

Reading is the time-binder of mankind, by which the child in the penthouse and the child in the cave join hands, since the russet-toned bison hangs on a wall in the Museum of Natural History in New York to be read as it was written by Cro-Magnon man. But most of all, "Reading is wonder at the world about us."

And it is here, in this last quotation, that what Mr. Jennings is saying strikes its most violent and meaningful blow. Because none of the techniques of the phonic-teacher, and none of the exposures to experience of the sight-say methodologists, and none of the admonitions of the "read or you don't go to college" prophets can succeed unless the mind of the child can find wonder and joy and the answers to what it wants, in the flowing of words on a page. "The teacher who does not love poetry does a rather poor job of arranging a love affair between words and the child." And to the family, he says, "But above all else, parents must never relinquish their private responsibility for the day-to-day education of their children." Parents, too, must bring wonder into the lives of their children.

Thus, Mr. Jennings is attacking the notion that reading can be developed by concentrations upon the physiological processes of the classroom. For him the art of reading is also the art of thinking, the art of feeling, the art of valuing, and it proceeds through the channels opened by the relationship of the words that are to be read to the thoughts that adults have already made important in the young human mind.

THAT is the failure of the texts that present words without significant meaning. What child, having watched a television repair man solder contact points and exchange tubes so that the favored program will come on again with its word-and-picture world, is going to be interested by a "Jump Jack, see Ted" textbook? And even the newest of experimental basal readers, which do take a giant step, do not yet move far enough into the lives of children. The Bank Street Readers are still concerned with little words and little ideas, even though they have moved out of the pure, all-white world, into the inter-racial, clothes-out-the-window, city streets.

But, however hard he hits at American schools and publishers, Mr. Jennings defends them against the unwarranted attacks of publicist "critics of education" who are themselves nonreaders. They know none of the values of reading beyond the specializations of their lives. And *This Is Reading* tells us what those values are, and how our minds go about building them and enjoying them and growing with them, as we turn ourselves to reading. "There are golden ages yet

to be made and times of trouble to be survived," Mr. Jennings concludes. "The book is a shield, a tool, and a power-pack."

If there is a serious flaw to this important work, it is that the scope is too great for the number of pages. One has

to be a "reader" in the special sense that one must be prepared to let the words happen to a mind that is trained to see and recognize and associate and organize and enjoy and finally act upon. For others the book would have to be 600 pages longer and not half so delightful.

Where the Talent Goes

***Talent and Performance*, by Eli Ginzberg and John L. Herma, with others (Columbia University Press. 265 pp., \$5.00), studies the careers of winners of graduate fellowships at Columbia University during the academic years 1944-45 to 1950-51. Harry N. Rivlin, dean of teacher education at The City University of New York, is the editor of "The First Years in College" soon to be published.**

By HARRY N. RIVLIN

AT A TIME when many nations are unable to provide elementary and secondary school education for all, our country is concerned with the college shortage. We are expanding college facilities to accommodate the high school graduates who want to go to college, and we are making going to college an attainable goal for many with economic or social handicaps.

It is clear that we want all the talent we can develop. What happens to this talent later? This is the question to which Eli Ginzberg, John Herma, and their associates addressed themselves.

The investigators used a detailed questionnaire for all who had been awarded a fellowship for graduate or professional study at Columbia University during the six academic years from 1944-45 to 1950-51. These were obviously a superior group of men—the women fellowship winners will be studied later—since the fellowships were awarded solely because of academic excellence, regardless of financial need.

This is not a study of success or failure. It is rather an investigation of the factors which led to greater or lesser attainment.

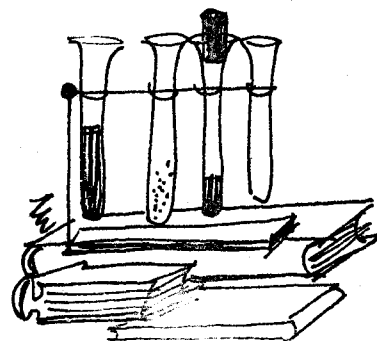
Five criteria were used to measure success: income, rank, responsibility, quality of employing institution, and personal reputation. Each of these criteria, in turn, presented complications. Granted that income, for example, is one measure of success, are we to rate as less successful those graduates who earn the relatively modest salaries of professors and clergymen? Rather than use a single

scale for all respondents, the investigators developed a system of judging income in terms of the professional field.

The overall results are definitely reassuring. All of the respondents were in the two highest rungs of the occupational ladder: they were either in professional or technical work or they held managerial positions. Not a single person was found in any less highly regarded occupation. As the authors emphasize, "The first and most important point is that most of the group are pursuing the type of careers and work that they prefer."

They were indeed more successful than some of them had dared expect. Some 18 per cent said their expectations had been exceeded and 49 per cent reported that their expectations had been met. If we add another 16 per cent who said that some of their expectations, but not all, had been met, there remain only 17 per cent who had not yet fulfilled any of their expectations. Even these men are not frustrated failures, for they see themselves as being on the way to such fulfillment.

What were the factors that contribute to high achievement? A clue is to be found in the Columbia University file of letters of recommendation written about these respondents, mostly by their professors in graduate school. "Those who had been rated by their teachers as having above average abilities do not show up disproportionately in the top achievement level. Those who were considered to have outstanding personalities, however, were likely to be in the top achievement level. Those who were considered to have above average abilities together with an outstanding personality were the most likely to be found



in the top achievement level. This suggests that eventual success, even in intellectual pursuits, depends on more than intellectual ability alone."

Some indication of the role which various factors play in influencing achievement is summarized by the profile of one most likely to attain a high level of achievement according to the findings of this study.

"His father is a professional man or holds a managerial position; he attended a religious-sponsored or technical college; he had very high grades in graduate school; he was assessed by his professors as intellectually strong and with an attractive personality; he earned a doctorate expeditiously; he served in the Armed Forces as an officer; he is able to combine in his work two or more functions such as teaching and research or research and administration; he finds a suitable institutional setting and avoids many job changes."

Talent and Performance is a rich source of information for all who are concerned with the higher education and later careers of our able young men and women, but it has even greater value as a stimulus and guide to further studies. Ginzberg and Herma have developed a questionnaire that is attractive enough to have gained an 80 per cent response and yet elicits significant information, and they have also developed a pattern for interpreting the data. Can these be used elsewhere?

The present study, being based on winners of graduate fellowships, does throw some light on the later careers of academically talented people, but the answers were undoubtedly affected by the sampling used. All of the respondents were, in a sense, self-selected by the very step of going to graduate school. They were clearly not a cross section of able college graduates. The respondents were motivated to go to graduate school; they were selected for fellowships, and their graduate study was subsidized by the University. It would have been shocking indeed if this group had not fared well in later life. Would the results be equally encouraging if we applied the same research procedure to a sampling of all college graduates who were in the top 10 or 20 per cent of their class? Would the results be the same if the group of respondents had included a wider ethnic sample than was provided by the two Negroes and the four Chinese in this study? What would we find if we studied the careers of young people of talent, regardless of whether or not they went to college?

Talent and Performance answers many questions, and like all good research studies raises almost as many more. Unlike some other studies, however, this one suggests a way of getting the answers.

The Negro in History

***A Glorious Age in Africa: The Story of Three Great African Empires*, by Daniel Chu and Elliott Skinner (Zenith Books, Doubleday, 120 pp., \$2.95), and *Worth Fighting For: A History of the Negro in the United States During the Civil War and Reconstruction*, by Agnes McCarthy and Lawrence Reddick (Zenith Books, Doubleday, 118 pp. \$2.95), are the first two volumes in a new series about minority groups, designed to supplement the high school social studies and English curricula. The reviewer, an American history teacher in the Scarsdale public schools, received a grant last summer to study and prepare materials on Negro history for a reference book, "Chronology and Fact Book of Negro History," to be published this spring.**

By IRVING J. SLOAN

THE UNITED STATES was born out of revolution. Revolt is our heritage, yet many white Americans react with shock, fear, and perplexity at the revolt which prevails in the land today: the Negro's fight for equality now. In no small measure this reaction is the result of a mythical as distinguished from a historical understanding of the American Negro. And the myth in turn is the result of a gap in what our schools (and colleges) have been teaching—and failing to teach.

The plain truth is that the Negro has been omitted from the literature of American history and therefore he does not receive consideration in the history classroom.

Last year a group of historians at the University of California, Berkeley, surveyed the American history textbooks that are most widely used in California from the standpoint of their treatment of Negroes and concluded that "the greatest defect in the textbooks we have examined is the virtual omission of the Negro."

This conclusion squares with those drawn by every individual and group study that has been made through the years in other parts of the country, including and especially New York City.

And, as though to add insult to injury, very frequently where the Negro does appear, the facts suffer from historical distortion. By omission and commission, the written history of the American Negro helps perpetuate and intensify the pattern of racial discrimination that is the root of the present Negro revolt and is one of the most serious problems our society faces today.

THERE has been a kind of explosion of published materials in very recent years treating the American Negro (and other minority groups, as a matter of fact) separately from the basic general histories. While it is always good to have specialized, in-depth studies that enrich the basic curriculum, such volumes all too often become supplementary material and come in at the tail end of a school's book budget. More often than not, funds dry up before this category is reached and the title ends up as a single volume in the school or classroom library and thereby receives limited exposure.

Another difficulty with this enrichment approach in the form of supplementary books is that it conveys the notion that there is in fact a schism between the history of the Negro American and the white American requiring separate treatment.

Professor Maurice Vance, in an exhaustive and brilliant analysis of the Negro in the literature of American history, published by Florida State University several years ago, wrote: "In the tapestry of American history, the black threads, though less numerous and less prominent than white, extend with them through the same patterns and periods of time."

What we need and what we want is the inclusion or interweaving of the role and contribution of the American Negro in all books dealing with the story of America.

Having said this, we can still welcome the new Zenith series about minority groups which Doubleday has launched. This series has set as its goal books to supplement present knowledge of American history, "with reliable and readable accounts of the origins of American minority groups, and of their significant contributions to the growth and development of this country."

Appropriately enough, the first two volumes released deal with the most topical minority group, the Negro, in A