

The discussion of esthetics is, in proportion, sufficiently extended, but in spirit and technical grasp it falls below the other sections. Under this head Dr. Flexner includes all the child's art activities, recreations and sports. No classics in literature, painting, or music are to be forced upon the pupil's attention. By every method that proves effective his real interest in the various arts is to be "carried as far and as high as is for him possible." He seems fearful lest his critics may think he has in mind the training of "makers of art." In all this discussion he seems to me to miss the real point. He does not perceive the fundamentally artistic nature of the child. Nor does he see how the art-instinct plays into the whole of life. Dr. Eliot devotes a paragraph to the fact that America has lost immeasurably through the inherited Puritan prejudice against fine art studies. Unconsciously both he and Dr. Flexner are proving this thesis. They believe in the value of dance and song and poem and picture. They know, too, that the children must approach them unconventionally and actively. But they fall far short of ancient Plato in realization of the power of beauty as an organizer of life's forces.

In view of our manifold social problems, the subject of civics is treated in step-motherly fashion. Dr. Flexner merely shows that history should be taught with an eye to "modern needs and demands." There is little enthusiasm here, little sense of the crying need for young men and women of clear insight, sure knowledge, and high ideals.

As to possible results of the operations of the new school, Dr. Flexner is modest enough. The pupils who attend it will, he expects, develop into effective, social units, and he makes haste to add, the freedom permitted them should stir their souls and develop their spiritual interests. But the school is founded with the desire of wielding influence over other schools, of reaching out far beyond the circles of young people directly taught in its class-rooms. The setting up of positive standards, the encouragement given to the inquiring spirit will, he hopes, do much to hasten a change in our system of education as a whole.

In its general features, then, the outlines of the new educational experiment may be said to constitute the contribution of the men

of science to our educational theory. Dr. Flexner's pamphlet is the lineal descendent of Huxley's *Essay on a Liberal Education*. This aspect of the project should be frankly accepted as a great advance. The knowledge which we sum up under the term *science* is the characteristic knowledge of our time. The man of science is our priest; the laboratory is our holy of holies. Here men come nearest to the secrets that control our lives. Here they tap the currents of power which flow out in new forms of civilization. Since this is true, an educational system growing normally out of our thought should be dominated by the scientific spirit.

In another respect, too, this plan is of our own stuff. I have spoken of the characteristically American disregard of great names and philosophical refinements. This approaches now and then almost to a charming-naivete. The easy optimism, also, is a product of our own spirit. Our optimism is, in part, based on a sublime faith in mechanism. It belongs naturally to a scientific and mechanical age. A civilization which tears down fourteen-story buildings in favor of forty-story ones and scraps last year's machinery for this year's model is naturally inclined to believe that cutting loose from the traditional system will quickly solve our problems. The spirit of the men behind this plan is typically American, too, in looking for immediate usefulness. The worst thing and the best thing said of us is that we are "practical." Well, this is the "practical" experiment in education. It is difficult to state these facts without seeming to be critical of them or sceptical as to their worth. But if we are ever to have a theory of life or a system of education based on what our life really is, they must grow out of just such connections as these. If our schools are to serve our needs and to grow with our growth they must be weak where we are weak and strong where our strength lies. So I, for one, am prepared to recognize the very punctiousness of Dr. Flexner's observations as a sign of progress. We should get on faster if we were to strike out thus freely in all lines of intellectual and artistic activity.

But in one important respect the authors of the plan show all the limitations of their class. They have little realization of the social demands which America has a right to lay upon her schools. They are, apparently, hardly conscious of the social problems