistive to or only dully appreciative of any attempts to elevate them to a level. This is true of any capacity you may choose. The outstanding truth of society seems to be the heterogeneous distribution of capacities. And the irony of it is that after artistic capacity true intellectual capacity is probably the rarest. For the public school to try to make intellectualists of all its children is a sheer defiance of sociological reality.

Some educators, while they recognize this diversity, yet insist on uniform standards, uniform curricula, uniform discipline, on the ground that social order in a democracy is imperiled unless the highest degree of like-mindedness prevails. Such a democracy would be the stagnant democracy of China. The result of these attempts at standardization have been the automatic centrifugal flinging off into space of the children whose interests were not intellectual, who were no more capable of being made into "accurate scholars" than they were into artists and poets. And from those who did not get quite flung off, but clung on with their teeth, we get most of our prevailing pseudo-culture. To keep on trying to "develop the mind" and produce "thorough scholarship" in those whom we force to submit to educational processes, means simply to go on creating a nerveless and semi-helpless mass of boys and girls who will never take their effective and interested place in the world because they have no mental tools which they can wield. Such a course is coming to be generally recognized as a kind of slow national suicide, a slow suffocation of industrial and social progress.

The schools do change, but the schoolmen yield

grudgingly. Nothing could be more naïve than the test which Dr. Baker proposes for evaluating the Gary plan. Submit, he says, the highest class in the Gary schools to an examination by the College Examining Board. If the students pass, the Gary system will be justified of its children. Was ever a more patent assertion of the professional bias? Let the children drop out of the lower grades untrained except in the rudiments, but if the small minority in the highest class passes its Vergil and algebra and English literature and German with marks as high as the graduates of the Tome School, then the Gary system will cease to be considered a "mere experiment." If this is what the critics of the Gary plan mean when they plead for an "evaluation of this novel experiment," we may well hope that it will escape the peril.

Such a conception of educational values cannot become too speedily obsolete. A public school is a mockery unless it educates the public. It cannot make the rarefied and strained product at the top the test of its effectiveness. And the public is not ideally educated unless its individuals—all of them—are intelligent, informed, skilled, resourceful, up to the limit of their respective capacities. Life itself can no longer be trusted to provide this education; the school must substitute. The Gary school deliberately sets such an ideal. Democracy does not mean uniformity, but it does mean equality of opportunity. A democratic school would be one where every child had the chance to discover and develop aptitude. The Gary school, with its harmonious activities of intellectual, manual, artistic and scientific work, physical education and play, gives just this chance. Democratic education does not mean the provision of separate schools for different kinds of children, or even separate courses in the same school, as the movement for industrial education is now threatening to bring. This is to create at once invidious distinctions, and fasten class education upon us. To say that children are different does not mean that some are fitted to be scholars and others to be manual workers, some to be artists and some to be scientists. The differences are differences of focus and not of quality.

To most children will appear in the course of school life some dominant interest, and it is upon the cultivation of that interest that the child's chance of being more than a nerveless mediocrity will depend. It is upon that training that his chance of being absorbed out of the school into the social and industrial world will depend. At the same time, without a common background with his fellows he will be alien and adrift in the world. Interest and skill in one's work, whether it be making automobiles or teaching Greek, an acquaintance with the contemporary world, an alert intelligence which is

always seeking to diminish the area of things human that are alien to one—a man or woman with this would be truly educated in any society. But both focus and background are supremely necessary. The present educational system does not really set itself to provide either. Only in a school organized on some such plan as the Gary plan will such education be possible.

This does not mean that every child is to marvellously blossom into ideally alert and skilled intelligence. But we can be sure that a school which gives opportunity for the development of the most varied aptitudes in the free play of a child-community life will have done all that it could. No one pretends that the Gary education is the intrinsically ideal education for all time. But we can say that, given the best social demands of America to-day, this school will make for the most robust, effective, intelligent citizenship of which we are at present capable.

Editorial Dilemma

ONE of the less happy aspects of the editor's life is the necessity he is under of coming to a decision on all sorts of intricate moral questions.

Imagine, for example, the plight of an editorial staff which was deeply interested in the work of a Social Relations Commission. The editors start off with high hopes. They believe that at last American complacency is to be shaken by a fearless, accurate, and overwhelming revelation of facts. They rejoice that in Mr. Frank Jones a man has been found for whom there are no sacred vows. The public with whom the editors are naturally in sympathy is also elated. Every prejudice they have is on the side of Mr. Jones. The people who attack Mr. Jones are at first those who attack every liberal cause.

But Mr. Jones, as he proceeds with his investigation, develops a rather unscrupulous method of attack. He appears as a prosecutor more bent on proving a preconceived case than in piling up and analyzing evidence. He shows scant respect for honest inquiry. He uses the machinery of his commission to make a large temporary noise, rather than to lay the foundations for a sustained advance. He associates radicalism with haste, untrustworthiness, and irresponsibility. Of course he makes enemies, chiefly among those who would be opposed to him even though he were the most scientifically-minded of men. What are the editors to do? They share his impulse and his enthusiasm. They resent most of his opponents. They know that if they criticize him they will be lumped with those who are congenitally obstructionists. If they support him unreservedly they are violating their own good faith,

and telling lies in a good cause. They realize that most radicals, like most patriots, act on the principle of our side right or wrong. To speak out against the comrade in arms is mugwumpishness if not treason.

The editors do not wish to be prigs, and so they submit to their prejudices a portion of the time. They pass over in silence many things Jones does, though if Jones were in the other camp they would go for him head on. They squeeze every drop of justification into defending and interpreting and explaining him. And though they do not feel entirely comfortable and honest, they are able to say that Jones is emotionally significant, and at bottom profoundly right. But this raises the really serious moral dilemma—does the value of Jones's ideals cancel the poverty of his method? Does the fact that he is morally incorruptible make it of no importance that he is intellectually corrupt? Shall editors be entirely jesuitical? Shall they say that the hatred of poverty and inequality is so great a virtue that it justifies a man in betraying every standard of intellectual integrity? Is intellectual integrity a pale and foolish idol?

The editors may be the kind of people who believe that the honest use of the mind is the measure of our redemption from barbarism. They may feel that no amount of good intentions can compensate for the destruction of those habits of thought we roughly call scientific. They may feel that the really new thing in our world is not the hatred of evil or the passion for justice, but the disciplining of these emotions in the technique of modern thinking. If that is the way the editors feel, the appraisal of Mr. Jones will be a difficult and somewhat distressing operation, and in their modern and unpoetical way they may be compelled to search their own souls.

The New REPUBLIC *A Journal of Opinion*

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1915, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY THE REPUBLIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 421 WEST TWENTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT. ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREASURER.

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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIFTY-TWO ISSUES, FOUR DOLLARS IN ADVANCE. SINGLE COPIES TEN CENTS. CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION FOUR DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR COUNTRIES IN THE POSTAL UNION, FIVE DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE.

REMITTANCE TO BE MADE BY INTERNATIONAL POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.