THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL IN GREECE:
PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION AND TEACHING

A Thesis

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THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

REPPAS

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ABSTRACT

Out of a total number of 8763 primary schools in Greece, 5220 are single-teacher schools. This type of school administers to the education of almost thirty per cent of the people who live in hamlets. This portion of the population has a definite and significant contribution to make to the country's economy and the Nation's life in general. Hence, improvement of their schools is particularly important.

The one-room school presents many problems growing out of the organizational methods and the ways of teaching employed in it. The main purpose of the study, therefore, is to suggest ways and means by which the teacher can organize and teach a better school.

The method of investigation used consists of a review of the research literature, and of the writer's seven years of experience in managing and teaching single-teacher schools.

Four chapters make up the thesis. The first one is an introductory chapter. The second describes the one-room school as such. Chapter three gives hints on the organization of the school. In the fourth and final chapter an

attempt has been made to discuss new ways of teaching and to show how they work in actual practice.

This study identifies certain serious handicaps under which the school at present labors. Teaching is difficult. Students and teacher are time-pressed. There is little or no furniture and equipment. The program of study is not stimulating and the social setting is conservative. There is much verbal instruction and "busy work". The teachers are inexperienced, inadequately trained, professionally isolated, ill-paid, and overloaded. Further, school funds are very limited. Perhaps a safe statement to make is that these disadvantages outweigh certain positive aspects that this type of school may possess under favorable conditions. Its abolishment, however, is neither feasible nor desirable at present. Improving this institution, therefore, becomes a desideratum.

The study also reveals that a wide range of opinion and practice affects the school's purpose. This was found to be due to competing philosophies of education.

For the internal organization of the school, flexible groups are recommended as a means of doing away with the traditional organization of combining and alternating classes and subject matter. In addition to stressing pupils' needs

and interests in grouping, the study gives practical advice on the installation of group organization. Regarding the external school organization, the investigation locates certain unsatisfactory aspects of present practices that need to be improved. They include the school library, pupil health, indifference to education, school attendance, and the teacherage. While dealing with the subject of the external organization concrete and attainable suggestions are put forth for the effective solution of these problems. All the way through, the coordination and cooperation of community agencies for school improvement are particularly stressed.

Further, the study has shown how employment of modern instructional techniques help the school become a more efficient institution. The most important ones are the development of units of work and the use of the local community as a sound guide in selecting proper learning experiences. Individualization of instruction and employment of activity methods are also recommended as important factors contributing to good teaching. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the daily program. The suggested one does away with uniformity in the day's work, emphasis on subject matter and grade divisions, and is flexible enough to allow for real life experiences and activities.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM STATED

Profound socio-economic changes have been taking place in Greece especially since the last World War. Village life seems to be uninteresting and disagreeable and, hence undesirable. As a result of this, country people are drifting from rural sections to prosperous towns and cities, or are migrating to foreign lands, e.g. Australia, Brazil, etc. It is there that they hope to live a better life. Moreover, the means of communication constantly expand and in this way make it possible even for isolated regions to be linked up with the outside world and thus to receive the influences of foreign ideas, movements, and patterns of life.

Cultural and political conditions are also changing. The Byzantine tradition of blind faith, religion, and orthodoxy in thinking and respect for authority are being superseded by the classical legacy of belief in the autonomy of the human intellect. The memories of the democratic past are increasingly becoming a revitalized source of inspiration.

On the other hand, the language of the intelligentsia approximates that of the common people. Thus the learned are getting closer and closer to the masses whose natural emotions are not prevented by any linguistic formalism from finding genuine expression through the means of demotiki.[1] Further, nationalism, being another force that adds a particular characteristic to the cultural picture of Greece at present, takes on a new meaning which is more in harmony with contemporary ideals and recent developments all over the world. Lastly, political instability is an additional factor affecting the state of affairs in the country in the last few years.

There is no doubt, however, that conditions such as these create several problems of vital significance for the future of the people as a whole.

The effective solution of these and other related problems depends to a great extent on a good system of education. Consequently, in a rural and mountain country like Greece, the attention of those concerned with the improvement of the present situation must be directed to the country schools and particularly to the one-room schools where the largest percentage of the rural people have their education.

But is the single-teacher school in a position to meet the challenge of the new circumstances? To give an answer as briefly as possible, this peculiar type of school is in some cases neglected and in many respects has not participated

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1. The language spoken and written by the people.

in the fruits of modern educational progress. It has not been able to make new adjustments in the face of constantly changing conditions. In certain instances the school under consideration is not respected at all; professional enthusiasm is often absent; good and experienced teachers are not frequently found in it.

More specifically, the one-room school presents the schoolmen concerned with many more or less unique problems some of which grow out of the organization methods and the ways of teaching employed in it.

How to organize the work of a one-room school is indeed a formidable problem. Effective organization of such a school involves difficulties in saving time and making effective use of it; handling several classes in one classroom - which poses unique managerial problems - and grouping the children. Furthermore, lack of organized effort, poor library service, community indifference, low school attendance, lack of a place where the teacher may room and board, and many other obstacles form additional handicaps to the proper organization of the school under consideration.

Teaching in the one-room school involves another cluster of serious problems. The wide range of abilities and interests of children from six to thirteen; their different backgrounds and mental level; difficulties in timing the lessons and selecting curriculum activities that meet the real

needs of the hamlet people; the development of units of work and the proper employment of individual instruction methods pose real problems and thus make it difficult for the teacher, who is himself culturally and professionally isolated, to teach effectively.

It is to a consideration of questions such as these that the present study is directed.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

It is only recently that much thought and attention has been given in Greece to the question of how to improve the one-teacher school. That is why some articles dealing with the problem are appearing in the leading educational magazines. Competent schoolmen are studying the difficulty and proposing ways and means of overcoming it. Political leaders[2] are taking a real interest in this movement to reform the hamlet educationally. In addition, many other well-meant efforts have taken the form of good theoretical books. But most of these books deal with the rural school problem in general and make no specific reference to the one-teacher school per se.

The present study, therefore, is the first endeavor of its kind. To the best of the writer's knowledge, neither the topic under consideration nor any other problem closely related to it has ever been attempted in Greece.

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2. G. Kyriazopoulos, Problems of the Small Schools, Petargos, Istaica, 1958, p. 9.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is an attempt to make whatever contribution it may to the proper solution of the main organizational and teaching problems of the small elementary schools in general and the one-room schools in particular. More specifically, the aim here is, in the light of the present knowledge, to suggest to the one-room school teachers certain ways and means by which they can organize and teach a better school and thus become community servants of substantial help.

A last remark may be necessary. It is well known how acute and central is the fiscal problem of the small schools. It is another purpose of the writer, therefore, to make suggestions that involve no greater financial resources than what are generally available in any isolated and poor one-room school. Moreover, in view of the inadequate training of the in-service teachers, the practical aspect and the immediate applicability of these suggestions is also aimed at.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Any effort aiming at the improvement of the one-room school is justified on many grounds. To begin with, this type of school administers to the education of 97% of that part of the people whose main occupation is agriculture[3] upon which

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3. Statistical Service of Greece, Statistical Summary, 1954, Athens, National Printing Office, 1955, p.186.

the Nation's progress depends to a great extent. With the success of agriculture is linked the welfare of every citizen, no matter what his social status or vocation is. Furthermore, in a rural country like Greece, the people who live in hamlets and small villages constitute an important factor in molding the national life and directing the cultural energy.

Moreover, the small rural community's contribution to the shaping of the national civilization has been pointed out by many educational thinkers.[4] The small community and its school preserve and refine the folk poetry, the folk songs and dances; the proverbs and the wise sayings; the allegories and similes that have their origin in the work activities of the rural people and their relation to the surrounding nature. All of these are elements of civilization that are always present and functional in the open country life. Of course, they by no means can be compared in importance with the contemporary technical advancements of urban areas. Yet, they are deeply rooted in the lives of the people and they are truly creative in nature.

It is easier to see how important the study is if one turns to statistical figures to find out the exact number of the one-teacher schools and of the people who are now actively connected, in one way or another, with them. According to the latest statistics, about one fourth of the total number

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4. G. Zobanakis, The Problems of Our Rural Schools, Scholeion Koei Zoi, Athens, 1955, p. 38.

of school-age children have their elementary education in this type of school and nearly one third of the government primary teachers work alone with small groups in the school under consideration.[5] In addition, almost all of the elementary school administrators have a direct or indirect responsibility for the education offered by the one-room school. The single-teacher school houses far outnumber all the school buildings housing all other types of schools taken together. The following statistical data obtained from Antonakaki's Greek Education make some of the aforementioned points clearer.

6-class schools 560	3-class schools 615
5-class schools 245	2-class schools 1728
4-class schools 395	1-class schools 5220[6]

If one combines the number of one- and two-teacher schools - since their problems are almost alike - he can easily realize the tremendous importance of the small rural school in the country.

In view of the fact that the social body of Greece consists of the tiny villages, it is easy to see that the one-room school can become an effective tool in making country life richer.

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5. Kalliniki Dendrinou Antonakaki, Greek Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1955, p. 56.
6. Ibid., p. 57.

Furthermore, there are some important values inherent in hamlets and small villages, that deserve perpetuation with the help of the school.[7] These are the fostering of feelings of belongingness to a concrete social group; the breeding of close intimacy and familiarity; the lack of indifference and disregard for what other people think or feel; the cultivation of responsibility to the community itself; the well-defined values and patterns of behavior, etc. That is why many eminent students of country life strongly claim that the small community should be given the necessary thoughtful attention it deserves.[8]

The fact that the rural people exhibit a high degree of intelligence and moral and political integrity[9] is another justification for undertaking any kind of study that helps contribute to the solution of small community school problems.

For all these and other reasons it is quite natural that the small rural school in general and the single-teacher school in particular should receive an important share of thoughtful attention, and secure a strong hold on our affection. If the rural people living in hamlets and small villages

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7. American Association of School Administrators, Schools in Small Communities, Washington, 1938, pp. 21-26.
8. Arthur E. Morgan, The Small Community, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1942, p. 19.
9. William F. Book, The Intelligence of High School Seniors, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1922, p. 235; see also, George H. Betts, New Ideals in Rural Schools, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1913, p. 8; and P.A. Sorokin, et.al, A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology, University of Minnesota Press, 1932, p. 229.

are to enjoy equal educational and social opportunities and not to fall considerably behind city and town people in intelligent action and preparation for their life activities, it is necessary that their schools should be improved.

METHOD OF TREATMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

METHOD OF TREATMENT

In actual practice there is an obvious interdependency among the several problems considered in this study. However, for convenience in the process of the present investigation, the writer deals with these problems separately, always bearing in mind their close interrelationship.

It should also be mentioned that an endeavor has been made to free the study from purely personal opinion that may be challenged. Yet, nobody can avoid making some personal judgement and interpretations of the problem investigated, if he is to contribute something, however slight, to its proper solution.

In the preparation of this thesis the writer took as a guiding principle, and tried to give an answer to the central question of how the one-room school teacher can attack organizational and teaching problems in the most effective way in order that the school may meet more satisfactorily the community needs.

The basic line of thought throughout this study unfolds as follows: The first of the four chapters of the thesis is an introductory one. The second deals with the characteristics of the one-room school in Greece, its importance, its objectives, its social foundations, and its present status.

In the third chapter problems of school organization and possible solutions to them are considered in some detail. The term "organization" has a broader meaning here. It includes not only grouping the classes, but also questions of how to save time, how to overcome sanitary problems, how to secure regular school attendance, how to provide a school library service, etc.

The fourth and last chapter shows what are the modern ways of teaching in the one-teacher school and how they can be applied in actual practice.

The choice of these two clusters of problems has been based on the assumption that questions of organization and instruction are of paramount importance to the one-room school and constitute, therefore, two of the most serious groups of difficulties to be overcome first if this school is to function effectively and not be doomed to fall short of its possibilities.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The materials have been gathered from two main sources: the writer's seven years of experience in teaching and managing one-room schools, and a review of the research literature.

To make suggestions for the improvement of any kind of undesirable conditions is more realistic when based on a careful personal investigation of the causes that have given rise to the problems one wants to solve. That is why the writer has availed himself, through reviewing his own notes, of some teaching and management experience he had with ungraded schools. In this connection it may be well to mention that some of the suggestions made in this study are the outgrowth of his personal experience. They were tried with success in an average hamlet community one-room school of Northern Greece where the writer served as a teacher.

To secure a more valid and experienced judgement, however, an analysis was made of the professional literature available at the A.U.B. library. It was also hoped that such a review might stimulate, on the part of the writer, more thinking about the needs of the one-room school and provide further suggestions for both thinking and practice on the part of other teachers who are, or intend to be, in charge of this interesting and useful type of school.

DELIMITATIONS

Because consolidation of small schools is not possible under the existing circumstances,[10] in the following discussion

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10. George Zobanakis, Problems of Our Rural Schools, Scholeion Kai Zoi, Athens, 1955, p. 214.

no consideration will be accorded school centralization, which under favorable conditions would be the first step in the process of solving most of the problems dealt with in this thesis. Therefore, the discussion is limited to what can be practically done in order to build gradually on what is worth retaining in the single-teacher school, looking to the future accomplishments as sure to come.

But even with this limiation, the study would still be very general and wide in scope. The number of the one-room school problems is appallingly large to be dealt with in a thesis satisfactorily. Not only that, but they are also very different in nature.

Out of their great variety, two categories of such problems, as already indicated, have been singled out for a thorough investigation; they are organizational and teaching problems which are, more or less, unique to the one-teacher school.

Again, the number of problems within the two aforementioned categories is relatively large. To limit the scope of this study more, only the most representative difficulties that fall within the two problem areas in question have been chosen and treated in some detail. What they are may be gathered from the table of the third and fourth chapters. That there may be more or fewer subproblems can easily be conceded. In this connection it is fair to remark, however,

that they have been taken up more with the problems of the single-teacher school in Northern Greece in mind.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Defining one's terms makes for exactness, precision, and, consequently, better understanding in any field of scientific endeavor. With regard to this study, in matters of definitions of concepts with definite educational and professional connotations, the Dictionary of Education[11] has been followed throughout.

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11. Carter V. Good, ed., Dictionary of Education, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1945.

CHAPTER II

THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL IN GREECE DESCRIBED

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

With a large part of the country's education centered in the one-room country school, it is pertinent to appraise its peculiar strengths and weaknesses. This is because every one-room school teacher should have a clear conception of the peculiar characteristics, i.e. the strong and the weak points of this type of school. It would really mean much to our rural education if only those who honestly believe in the advantages of the school and the merits of the hamlet rural community were employed to teach.[1] Moreover, an appraisal of the advantages and disadvantages of the one-room school would also indicate if it is really desirable to focus our attention only on the weaknesses of the school and then conclude that no considerable improvement can be brought about,

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1. A genuine love for the essential features of this school and of the physical and social environment in which it operates constitutes an important factor in attracting and retaining able teachers in the hamlet. The oft-made suggestion that only generous salaries will make teachers remain in the small village is not always an adequate solution. For an explanation, see K. Dimitriou, The Teachers' Salaries, Kollaros and Co., Athens, 1934, pp. 187-189.

or to capitalize on the small school's assets and thus to avoid being overwhelmed by its weak points. Finally, it is hoped that the following discussion may contribute to a better understanding and a fuller appreciation of the "little red schoolhouse".

DISADVANTAGES OF THE SCHOOL

The one-room school does labor under serious handicaps. In any one-room school situation a very unusual amount of work is required of the teacher. If he is to teach several classes in one and the same room he has to tax his mind and to successfully exert great efforts indeed. Such multiple-class teaching is far more difficult than teaching in a graded school.[2] This is due to the fact that, under the one-room school's unique conditions, master and pupils are obliged to shift from one area of knowledge to another within a relatively limited span of time. Furthermore, it is much easier to manage a group of fifty pupils of one grade than to do the same thing with an identical number of students who belong in different classes made up of boys and girls having different psychological and developmental traits. In close connection with this, another defect of the school is the fact that though teaching is now characterized by high specialization, one teacher is expected to handle equally

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2. The teacher has to hear at least thirty recitations daily.

well all ages of children from six to twelve. Lack of time is really another most pressing problem. The one-room school appears of necessity to be somewhat defective in its total organization, too. Thus, according to the severest critics,[3] the scene of the one-teacher school community looks like a "broken picture".

Speaking very generally, this school lacks the means and the teacher's professional experience and competence to cope with the problems of the abnormal children (brilliant, subnormal). This is because it is, for the most part, financially dependent upon the needy community. That is the very reason why the German teachers call it "the school of the poor and the underprivileged".[4]

To them the school under consideration labors under the following serious handicaps:

1. The relative isolation from the whole school organism, a fact which is evidenced by the unwillingness of the rural child to continue his self-education after graduating from the school.

2. The building is not well furnished and equipped to secure the best type of a chievement possible.

3. Contact with a large number of pupils (up to 100 or more in extreme cases).

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3. H. Christodioulou, The Ungraded Room, Vlachopoulos and Co., Athens, 1929, pp. 385-87.
4. G. Zobanakis, Problems of Our Rural Schools, Scholeio Kai Zoi, Athens, 1955, p. 65.

4. There is much of "busy work" which, in some cases, is fruitless, if not harmful.[5]

Moreover, small rural schools have difficulty in providing a stimulating program of study. This is because the background of the homes from which the students come is poor in cultural resources. This situation and other adverse circumstances under which the school operates make the course of study stereotyped and lifeless. Faced with a six-grade school, the inexperienced and inadequately prepared teacher relies heavily on verbal instruction and routinized and dull drill. As a result of this no particular attention is paid to individual differences and some subjects, such as gymnastics, arts and crafts, music and penmanship, are sometimes totally neglected.

In addition, the overloaded and centrally prepared program of studies is the same as that of the well-staffed schools operating in the most privileged localities. Consequently, there is a great lack of appeal to the needs of the hamlet community and its rural life. The one-room school still remains, to a great extent, a formal institution which is imposed on the people by the central government.[6] Thus, the school, in most cases, has no relation with the life outside it. It is no wonder, therefore, that people cannot

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5. Ibid., p. 148.
6. T. Konstas, Formalism in Education, Dimitriou and Co., Athens, 1948, p. 408.

easily see the reasons why such a school should exist.[7]

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

The above exposition of the serious weaknesses of the one-teacher school may give the impression that it is completely devoid of any good points that can be capitalized upon. However, this is not the case, because this type of school has also some positive aspects that are worth mentioning.

To the German educator Peerz, the one-room school has the following strong points. A desirable amount of drill which makes for mastery of what is taught is sometimes neglected in the graded school. However, this is not the case with the one-teacher school for there it is necessary to make use of drill in order to fill a portion of time of the groups which are not involved in direct cooperation with the teacher. Thus the so-called "seat work", if properly utilized, can really become an asset of this school.

Moreover, under the peculiar conditions of work in a one-room school, the child has to control his attention and to concentrate on his individual work if he is to finish it successfully. This means that he naturally has the chance to develop the desirable qualities of a hard intellectual worker. Such a habit is the prerequisite for success in

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7. B. Panos, School Administration, Eleftheriou and Co., Saloniki, 1939, p. 84.

future life.[8]

"A one-room school is a laboratory in which boys and girls learn to help those who are younger."[9] If a 7-year-old needs help that an older child can give, he asks for it. He learns gradually to have proper consideration for the other's convenience. A twelve or thirteen year-old, expecting to be ready for high school in a year, tries to find ways of being useful in helping younger pupils to learn and to get along well together. Learning to understand and deal with young children is a part of this older child's education for home and family living, and it also helps him develop poise and self-confidence.

Several children from the same family will be in the same classroom, making it easier for beginners.

The ungraded room seems to be more suitable for the application of activity as a means or method of education. This is because learning activities are carried out more successfully where a group is heterogeneous in so far as the ages and attainments of the individuals are concerned. But this is exactly the type of situation to which the one-room school most readily lends itself. This advantage is well pointed out by the California Curriculum Commission in the

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8. These views are contained in G. Zobanakis, The Problems of Our Rural Schools, Scholeio Kai Zoi, Athens, 1955, pp. 67-68.
9. P. Stephanou, Rural Children Learn to Work Cooperatively, Pinou Press, Volos, 1938, p. 707.

following statement:

"A one-teacher school is really an ideal place for activity work because the children of the varying age levels can all find interesting, profitable experiences for their own development. The varying degrees of difficulty involved in carrying out an activity challenge the interest and effort of children on a wide range of age levels. The group conference in which the work is planned sets all the children to thinking. With the group unified in a common purpose, the interest goes out into many directions and stimulates thinking in a very constructive way."[10]

Thus one-room school children, classified in heterogeneous groups, work together as people do in life outside the school on enterprises of common interest in which each participates according to his ability. The integrating factor is the factor of activity.

Functional understanding of the conditions that surround the school is one of the objectives of modern education. But, according to Poulos, life is much simpler on the farm and in the hamlet or the very small village where the one-room school operates than in a relatively large rural or industrial village.[11]

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10. California Curriculum Commission, Teacher's Guide to Child Development, Sacramento, Calif., State Department of Education, 1930, p. 107.
11. S. Poulos, Hamlet Life, Argyrion and Co., Athens, 1938, p. 247.

Moreover, this profound simplicity is also evidenced in the school itself which is usually small. Again, this smallness results in an intimate association between teacher and pupils. One teacher has the same students for several years. This, in turn, increases the guidance and counseling possibilities. The teacher is more in a position to render substantial services to his pupils because, generally speaking, he knows better their homes and their parents. In addition, the smallness of the school makes for management and regulations that are flexible and informal in nature. Hence, the whole school looks like a home. However, in extreme cases, smallness ceases to be an asset because it makes an uninteresting school composed sometimes of classes of one, two, or three children. Such conditions are abnormal and anti-social.

Furthermore, especially in the farm and hamlet family there seem to exist some desirable influences,[12] which are highly active in developing worthy character traits in the one-room school children.[13] The hamlet home with its high standards of personal conduct and more sound values and practices resulting from the personal, close, and intimate relationships in the farm and small village, contributes significantly to character building.

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12. For a discussion of these forces, see P. Pulios, Hamlet Life and Character Building, Elertherious and Co., Athens, 1939, pp. 184-199.
13. Charles D. Lewis, The Rural Community and Its Schools, American Book Company, New York, 1937, pp. 26-27.

Finally, the one-room school has a central position in the life of the hamlet. There the school holds an important place and it is not one of the many institutions; but, more often than not, it is the only institution and neighborhood social center available. This means that the school under consideration can enjoy many privileges but, at the same time, it does have many responsibilities as well.

From the foregoing discussion it seems to the writer that the one-room school's disadvantages outweigh its good points. Yet this school's abolishment or centralization is not feasible under the present conditions prevailing in the country.[14] It becomes, then, the responsibility of all those concerned to improve this type of school and to minimize its disadvantages.

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

SIGNIFICANCE

The Ministry of Education has recently focused particular attention upon the one-room school and greatly emphasized its importance in administering to the educational needs of those living in the open country.[15] This is because 93 per

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14. George Zobanakis, Problems of Our Rural Schools, Scholeion Kai Zoi, Athens, 1955, p. 214.
15. Ibid., p. 57.

cent of the rural population[16] reside on farms, in hamlets, and very small villages where only the one-room school is to be found.[17]

The importance, therefore, of this school is clearly indicated in the agricultural situation. Agriculture is the principal resource of the country[18] and the only occupation of the people for whom the school under consideration exists. The single-teacher school, which sometimes is the only institution[19] in hamlets and small villages, can become an effective means to improve the ways of tilling the soil and thus to help the majority of the farmers keep up with the times as far as agricultural progress is concerned.

At present the one-room school is a great reality in Greece. Because of poverty thousands of children have all of their education in this school. According to the latest statistics,[20] 65 per cent of the total number of primary schools are one-room schools. This fact means that

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16. The percentage of the people who earn their living by cultivating the land is 78% of the total population.
17. E. Tsiribas, Small Schools, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1951, p. 409.
18. Seventy-three per cent of the Nation's income comes from agriculture, see Ibid., p. 24.
19. For a further discussion of this point, see Zobanakis, p. 63.
20. Ch. Christophylidis, The Primary Schools, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1956, p. 18.

the school in question is an integral and functional part of the whole educational system. It indicates also that this type of school can serve as one of the vehicles for the transmission and advancement of the rural culture and the enrichment of the Nation's civilization. Moreover, the single teacher school, if wisely utilized, can become highly instrumental in bringing about desirable changes that may affect the overwhelming majority of the population who live in the open country.

Because of their large number, the people who live on farms, in hamlets and small villages are still the "cradle" of the Nation. The one-room school, therefore, which administers to the educational needs of the prospective citizens and leaders in the open country and provides them with an understanding and appreciation of our democratic way of life, is of vital concern to those interested in the future of the country as a whole.

In addition, it is the conviction of the intellectual leaders that the Greek one-room school preserves and refines the national character, i.e., the rural life and spirit and the peculiar psychological characteristics of the farmers.[21]

For all these reasons, it can be said with a fair degree of conviction that great is the significance of the one-room school which is the "folk school" of Greece today.

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21. G. Kalliafas, Our National Character, Vlachopoulos and Co., Athens, 1952, p. 145.

OBJECTIVES

Alleged inferiority and superiority of the school. Before discussing the objectives that the one-teacher school tries to achieve, a consideration of its position as compared with that of other types of primary schools may not be out of place here.

As a matter of fact, a contrariety of opinion obtains on the matter. Some people claim that the school under consideration is inferior to the well-staffed elementary schools. Of course this school does labor under serious handicaps, but its severest critics undoubtedly overemphasize its weak points and take the extreme view of regarding it as a "school of necessity". Such an institution, they say, is greatly handicapped and, consequently, unable to achieve its full purpose.[22] However, others think just the other way. This group asserts that the one-room school is "the ideal type of elementary school".[23] They praise it very much by pointing out its positive aspects only. Which of these two positions is more realistic? or, is there any third one that may be more sound than either of the above?

To answer this question as briefly as possible, it is thought that there is a middle point between the extremes

22. G. Vasilou, Small Schools, Athens, Elertheriou and Co., 1953, p. 198.
23. P. Konslantinou, Rural Schools, Vlachopoulos and Co., Athens, 1948, p. 301.

just mentioned. Definitely this school is not "ideal"; nor is it "a product of necessity" in the sense that, of necessity, it can not be improved. "It is a fallacy to assume that single-teacher schools must necessarily be poor."[24]

Experience shows that they can become more effective institutions provided the schoolman is primarily concerned with what can be done here and now for the improvement of the school and thus he does not let the hope of future accomplishments affect the educational welfare of the children at present in the type of schools under consideration. In this connection it may be safe to say that the one-teacher school is just as worth keeping under the present circumstances as any other type of primary schools.

However, the notion that this school is still a necessity in the sense just mentioned is more or less accepted by some laymen. Therefore, a further consideration of this opinion may be desirable here. The one-room school came into being as an educational institution produced by the peculiar demographic distribution of the open country population, and the social and economic conditions that prevail in the country. There seems to be no other type of school that is more fit to adjust itself to adverse conditions and to administer more effectively to the educational needs of

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24. C. Phonis, Teaching in Small Schools, Dimitriou and Co., Athens, 1951, p. 403.

the people who live in the sparsely populated areas.[25] Only in this sense can the school be considered as being still a necessity and destined to perpetuate itself as far as one can see. By no means, however, should it be taken to mean that this school ranks below the graded primary schools, because, under favorable conditions, it is not inferior to them.[26] This equality is clearly seen in the fact that the Government has set up exactly the same objectives for both graded and ungraded schools to achieve.[27]

The role of the school in the community. Before beginning any discussion of the place of the school in the community life, it should be pointed out that a wide range of opinion exists both among educational thinkers and workers and among the lay people in general.

There is a large number of parents and teachers who think that the one-room school's main function is to impart to the child knowledge and the literacy skills essential to the learning of the facts. Those who hold this view pay no attention to the peculiarities of the social and physical environment in which the school operates. To them, education takes place only in schoolrooms; it is a process of learning from books; schooling has no purpose beyond this bookish

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25. Peter Chotios, Rural Schools and Small Communities, Kollaros and Co., Athens, 1934, p. 238.
26. E. Tsiribas, The Folk School, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1949, p. 334.
27. Government of Greece, Education Act 461/42, Article 1, Hellenikon Typographeion, Athens, 1942.

learning. They do not feel the need to relate what goes on in the school with what actually happens outside it. The curriculum is conceived in terms of the study and recitation of lessons. They put great emphasis on the amount of subject matter learned by the child. High scores on achievement tests are the criterion by which the school is evaluated. The teacher's work is thought to be limited to the schoolroom. His main business is to follow the centrally-prepared and prescribed course of study. He does not have anything to do with the community at large. The people look upon him as a transient worker. They are little interested in his activities outside the schoolroom. In fine, the school is traditional in its function and thus becomes the means to perpetuate the memory of the "good old days".

This point of view is based on a narrow concept of the function of schooling and it reflects a poor understanding of the educational process. Yet it is widely prevalent in small rural communities today. The adverse conditions under which many one-room schools operate, i.e., isolation, poor building, lack of sufficient wealth, inexperienced teachers, etc., tend to perpetuate this outlook on education.

The weakness of this limited viewpoint is that it accepts an educational program which is devoted only to the teaching of the traditional knowledge and skills in isolation from the life in the community. As a result of this, learning

is poor because: 1. children do not see any purpose and meaning in their efforts, 2. the subject matter learned is non-functional, and 3. such education ignores the fact that in-school and out-of-school experiences are but divisions of the one life of the child. The final and fundamental weakness, according to Petrovas, is that this traditional view fails to recognize that the purpose of education today is as broad and inclusive as the democratic way of life.[28]

In sharp contrast with this viewpoint that one-room schools need not necessarily relate to community life is the one that the school under consideration should be the center of significant community activities; that the one-room school teacher should be among the leaders of the community; and that the school work should reflect the community life. Education for hamlet and for urban people is considered as two systems of education because they involve many differences. At present this viewpoint is held and practiced by a limited number of one-room school teachers and small village leaders. It has emerged from the critical examination of the preceding one. It does not ignore the teaching of facts and skills, but it is thought that abstract knowledge is not enough. The school must be concerned with more than knowledge and skills. Those who advocate and apply such ideas[29] about the function of the hamlet schools assign to them the role

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28. A. Petrovas, Principles of Democratic Education, Vlachopoulos and Co., Athens, 1940, p. 403.
29. O. Sourlas, The Community-Centered School, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1948, pp. 150-205.

of agencies of community improvement. Thus they commit their school to many responsibilities in addition to purely school-room work. To them the school is not only the vehicle for the transmission of what is valid in hamlet life but it is also the progressive community agency that takes a leading part in helping the people help themselves and thus keep up with the times.

In addition to the first view cited above, the following are some other examples of inadequate conceptions of the one-room school's function:

There is a certain group of laymen, educators, and economists who want to use especially the one-room school to keep rural youth on the farm.[30] It is feared that if the movement to the cities is not checked, rural life will deteriorate. The more alert people will be drawn away from the hamlet and the small village. Thus, they say, production will be reduced and, as a result of this, cheap food will be endangered. Others favor the practice of retaining youth in the village on the ground that urban conditions are not favorable to complete living.

Undoubtedly, it is desirable to keep the ambitious and alert youth in the country. However, the school under consideration should by no means be used in retaining young men and women in the open country, who for one reason or

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30. John Roucos, Our Rural People, Thessaloniki Typographeion, Thessaloniki, 1951.

another might reach a higher degree of satisfaction and self-realization in the city and town or even abroad. If city or hamlet life have unfavorable aspects the solution should be found in remedying the conditions and not discouraging the drift of the youth to the cities.

On the other hand, there are those parents who want their children to escape the privations of the small village life. That is why they seek to provide their sons and daughters with an education that will help them get into other fields of labor. Such an attitude, however, is unjustifiable, because it does not take into consideration individual abilities and preferences.

Still others[31] emphasize the vocational possibilities of the one-room school. This group overlooks the fact that emphasis on vocational training is a narrow function of this school, because it fails to develop the student to his fullest capacity. Purely vocational activities do not make for all the knowledge that is necessary nor do they give experience in all desirable forms of thinking. This should not be taken to mean that contacts with vocations will "contaminate" the one-room school boy. On the contrary, it is highly desirable that projects imitating the vocational life must be undertaken by the school, because as Tsiribas

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31. E. Tsiribas, Elements of Vocational Guidance, Dimitrakos and Co., Athens, 1955, pp. 145-198.

says, they motivate the work, introduce valuable real experience elements, develop respect for trades and vocation, and prepare for future life.[32]

From the above exposition, it is rather clear that conflicting philosophies of education have produced a great variety of opinion on the small rural school's proper function. This whole range of educational thought and practice, generally speaking, lies between two extremes, the one purely traditional, and the other ultraprogressive in nature. The traditional outlook is still very strong, but there is some evidence[33] indicating that the present trend is toward wider acceptance of the new viewpoints. The so-called "school of life"[34] and the "rural community schools"[35] hold the attention of a steadily increasing number of people in Greece today.

THE SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

To present a true picture of the social environment in which the school operates would make some contribution to this discussion. However, such an attempt could not be

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32. Ibid., p. 154.
33. P. Argyropoulos, Trends in Modern Education, Phanopoulos and Sons, Athens, 1950.
34. K. Antoniou, The School of Life, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1952.
35. O. Sourlas, The Community-Centered School, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1948.

realistic for it is not possible to tell what is typical of Greece taken as a whole. What is representative of a certain set of conditions in a country is an abstraction rather than something that really exists. Hamlet characteristics differ with the size of the community, the way people earn their living, contact with outside factors, etc. Baldwin in his studies of representative small communities has shown that variations exist even within the same section of communities which are seemingly very much alike.[36] In spite of these differences, however, there are some common features in any very small community situation which differentiate life and organization in hamlets from that in large rural villages and towns. These environmental influences have an important bearing on the one-room school.

THE HAMLET FAMILY

The hamlet family is larger[37] and more stable than the family in large villages and towns. The percentage of divorced parents is higher in relatively large villages than in hamlet areas.[38]

There are some characteristics that are more unique to the hamlet family. The family members are bound together

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36. Bird Baldwin, et. al., Farm Children, New York, D. Appleton and Co., 1930, p. 337.
37. D. Petrou, "The Hamlet Family", Journal of Home Economics, Athens, April, 1940, pp. 145-1
38. K. Sakellariou, Principles of Sociology, Athens, Dimitracos and Co., 1952, p. 103.

by a strong interest in the farm as a means of mutual support and welfare. Each hamlet family member, no matter if he (or she) is a child or an adult, takes certain responsibilities in connection with things to be done in the home or on the farm. The hamlet family is perhaps a stronger social unit. The child gets accustomed to deferred awards, because this is the way his parents enjoy the fruits of their foresight and efforts. Lewis found that one-room school children ranked definitely higher in character than those who came from rural villages and towns. The bases on which this comparison was made were: A. obedience to school authorities, B. application to study, C. purpose in life, and D. honesty and truthfulness.[39]

LOW MOBILITY

Hamlet life in Greece is characterized by its proverbial stability. Moves are very rare and the largest part of the hamlet and tiny village population spend their lives in the same communities where they were born.[40] Anderson,[41] Lively,[42] and others found the same situation existing in

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39. Charles D. Lewis, The Rural Community and Its Schools, New York, Amer. Book Co., 1937, p. 26.
40. G. Karakakis, Principles of Rural Sociology, Athens, Dimitracos and Co., 1949, p. 414.
41. W.A. Anderson, Mobility of Rural Families, Bulletin 607, Cornell University, Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, June 1934, Tables 4, 18 and 19.
42. C.E. Lively, and P.G. Beck, Movement of Open-Country Population in Ohio, Bulletion 467, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Columbus, Ohio, November 1930, Tables 13, 16 and 20.

the States. This social stability makes for more intimate personal relationships. Thus a sense of belonging to the tiny community is cultivated and feelings of disunity do not develop. The child is continually under the direct guidance of his elders and has more opportunities to realize the importance of living and working together harmoniously.

SOCIAL CONTROL

Stability and very close personal acquaintance make a larger degree of social control possible. Professor Sakellariou says that in hamlet communities where it is more desirable to enjoy the esteem of others, one is far more susceptible to what others think about him.[43] This strong social control results also from the larger degree of kinship which, in turn, is an outcome of many factors that are more or less unique to the hamlet life. In spite of the more and more frequent contacts between hamlet and village or town, the control under consideration does not seem to break at least for the time being. As a matter of fact, it is one of the factors that account for the Greek conservatism discussed in the previous chapter. The primary group relationships of the hamlet life create a satisfactory state of affairs for the individual and develop a sense of security

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43. K. Sakellariou, Sociological Changes, Athens, Dimitricos and Co., 1937, p. 143.

in the tiny community. The child is continually subject to the influences of this social control.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The hamlet still produces a large part of the goods necessary for life locally. To an extent, the hamlet people are not directly or indirectly dependent on large villages and towns for getting certain means to satisfy some of their needs.[44] They own their homes, fields, and cattle, and have most of their food supply. They are not afraid of being "thrown out" of their jobs for one reason or another, such as economic depression, unemployment, etc. Of course the hamlet is becoming gradually dependent upon large village, town and city services. But this is a very slow process and does not seem to have a substantial effect on hamlet life at least for some years to come.[45]

SOCIAL SIMPLICITY AND DIRECT RELATIONS

Another factor contributory to hamlet community coherence is the profound simplicity and most concrete relations which characterize all phases of the hamlet life. It is much easier in a hamlet than in a large village or town to compre-

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44. Ch. Barberopoulos, The Greek Hamlet, Athens, Vlachopoulos and Co., 1956, p. 439.
45. H. Papathanasiou, Social Change, Elertheroudakis and Co., Athens, 1952, p. 489.

hend the way in which the social life operates. Social relations seem to be somewhat complicated in a large village as compared with those in a hamlet.

In a hamlet the basic social processes are most easily observed and the individual can more directly learn many valuable things about the social, ethical, religious, political, and economic aspects of group life.

The neighborly spirit that is more prevalent in the hamlet community life is nearly always an asset whenever found.

PRESENT STATUS OF THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

THE SCHOOL ITSELF

In fact, if one is to compare city and hamlet schools, he will find that the small country school seems in many respects to be inferior to the large school units. In towns and cities the schools are housed in beautiful and sanitary buildings. There is enough teaching equipment. There are also libraries and laboratories satisfactorily equipped. The teachers are experienced, well qualified, and fairly paid. The good school management is also worth mentioning.

However, this is not the case with the rural one-room school. Unfortunately, there are still some cases where one-room school children have to have their schooling in single-roomed houses which are heated, lighted, and ventilated very

poorly indeed. The grounds have no shade trees and are as ugly in appearance as the school building is itself sometimes. The interior of the classroom is in a number of cases dingy and unattractive. Sometimes the absence of books for the pupils and the teacher is complete and, more often than not, there are no teaching aids. The whole school is of necessity inadequately grouped, because the one teacher has to teach all the grades.

Generally speaking, the quality and amount of education enjoyed by the one-room school pupil lags far behind that which can be provided by an average school today. At present the seventh and eighth grades are part of the Gymnasium and thus the farm and small village boy and girl who, as a rule, do not continue their high school studies, are completely deprived of them. As a result their whole elementary education suffers much. In some instances the problem of drop-outs is really acute. They leave the school when they have mastered the art of reading but have not yet read enough to develop an interest in it.

In a number of cases the one-room school students know little about the form of government under which they live and about what is going on in the country and abroad. As a result the great modern innovations are not known and their impact on our life conditions is poorly felt in this "age of science". Not infrequently the one-room school students have an inadequate

knowledge of their bodies and sound hygienic practices. Moreover, they do not know much concerning the work of the farm and the ways the farm and the hamlet home can be made a happier and more pleasant place in which to live. They do not know how to use their leisure time fruitfully in connection with hobbies, recreation occasions, etc. In brief, the splendid powers of mind these children have go usually unchallenged. The boring recitations, the listless study, and the wastage of precious time and opportunity complete the picture of this school, which has not yet caught the spirit of efficiency and progress of our times. The ring of all these difficulties is closed by the lack of community interest and leadership.

In spite of the fact that the one-room school cares for a large percentage of the school children of Greece, it does not receive much attention from the central educational authorities concerned. On the other hand, the school itself has not been satisfactorily able to make its needs so obvious to the leaders of the country as to get the aid necessary to maintain the desirable standards of efficiency.

THE TEACHER

"The teacher is by far the most important factor in the making of the school."[46] The old saying "as is the teacher,

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46. William A. Wilkinson, Rural School Management, ed. W.W. Charters, Silver, Burdett and Company, Boston, 1917, p. 392.

so will be the school" is full of meaning. The teacher stands at the very heart of the educative process. He really holds a strategic position in it. On the teacher depends all the rest. Therefore, it is not an overstatement to say that the key to the solution of the one-room school problem as a whole is, to a great extent, in the hands of the teacher. A competent and brilliant teacher is needed more for this type of school, because of the many problems inherent in any small school situation, and because there is neither school inspector immediately available nor principal to give advice and provide sympathy and suggestions. The educational reforms now needed in the sparsely populated areas will take place if the teacher, along with other factors, is able and willing to render his services and share in the responsibilities. Consequently, it is pertinent to see what the one-room school teacher really looks like.

Salary. The actual amount of salary paid beginning teachers, the largest percentage of whom are in charge of one-room schools, is perhaps more instructive than any other single factor that can give a clear idea of the teacher's general conditions. This is because one's income is by far the most important of all the factors that determine his position and affect the social prestige one enjoys.

Greece treats her teachers with no generosity at all. The present salary of the teacher under consideration can

hardly keep him alive. Out of an amount of one thousand five hundred drachmae per month he is expected to pay for new professional books,[47] subscribe to school periodicals, and attend teachers' conventions, besides supporting himself. It is clear, therefore, that this meager salary enforces a standard of living too low for a teacher who is paid far less than other civil servants with similar qualifications. There is no special allowance for a family, for educating the children, and for transport; neither are there maternity benefits for women teachers.[48] The teacher receives a paid leave, however, in the event of sickness. The pension scheme is state-controlled and based on a retirement age of sixty years. Promotion in salary or position takes place primarily on the basis of the years in service. Seniority is highly respected in Greece. Academic qualifications, beyond the two-year special training after high school graduation, play a minor role in the teacher's career.

Security of tenure. Tenure is based upon a two-year period of probationary appointment. After this period of efficient service the teacher is employed permanently. Teachers once appointed are secure in their posts. Unless

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47. According to Drakulidis, very few one-room school teachers buy books and take professional magazines, because they cannot spare the small sum of money required. For a detailed discussion, see D. Drakulidis, The Teacher, Vlachopoulos and Co., Athens, 1949, pp. 218-224.
48. Men and women teachers receive the same pay, provided they have the same qualifications.

grave misconduct is proved he cannot be dismissed. As a matter of fact, the method of taking proceedings against the teacher is so difficult that school inspectors are afraid to take the steps. There is public announcing of vacancies and relative absence of political and religious tests.

Professional preparation. The prospective one-room school teacher whether a man or woman, is a Gymnasium graduate who, after succeeding in a keenly competitive entrance examination, enters an elementary teachers' college where he receives professional training for two years. After graduation he automatically becomes a ceritificated teacher qualified to teach all the primary school subjects. After three years of teaching experience, he may sit for another competitive exam to enter the University of Athens School of Education. If he succeeds, he will attend the University for two more years[49] of advanced professional training.[50] His bachelor's degree, however, does not qualify him for promotion or any like benefit. Unfortunately, there is no possibility for the teacher under consideration to obtain a doctoral degree.

The present system of the one-room school teacher's professional training is defective in many respects, because

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49. During this period of study the teacher receives his full salary.
50. The teachers' admission and training are controlled by the Ministry of Education; the profession itself does not have any share in it whatsoever.

it does not prepare him to meet the peculiar one-room school difficulties adequately.

The problems involved in the organization, management, and teaching in one-room schools are probably the most important ones. At present the teacher does not get any special training to solve them effectively. The colleges are not yet prepared to help the prospective one-room school teachers materially. Peculiar difficulties involved in teaching are also equally neglected by these colleges. They do not acquaint the prospective one-room school teacher with the principles that are to be followed in correlation of subjects by days, weeks, months, and school years; in combining grades for the study of the "interest units"; and in ways of teaching that make for time economy. Also, the training classes do not prepare the teacher to develop the ability to overcome even more pressing educational problems, such as connecting the school with life outside it, etc.

There is also another defect in the teacher's preparation concerning his rural orientation. His pre-service education does not familiarize him with the real needs and the true spirit of the small rural community[51] and does not make him feel enthusiastic about his calling as a rural teacher and servant. Thus the teacher, very often coming from a

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51. Certain courses, such as nature study and agriculture, rural sociology and economics, rural education, etc., which are thought (see, A. Perros, The Status of Rural Teachers, Voucopoulos and Co., Athens, 1949, p. 386) to be very important parts of any rural teachers' special training, are completely neglected by the Pedagogical Academies.

large village or town, in many cases does not possess the sympathy and understanding needed to help him render substantial service to the community. Consequently, he is by no means ready and willing to identify himself with the activities and conditions of the hamlet life. The one-room school of today is in great need of teachers dedicated to rural education, if it is to participate in the fruits of contemporary progress.

Today it is widely recognized that no matter how good the teacher's preparation is, he must keep abreast of new professional developments, if he is to avoid stagnation and improve the quality of his work. That is why in other countries local and regional educational authorities are greatly concerned with the in-service training of the teachers, in general, and of the small school teachers, in particular. However, this is not the case in Greece at present. Consequently, no substantial help is offered to one-room school teachers now in service through summer courses and workshops; extension courses; county and local conferences; conference days or week at the nearest Teachers' Colleges; more professional publications and lectures. As a result of this, the one-room school teachers' service suffers a great deal. In fine, in-service training, which has worked so effectively especially in the United States, is not known in Greece at present. This, in turn, is eloquent evidence that, unfortunately, the

rural education leaders have not yet recognized that the "teacher's professional growth and development must be a continuous process"[52] and that "when the teacher is growing our rural schools are safe."[53]

Living conditions. The problem of the teacher's boarding place is a serious one. Because of the limited housing facilities in many of the hamlets, the majority of the one-room school teachers live under most unsatisfactory domestic conditions. Some live in the school office, if there is any, or in the school store.[54] This situation creates tension and accounts, in part, for the fact that some teachers try systematically to secure transfer to a town.

Conditions of work. More often than not, the one-room school teacher is overloaded. In addition to his school work, he has to do many things which in larger schools are assigned to other workers. He is frequently the visiting teacher, the parent-education worker, the school librarian, the recreation director, the public health worker, the school psychologist, the child guidance worker, the community secretary, the most responsible member of charity organizations,

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52. Genevieve Bowen, Living and Learning in a Rural School, the Macmillan Company, New York, 1946, p. 232.
53. Ibid.
54. It is these adverse conditions which account for the fact that, as a rule, women teachers are not appointed in one-room schools.

etc. He is also expected to undertake a campaign for the eradication of illiteracy among adults; to suggest and initiate a solution to the community playground problem; to direct and teach in the Sunday School (refusal to accept may bring about a penalty to him); to be the local scout executive; to be the most responsible official of this or that community association, etc., etc.

However, there is complete freedom to go wherever one likes while not teaching. There is also freedom to join professional organizations and political parties. Freedom to go abroad for study is limited. The more or less authoritarian attitudes of school inspectors and inspectors-general hinder truly creative work. The teacher is not allowed to prepare the school programs of study. He has to follow the existing syllabuses which are centrally prepared and prescribed.

Professional organizations. Each one-room school teacher is by virtue of his appointment a member of the district professional organization, which, in turn, is a member of the Pan-Hellenic Teachers' Association. This organization has really the power[55] to defend the economic interests of its members, but, unfortunately, because it lacks effective

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55. There are 22,000 members in all.

leadership, it is not in a position to do so at present. For this and other reasons, it is also difficult for the Association to support research work.

Mobility. The teacher is free to move from one rank of the profession to another, provided he has the necessary qualifications. His position has in some cases proved to be a stepping stone to either school inspectorship or any other higher position in the educational administration of the country. Many one-room school teachers also manage to further their studies in Europe or in the States. Thus the school loses valuable educational workers, because they, upon their return, try to get a higher post or to seek another career. Those who leave the profession attest to the fact that conditions are not satisfactory.

General status. Generally speaking, the one-room school teacher's status is high indeed, but only within the narrow limits of the small community. Again, this is relative, because the position and prestige of a person in any society depends not only upon the work he does, but also upon other factors, such as his personality, his physical appearance, etc.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The rural people's philosophy. Most of the villagers

and farmers hesitate to join their efforts with those of other small communities to bring about an improvement in the program and conditions of their children's schooling. This is due, to some extent, to the fact that they do not appreciate education because its good results are not immediate. Another reason goes back to the structure of rural life in scattered small communities. Their outlook on life is traditional and independent of outside factors, because of social isolation. They earn their living by themselves without enlisting the cooperation of others. They are fully convinced about the sound values of their way of life as compared with that of city and town life. This very narrow attitude is the main cause of their objections to educational improvements, especially when they require sacrifices of one sort or another. This also accounts for their violent rejection of any idea for reorganization of school districts into more efficient units, These objections may be simply explained as social and psychological reactions to everything new. Such a situation is really a challenge to all concerned with the rural education problem today.[56]

The school's philosophy. Before Independence (1821) the one-room school's main function was the teaching of the

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56. The philosophy of education views as outlined herewith are based on the writer's 7-year contact with rural people, and on his experience of working in small country schools for the same period of time.

3 R's in order to keep alive the national feeling and the tradition of national greatness in the hearts of the pupils and prepare them for a unanimous revolt against the Turks.[57] Another feature of this school's philosophy was "Fear of the Lord."[58] As a matter of fact, one may say with much fairness that the school's philosophy was "theocentric" to a considerable extent.

It is interesting to note, however, that this philosophy has undergone some changes; but they are not so great as to help the school run completely away from its theocentric orientation. Generally speaking, the school as a whole has not yet caught the spirit of the modern philosophical developments that have taken place since the time of Dewey and other progressivists. In spite of this, an encouraging fact is that the school's traditional philosophy as described above did not go unchallenged. As early as 1920 the so-called progressive philosophy of education has had some important impact on a certain number of one-room schools. Highly instrumental in transplanting this philosophy were those who had studied in the United States of America. Influenced by such a philosophy a limited number of one-room schools have tried to test the new philosophical ideas. At present there is

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57. K. Paparigopoulos, The History of the Greek Nation, Elertheroudakis and Co., Athens, 1896, p. 680.
58. Ibid., p. 682.

some evidence in the type of school under consideration, which indicates that a progressive philosophy accounts for some new developments.[59]

Recently a newer philosophy seems to take its way to the one-room school. This new movement which is known as the "Community School Philosophy", although limited to individual schools at present, is a really promising one. The one-room school teachers who have accepted it as a sound way of managing their educational affairs claim, and rightly so, that they go a step further. Their philosophy, it is true, contains elements of both the academic and the progressive schools, but it goes beyond it and lays great store by the significant values that are inherent in the process of growing up in a definite social environment whose limits coincide with those of the local community. The local community, according to the advocates of the new philosophy, is the point from which the pupil starts to understand the regional, national, and international communities. The curriculum, which is an attempt to integrate the rural school program with community life, is so designed as to develop patterns of action that are useful now and in the future and to produce the good citizen by the means of community-centered and socially responsive school life. This new viewpoint particularly

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59. Supra, p. 32, n. 33.

emphasizes the local adult responsibility and participation in school affairs. The following statement well expresses this philosophy which seems to have originated in the United States of America.

"An important step in the improvement of the community is the development and acceptance of the idea that one of the basic purposes of the rural school is to assist the people of the community to utilize the school itself for the improvement of their general living conditions. The acceptance of this idea makes necessary an educational program for out-of-school youth and adults in connection with the regular school program. This involves cooperative activities carried on by lay leaders, children, and teachers with the general aim of making the community a healthy, wholesome, and satisfactory place in which to live. Of course the school can not do this job alone, but it is the logical agency through which some of the efforts of other agencies working toward the same goal may be coordinated.

"The revitalized rural school program should cease to be patterned after urban programs. It should possess its own distinctive features. A major part of its materials and activities should be drawn out of the school environment, and efforts should be directed toward the improvement of living

within the rural community."[60]

Sourlas, a Teachers' College President, is the chief advocate of the community philosophy[61] in Greece today. He claims that because the new philosophy appeals more directly to rural society - for the concept of the community is much stronger there - the full growth of the community school may be more suited to the rural culture and especially the life of the very small communities. Moreover, he says that country teachers as a whole are much more willing to accept working concepts associated with the community school.[62]

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60. The School and the Changing Pattern of Country Life, Report of the Southern Rural Life Conference sponsored by George Peabody College for Teachers, Vanderbilt University, Scarrit College, and Fisk University, 1943, p. 63.
61. This new philosophy is a real block to school consolidation.
62. O. Sourlas, The Community-Centered School, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1948, p. 198.

CHAPTER III

ORGANIZING THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

School organization must come first. It prepares the way for all the other work of the teacher and the school. The object of organization is to make the law of cooperation effective. To organize a one-room school is to bring all its classes and all the outside factors affecting school work, into such relations of harmony, union, and efficiency that the aims of education may be fully realized.

A school is well organized when the conditions for all-round child growth and development are made favorable for every properly classified pupil, and when the interest and hearty cooperation of the teacher, parents, and the community at large have been secured.

How it can be done is discussed in the following sections. For this purpose the present chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with problems whose effective solution makes for better internal school organization. Here the question of how to reduce the number of classes is taken up and discussed in some detail. In the second part an effort is made to deal with the most pressing problems facing the one-teacher school at present and relating

to its external organization. A careful survey of the professional literature revealed that they consist of difficulties having to do with irregular attendance, poor school library service, pupils' health, indifference to education on the part of the community, and lack of a suitable place in the hamlet where the teacher may room and board.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

Where all the six years' work must be done by one teacher, and where pupils are of all ages from six to thirteen, the organization and arrangement of classes must be given very careful thought or the number of grades will be so great that good, thorough work is impossible.

The special internal organization needed by one-teacher schools is different from that appropriate to graded schools. It is an organization which will reduce the number of classes, increase their size, eliminate those with one, two, or three pupils, and save time. Various plans have been devised to achieve this end. The more distinctive of them are discussed below.

COMBINATION AND ALTERNATION OF GRADES

This plan is the earliest attempt made by the Ministry of Education to set up an organization to overcome the difficulties inherent in the constitution of the school. Faced with the problem of lack of time for effective instruction

when every class met every day, the Ministry introduced alternation, combining in nearly all subjects each two grades and doing one of each two successive years' work in alternate years.

This scheme was adopted widely to solve the problem of organization. Today it is so well known that it may be well to outline some different ways in which the same idea is developed in various parts of the country.

The differences lie both in the grades combined and the subjects in which combinations are made. Thus in the course used by the Athens University Experimental School it is recommended that fourth and fifth grades form one class in geography and in health education, teaching only the fourth grade outline in one year to the two combined grades, and the fifth grade outline in the alternate year.

In other schools more combinations are made, and of different pairs of grades. First and second grades combine in language; third and fourth in history and geography; fifth and sixth grades in all subjects except arithmetic.

In most cases the alternation is of two years' outlines of the same subject, but in a few cases one subject is taught alternately with another in the two grade groups. Thus fifth and sixth grades study history and civics one year and hygiene the next; in other cases general geography alternates

with the country's geography, and physiology and hygiene with reading. In most parts of the country arithmetic is not alternated, but some schools have organized a course in which first and second, third and fourth, and fifth and sixth grades are combined in that subject.

The demonstration schools attached to the teachers' colleges use combinations which are very inclusive. Holding that alternation is not possible in the first and second grades except for nature study and that it is not always possible to alternate reading and arithmetic in the third and fourth years, they recommend combination of third and fourth grades in composition, geography and history; and fifth and sixth in all subjects with a possible exception of arithmetic in connection with teaching common and decimal fractions.

CORRELATION OF SUBJECTS

Another method of decreasing the number of classes is the teaching of two in one, making one class serve two purposes. Thus in the curriculums of some experimental schools it is directed that in all grades history be taught with reading, art, and special day programs. Often language and nature study are combined in primary grades, with the idea that conversation, composition and other forms of expression need ideas to express, and that those ideas may very practically be drawn from the experiences of children

in their natural environment. In other cases, composition is taught when topics are discussed in history or geography, and geography is taught in connection with the historic development of the country.[1]

In this connection, it may be well to state that no attempt should be made to associate units of work that have no inherent relationship. This point is made clear by the following statement of New York State in its rural school curriculum for "social studies group": "Obviously there is economy of learning for children when...geographic interpretations are closely associated with the history narrative. The extent to which the overlapping of geography and other related subjects can be utilized, therefore, makes more real to pupils those vital relationships which actually exist. There needs to be an inherent dependence of one unit upon the other, however, before such integration is justified. Merely to present a fact of geography and a fact of history side by side is not correlation. Geography may become properly human and social whenever the actual relationship between man and his environment has been established."[2]

Certainly this does not seem a radical measure. Yet often such potential relationships fail of realization because units of work from different subjects, which do have

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1. P. Moutiadou, An Experimental School, Dimitriou Press, Athens, 1939, p. 308.
2. New York State Education Department, Curriculum, Bulletin No. 2, p. 5.

established relationships, are assigned to different years of the course. In this case meaningful association is impossible except by duplication of subject matter; but this is a wastefulness which the time pressed one-teacher school cannot afford.

INTEGRATION OF SUBJECTS

Integration or fusion of allied subjects into more inclusive fields of knowledge is a further step toward organic interrelation of meanings and elimination of classes. Perhaps the best known illustration of integration is the "Social Studies" curriculum as described by the South Dakota Department of Instruction in its Social Study Courses, in which subject matter from history, geography, civil government, economics, and sociology is drawn upon in the development of instructional materials organized around social problems.[3]

This plan of organization, which has been used chiefly in the field of social studies, is employed in several recent courses by one-teacher schools in the States. Units of work, whose number is relatively small (12) and last a few days, a semester, or a whole year, are organized around such topics as Cereals as a Contribution of Farmers to Civilization, Cooperative Marketing, The Lengthening of Human Life through the Study of Bacteria, etc.[4]

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3. Similar organizations are to be found in the "General Science" or "General Mathematics" courses of many modern secondary schools.
4. South Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Social Study Courses, Study Bulletin No. 5, Pierre, S. Dak., The Department, 1932, p. 32.

The school day is divided not into a study of certain subjects but into a work or activity period, a reading period, a reports and discussion period, etc. Certain schools have built their work around projects and they have done away with subject matter divisions.

PUPILS WORK IN FLEXIBLE GROUPS

The three plans discussed above have some serious disadvantages, which have prevented their universal acceptance and have caused considerable criticism. One of the weaknesses is the fact that in these schemes the fundamental organization has been by grades. But with such a provision there is the tendency to develop and emphasize a sequence of curriculum materials. Thus it is taken for granted that certain understandings, experiences, and abilities are already developed. This, however, is not always the case. Furthermore, when alternation of grades is practised a devious progress begins with those who finish the second grade. Thus certain children have "to plunge unprepared into work that is a year beyond them" or to "spend a year doing work that is easier than what they did the year before."[5]

In addition, the traditional one-room school organiza-

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5. Evelyn Dewey, New Schools for Old, New York, E.P. Dutton and Co., 1919, p. 244-45.

tion has another serious disadvantage. Particularly the one-room school children need opportunities for socialization, for developing desirable attitudes that come from cooperation. Yet the school divides them into many separate grades. In nature such an organization does not prevail; it is an urban and relatively recent development. The experiences of some schools, however, show that we can do away with grade divisions and thus secure a better organization for the school.[6]

Recently there has been the tendency to ignore grade lines altogether. Instead the children are grouped into three divisions that fall roughly into lower, intermediate, and upper school groupings. These groups form the instructional units. The tool subjects are taught individually or in small groups.[7] This scheme is very flexible; children might be scattered through any of the arithmetic, or reading, or any other similar groups. In this way the children find their places in terms of individual needs and achievements. As a consequence, each pupil frequently participates in a number of groups in the course of a school day. It will depend upon his own resources and turn of mind.

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6. P. Montiadou, An Experimental School, Dimitriou Press, Athens, 1939, p. 112.
7. Ibid., pp. 118-24.

Groups within the instructional unit. Whatever the method of grouping the children may be, there will be wide differences in their ability, achievements and quality of experiences. The teacher will, therefore, find it advantageous to further classify the children of one section into three or four groups. At other times it will be necessary to cut across old grade lines in making new groups.

Considerations in bringing about such a subtle school organization include mainly the pupils and their problems and activities in which they wish to engage.

Children's characteristics and needs. Some children work better together than others. It may be that they are friends or they are interested in the same things. Thus they feel comfortable in working together. At any rate, a child's preference is one consideration in organizing effective working groups.

Again three or four children may have a special interest in a certain aspect of a problem. Children who are interested in the same activity can sometimes study better together than alone.

Children of different ages may be interested in the same problem. In this case each member of the group contributes to the solution of the common problem according to his ability.

Furthermore, groups are organized to meet pupils'

needs. As needs change, new working groups are formed. Age lines are disregarded when pupils are served better by cutting across ages. Thus the teacher tries to arrange for pupils to go from group to group at any time. In this way pupils are not kept in the same groups for all activities. All will depend on their individual rate of progress. Thus some members of a certain group work with the higher group, others with the lower. Consequently, the faster first-grade children who have entered the school this year are grouped with the slow children that were admitted to school last year. However, this grouping is temporary, because the children are reshuffled as they make progress. Such an arrangement makes it possible for children to go along according to their individual needs.

Activities and problems. Some problems require only a few kinds of activities. A large group can work on such problems and it is not necessary to form small groups. Other problems and enterprises may require a variety of activities and several groups, or committees to carry them out. Perhaps different children need to learn certain skills before they can complete the tasks undertaken. Again, it may be necessary that the teacher give instruction to only a few pupils at a time. In such cases arrangements are made for some pupils to carry on familiar activities independently,

while the teacher is helping a particular group to develop a new skill. Problems or projects can be undertaken in which some children do art work, others make written reports, and still others do dramatizations or develop bibliographies. In these cases, pupils arrange their chairs or desks so that groups can work on special projects and the teacher can go from group to group.

THE WHOLE SCHOOL AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT

It has already been indicated that the teacher sometimes may find it possible and desirable to combine two or all three large groups of the school in a common project. Even in schools where no grouping or even alternation of grades is ordinarily practised, it is sometimes found practicable for the total number of pupils to combine in the development of a single unit of work.[8]

Such an arrangement makes it possible to save time and to integrate the whole school on a common unit, utilizing topics and material which are sometimes centrally prepared and prescribed. An illustration of the extent to which a common theme can be outlined on various grade levels, all of which may be brought together in a group enterprise engaging the whole school, is found in Manko's Wholesome Child

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8. G. Mankos, Wholesome Child Development, Dimitriou Press, Athens, 1938, p. 29.

Development. The topics are taken from different parts of the state course and are brought together as an aid in planning a unit of work. Thus on certain occasions and especially for certain subjects like music, art, health, and sometimes, science and physical education, all the children, regardless of their instructional units, are brought together and taught as one group.[9]

Many administrators[10] and teachers in graded urban schools favor such desirable practices found in very small schools and seem willing to adopt them into their own more complex type of organization. Verbeck is a case in point:

"Only in the one-room schools where the situation has forced it, has there been much experimentation with the value of heterogeneous grouping. The results of some of this experimentation would lead one to believe that there may be more value in the heterogeneous group than we have been willing to believe, and that its possibilities of meeting the needs of individuals are greater than has been assumed."[11]

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9. Ibid., pp. 218-21.
10. Jeannette Veatch, "Why Grade-Level Groups?", Childhood Education, XXX, 1953, pp. 62-64.
11. Blanche Kent Verbeck, "Shall We Use Grade Groupings?", Educational Method, XXI, 1942, p. 166.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTALLING A GROUP ORGANIZATION

There is always resistance to change. The factors involved in it are psychological, i.e., mind sets, habits of thought and action, feelings of uncertainty in face of the new and strange, and so on. To introduce a program involving any notable change, careful planning is necessary if resistance is to be reduced to a minimum or avoided altogether.

The following steps have been successfully used by the writer in the initial installation of group organization.

a. Plan the organization and materials: What grades or sections will be grouped? Shall the entire school be grouped at first, or shall a part of it continue with the graded system? Which year of the grouping plan shall be used first? What books are available? How many more will need to be purchased? How to care for the books not used in any given year? What books and other material will each group use?

b. Decide upon the group in which each child should be placed. Here we use tests, conferences with the child, his parents, and the supervisor to secure information as to the pupil's mental ability, health, age, family complications, and special interests. The children's grade identity may be kept and recorded as usual on their report cards, though for all instructional purposes the class is identified by its group title.

c. Provide for records of the work that each child does yearly. Such records are most useful for many purposes, i.e., counseling and guidance, etc.

d. Decide upon the method by which the plan will be introduced. Some plans are instituted as a state program which all have to follow; others are introduced on the inspector's recommendation, who has had the plan tested by an interested teacher. Thus the practicability and possibilities of the new idea are established before its application.

e. Help parents, children, and school board to understand the plan.

Children, parents and school board need to see that the same quality and quantity of subject matter will be taught better because the teacher has more time to give to preparation and teaching; and that every subject is prepared every day, even though children do not meet with the teacher every day in every subject.

The teacher needs to see clearly many other implications of the plan, such as larger social contacts, fewer classes to prepare for, fewer recitations per day, conservation of time, etc. However, he needs to know how to overcome certain difficulties involved in the grouping plan. Sometimes there is a wide variety of abilities and previous background among children of one and the same instructional unit. When this is a problem the teacher must adjust the work to the needs of all by means of: various types of

questions in an assignment, use of an easier text at first in getting answers of common concern, care to make the less able or prepared feel satisfaction and success in their contribution to the group, giving younger children special help, etc. Thus the class and discussion are shared by all, but various levels of difficulty are provided in the various activities.

In general, the teacher must be very tactful in making the very first attempt for any new group organization. At the beginning let him sell the idea to the pupils; then, with their help, enlist the cooperation of the whole community through carefully prepared parent-teacher association meetings, board meetings, and personal conferences. Local agencies may also help.

The school board needs to understand about the textbooks to be bought, and to see why certain books are not always used.

f. Start the work. There may be some failures, but no plan is absolutely successful.

EXTERNAL ORGANIZATION

In part A of this chapter certain ways in which the one-room school can be better internally organized have been discussed.

Such an organization, however, no matter how necessary

and important, it may be, is not enough. It must be supplemented by an appropriate external organization as well. If the school under consideration is to achieve superior results, it will have to give much thoughtful attention to a number of other difficulties which, though not directly related to its main-teaching-function, have an obvious bearing on its efficiency. To cite but one example, if regular school attendance is not secured, the total school organization is deficient and, as a consequence, the whole school falls short of its highest possibilities. It is, therefore, the teacher's duty to overcome such obstacles and thus pave the way for the smooth functioning of the school.

How this may be accomplished effectively is shown in this part which treats only a limited number of school problems external to the classification and grouping of pupils. What precisely they are can be gathered from the following sections.

THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

Significance. The need for building up a library in the one-room school scarcely requires stress. "The library is the heart of the school" a certain school inspector used to say. It, after the pupil and the teacher, has been ranked by competent authorities as most important

in the education of the child.[12] The library is helpful in creating interests and supplying happy contacts. It is in the school library that the hamlet child can become acquainted, through the use of books, magazines, pamphlets, newspapers, picture collections, charts, etc., with the progress which the world has made as well as with the current happenings of the day.

Satisfactory learning today can no longer be confined to a single textbook. The effective one-room school teacher guides his pupils so they may consult a number of references and form their own opinion on the basis of all the data and points of view presented. In this way the library fosters a spirit of investigation on the part of the pupils instead of relying exclusively on the teacher or the textbook. Thus they are taught to weigh the information presented in one source with that presented in another. This is the way modern one-room school children learn to evaluate and test information for accuracy. Teaching of this kind is the basic foundation of efficient thinking, which is the purpose of modern education. That is why good libraries in small rural schools have always been indispensable to the educational programs offered.

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12. Charles Banks, Yearbook of University City Public Schools, University City, Mo., 1937, p. 120.

In addition to the contributions the one-teacher school library can make to the pupils' self-education, recreation, cultural enrichment, love of good reading, and intellectual growth in general, it can add enormously to the value of many group activities. This is because groups of pupils who get together for study and discussion require books in connection with their activities. Also, under such conditions adequate school library facilities encourage self-initiative and self-reliance on the part of the learner.

It is in keeping with the modern philosophy of education to elevate the school library to a position of supreme importance. Thus, the increasing emphasis on adult programs related to the school and on the use of the school as a social center give an added area where school library service can be most helpful. On the other hand, the use of the library by the pupils is thought to be an accurate criterion of the school's educational progress in general. This view is well expressed by the following statement made by the California State Curriculum Commission:

"Not only is the library the indispensable tool of modern instructional procedure, but its habitual use determines the cultural level a human being will maintain in adult life. The library is the most powerful influence in promoting the ideal of education as a process which begins

at birth and continues throughout life both in and out of school."[13]

Means of building up a library. In spite of the above-described great significance of the school library, the facilities that the one-room school can now offer in the way of books and other similar supplies are by far the weakest. Thousands of one-teacher schools have libraries with a total book list of less than one hundred ten volumes, and no other library materials.[14] With six grades in the school, this means less than twenty volumes at any particular grade level. If one were to eliminate the inappropriate books from these small libraries, the number actually available would be considerably less. This is the only type of library available to boys and girls growing up in hamlets of the country. So the one-teacher schools need to make every effort to obtain additional library service themselves.

In view of the very limited school funds, the problem now is one of suggesting effective ways and means of building up a good school library.

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13. California State Curriculum Commission, Teachers' Guide to Child Development in Intermediate Grades, Sacramento, California State Department of Education, 1936, p. 63.
14. N. Panagiotou, School Libraries, Dimitriou and Co., Athens, 1939, p. 246.

In fact it is primarily the one-room school teacher who must face the situation. To expand the library, systematize, and make it truly useful to the pupils should be one of the teacher's significant challenges. The responsibility is one in which children can share continually since it is a long-range job.

To gain some additional library service, the teacher can make special individual efforts to borrow books and materials from other libraries. It was not unusual to the writer to see a certain teacher of a one-room school unload twenty five or thirty books from a bus on Monday mornings when he arrived at his school. On Saturday evenings he visited libraries in some nearby or distant towns and found what he could for his pupils. He also used to explore the possibilities of securing boxes of books from a nearby college.

A capable teacher can also make an attack for more books in his school. If he steps out and fights for something he knows will benefit his pupils, and is able to point out the why to the school board and local people, he may be surprised at the increased interest shown in the school library. If hamlet people want for their children school library service badly enough, they will get it. But if they do not know what good service is, they will not want it. It is the teacher's duty, therefore, to arouse in the hamlet

residents a desire for a good school library service and a knowledge on their part that it will be worth what they are asked to pay.

The one-room school library may be supplemented by books and periodicals from the community. An inquiry of the writer revealed more than ten current periodicals, some books, and a number of newspapers to be available in a hamlet where he worked as one-room school teacher. When proper cooperation is established with the community, the patrons of the school are happy to lend these materials to the school. Such community material should be carefully kept and returned in as good condition as when received.

By pooling their resources with those of the community, one-room schools may have access to larger and more varied book collections than they could provide for themselves.

Where public libraries are available the one-room school can solve, to some extent, its library service problem. However, in areas where public libraries have not yet been established, rural schools can obtain many of the advantages of affiliation with a public library by cooperating with one another for the provision of library service. A group of schools working together can build up a larger and more varied book collection than each individually could afford and can secure expert management of it through the joint employment of a trained librarian. The

books available to the cooperating schools will not only be more numerous but will also be better selected and cared for, more actively used, and more frequently replaced.

Cooperative arrangements of an informal character have been worked out in a limited number of districts. Sometimes neighboring schools simply enter into an arrangement to concentrate on different types of material and to effect exchanges at convenient or stated intervals.[15]

In Agialya school inspectors have organized circulating school libraries. Dr. Pipinos estimates that such libraries increase fourfold the book resources available to the open country schools they serve.[16] School circulating libraries usually provide books for both curriculum purposes and recreational reading. They also include a collection of teachers' professional books. The central collection of books is usually housed in the office of the district school inspector. Books are circulated by a variety of means: either the teachers pick them up when they visit the office of the inspector or other school officials bring them to the schools on the occasion of their visits. Some schools may find it desirable to use truck delivery;

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15. John Natou, The School Library Problem, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1948, p. 38.
16. G. Pipinos, Circulating School Libraries, Dimitriou Press, Athens, 1950, p. 9.

a few may employ parcel post.

Thirty-eight schools in Lafon County, Switzerland, twenty-nine of which are one-teacher schools, jointly support a highly successful circulating library. Its plan of operation is extremely simple. Monthly, in accordance with a schedule worked out in advance, each school receives a collection of different books for students of different ages. At the end of the month it passes on its collection to a nearby school and receives a group of fresh titles.[17]

In a few cases the one-room school can avail itself of "travelling libraries" collections of books, sometimes numbering one hundred or more, furnished by state libraries and state library extension agencies. Such a library can be of invaluable help to the one-room school. This service is most effective when the travelling library unit makes a scheduled stop at the school. Thus children have an opportunity to select the books they like, to confer with the librarian, and to request materials and aids that groups of children may desire in furthering their school work. However, travelling libraries cannot take the place of local library facilities.

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17. Ph. Giamango, How to Build Up a Small Rural School Library, Dimitrious Press, Volos, 1952, p. 445.

The one-room school library can be supplemented in other ways as well. Much useful material in old books is worth saving. Good use may be made of valuable selections from old books by clipping the pages and binding them in folders or in loose-leaf notebook covers. If these folders are indexed, they become valuable additions to the school library. Stories, poems, informational articles, maps, and sometimes pictures are worth saving. Children can share in the work of preparing these materials.[18]

Furthermore, there are also other ways to secure much free and inexpensive material of various kinds. Guides to such materials are bulletins of state library agencies and publications of the Ministry of Education. Certain commerical and non-commercial firms, and several councils and companies issue posters, booklets, pamphlets, bulletins and folders of illustrative and informational material which, though quite free of objectionable content, is very often overlooked. Government agencies such as the Agricultural Extension Service, the Forest Service, etc., are an additional source of inexpensive library supplies which fit in with the curriculum and the real interests of pupils and create in the child an enduring love of books. It is the business

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18. This is one of the ways in which the American Community School in Beirut builds up its library.

of the school to ask for them.

The one-room school library can also take advantage of non-school sources by cooperating with parent-teacher associations, mothers' clubs, women's clubs, book of the month clubs and other organizations that may be available in the community. The Agricultural Extension Service is in a strategic position to encourage and awake the community to the necessity of better school library service. Often an agency other than the school can make more rapid initial progress, since it is not likely to be considered selfishly engaged in the promotion of a better library.

Finally, it must be stressed that a systematic book-buying program is necessary to extend and maintain the library's usefulness; otherwise the library soon becomes depleted. For the library to grow from year to year, an annual appropriation out of school funds of not less than one thousand drachmae, and as much more as the finances of the school will bear, must be devoted to the purchase of new books and magazines such as Pictures, Red Cross, etc. which are worthwhile and inexpensive. One of the poorest places to practice a foolish economy is in the school's library. As a matter of fact, there is no argument against supplying a library.

To conclude, the progress that can be made in the one-room school library depends largely on the teacher and the people in the community. Other local factors must also be taken into consideration.

Attractiveness and management. To end the discussion, a general remark about the management and attractiveness of the school library may be needed here.

The library corner can be made a comfortable and inviting place. As a matter of fact, an increasing number of one-teacher schools now recognize the importance of making the library room attractive and conducive to studying. Pupils themselves can be given responsibility for decorating the library and keeping it clean and orderly. A rug on the floor, a table where books are displayed, a comfortable chair, a bulletin board for book news, simple charts recording what books the different children have read, can be used to add to the attractiveness of a restful library corner.

To keep the school library open the teacher can obtain help from responsible interested pupil assistants who are taught how to care for books. It is the responsibility of these assistants to issue books, aid pupils who need help in looking up references, and see that a library atmosphere is maintained during the time they are in charge. The pupil

library assistants may form a club and develop standards which a pupil who wishes to become a member of the club must be able to meet.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Importance of Attendance. There are no statistics available showing the exact proportion of one-room school children of certain ages who are enrolled in this chool, yet the approximate facts are known. The number of pupils who should attend one-teacher schools is about one third of the number of large village and town children.[19] It is probably safe to say that this one third of the Nation's boys and girls are on the average quitting school with not more than three years of elementary school work.[20] This amount of education must in the long run affect them in many ways.

In the first place, regular school attendance has great civic and social importance. From the standpoint of the State, schools are maintained primarily to make better

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19. K. Argyriou, The School Attendance Problem, Hellenic Press, Volos, 1951, p. 42.
20. Ibid., p. 45.

citizens out of children. But children who attend school irregularly do not, as a rule, become the best citizens.[21] Where people believe in the philosophy of public education for all, regular attendance is not only a basis for intelligent democratic decisions, but it also makes for an enriched school achievement which has become of real importance to individual and group welfare in the society. Low or non-attendance, therefore, must in the long run spell inferiority for those affected.

In the second place, school attendance is important because of its economic aspect. The irregularity of attendance results in waste of money. The people supply buildings and school equipment which are not most profitably used. The people also employ teachers for all the pupils of school age and not for a portion of them who actually attend school regularly. But under such conditions the desirable relation of the returns to the cost of maintaining schools does not obtain. In business this could result in bankruptcy.

Besides the waste of money, the irregularity of attendance has serious pedagogical consequences. These are the undesirable effects that irregularity of attendance has

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21. A. Antonakou, Education for Citizenship, Dimitriou Press, Athens, 1949, p. 243.

on the work of both individual pupils and the school as a whole. Poor attendance has been found to be one of the most serious handicaps for the teaching work of the school.[22] If a pupil does not attend school regularly, he falls behind in his work and either he will fail of promotion, or he will drop out of the school, or the teacher will have to give him extra time and special help, frequently at the expense of other pupils. But such conditions are certainly not conducive to the best school work, and thus the school falls short of its highest possibilities.

It is estimated that on the average a hamlet child attends school for 4½ months per year.[23] It would require, therefore, about twelve years to complete the elementary course at the rate of attendance now obtaining. That is to say, on this basis an average pupil entering the one-room school at the age of six would receive his graduation certificate at the age of eighteen years. If he should go on through a high school at the same rate, he would have earned his gymnasium diploma by the time he was thirty. Of course this is preposterous, and makes obvious the necessity to improve the situation.

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22. Argyriou, p. 64.
23. T. Antonios, The Compulsory School Attendance Law, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1945, p. 78.

But before turning to the steps necessary to remedy the situation, it may be well to investigate the causes of low school attendance. Through such an approach to the problem one is in a better position to recommend certain possible solutions that might be more effective than others in bringing about desirable results.

Causes of low attendance. Several factors may operate together to bring about poor attendance. In fact, the causes of low attendance vary so greatly with different hamlets and with different sections of the country that it may be impossible to mention all of them here. The following, however, are believed to be those which are most widespread and most serious in their effects.

According to Pinakidis, who has made a study of the problem, hamlet children show poor school attendance because the curriculum is unsuitable and because it does not give particular attention to the individual child. Thus parents are indifferent for they feel that the school does not provide the child with what he actually needs.[24] Moreover, unsatisfactory attendance is often due to failure in examinations, or to the enforced repetition of a grade, or to the

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24. P. Pinakidis, The Low School Attendance Problem, Elevtheriou and Co., Athens, 1954, p. 88.

competitive spirit of the school. Low attendance because of spiritless and uninspiring teaching is not uncommon.[25]

Furthermore, through frequent changes of the teacher, poor classification and poor attendance, the one-room school pupils have often been forced to go over and over the same ground, without any reference to whether they were really ready to advance or not.[26] In other cases careless grading has placed children in studies for which they were utterly unprepared, and from which they could get nothing but discouragement and a feeling that the school demands more than the child can give.

In still other cases, absenteeism is often due to the fact that parents require their children's services especially during the harvest seasons.

Some additional factors, according to Pipinos, are lack of participation in extra class activities, coming from a home broken by separation, or divorce, or death of father or mother or both, membership in family with relatively little education, and indifference of parents and children alike to the necessity for schooling.[27] As a matter of

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25. O. Photinos, The Concept of Competition in Education, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1948, p. 9.
26. B. Alexiou, A New Curriculum for Small Schools, Euthymiou and Co., Athens, 1949, p. 84.
27. N. Pipinos, Making School More Attractive, Athens, Elevtheriou and Co., Athens, 1939, p. 74.

fact, this last factor is perhaps the most serious of all and it is, therefore, primarily here that the school should turn to deal with the problem.

How to improve school attendance. At present there is clearly a pressing need for ways and means of improving the low attendance situation. The following are some methods which can be used with success in increasing the school-holding power.

To begin with, a capable and devoted teacher with his personal influence can do much to improve school attendance. The things he can do, among others, are writing of notes to absent pupils and their parents, and visiting the homes to see why the children are absent. On such occasions he talks to children and their parents about the value of courses offered in school and their relation to success on the farm and in future life. The teacher can also give the truant extra time and special attention, thus helping him to catch up with the class and not to feel the need to drop out. If the teacher succeeds in proving himself to be a person who really cares enough about the children and wants to help them, he will make a good start in solving the low attendance problem.

The compulsory attendance law in the country is

evidence that the state wants every one to be in school until age 14 or until completion of elementary school. To keep children in school, however, the teacher should do more than use the law. In certain cases, it is true, it is necessary to have recourse to law for the purpose; but most frequently a more constructive approach to the problem is to be preferred. This approach calls for an analysis of the reasons why pupils attend school irregularly and for the exertion of effort to remove or reduce the causes. If the truant or the prospective drop-out believes that school is not worthwhile and that it does not give particular consideration to him as an individual, there is need for the teacher to analyze carefully the school's program and organization and pay more attention to the needs and capacities of children. If the home does not see the importance of regular attendance, there is opportunity for the teacher to try to change this point of view through improving the school work and through other means discussed in the following paragraphs. If poor health is the significant factor, it is obvious that the teacher in close cooperation with the community must see to it and remove the causes. If absenteeism is due to the fact that parents require, as they often do, their children's services especially during the harvest seasons, the teacher may fix the school holidays to coincide with these seasons.

Moreover, the teacher must constantly be alert to the circumstances affecting daily attendance. Logically this implies that, in his efforts to do something about increasing school-holding power, the teacher must work with the potential truant or with the child who is likely to drop out. To this end continued development of improved guidance practices employed by the teacher contribute significantly. This is because preventive measures are preferable to corrective ones.

Making the school interesting is another effective means of improving school attendance. This can be done through the formation of student organizations in the school, such as health militias, literary societies, musical clubs, boys' and girls' clubs, etc. The school can be comfortable and attractive in other ways as well. The class work can be enjoyable and useful. The surroundings (school yard and garden, playgrounds, etc.) can also be improved. Children attend, more willingly, that school which presents a more inviting appearance. This is because, to repeat the exact words of a businessman, "Attractiveness and neatness draw customers".

The undesirable consequences of poor attendance can also be averted by the help of the parent-teacher association. Its great importance lies mainly in its effectiveness

in overcoming parental indifference to school attendance more directly than any other means. The association can perform many specific services to keep school attendance high. To this end they secure the cooperation of the school board and civic clubs. Also they can show movies to persuade the community of the values of school attendance. Members may individually talk to parents, if necessary. Such an association acquaints the patrons with the work of the school and awakens a widespread interest in it. Indifferent parents catch the school spirit from their interested neighbors and from being asked to help in matters having to do with the improvement of school attendance. If certain parents in the community are unable to supply their children with books and other school articles necessary for satisfactory school attendance, the P.T.A. pays for them. A system of social security benefits can also be established under the leadership of the association in order to assist the lower-income families overcome additional difficulties involved in keeping children at school.[28] Furthermore, the association can make arrangements for the provision of school meals, free clothing, medical care and other welfare services

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28. This is the way New Zealand has, to some extent, solved the problem under consideration. For further reference, see UNESCO, Compulsory Education in New Zealand, S.A.I. BEL., Paris, 1952, pp. 49-50.

that contribute significantly to keeping daily attendance high.[29] In fine, it may be safe to say that the P.T.A. is highly instrumental in establishing a close tie of mutual interest and helpfulness between teacher and community which must in the long run make for satisfactory school attendance.

Some teachers have been able to improve poor attendance in graded schools by means of attendance contests. These are of two types: 1. contests between different classes in the same school, and 2. contests between two or more schools. Interclass contests, however, should not be used because, especially in the one-room school, they create an unfriendly school spirit and they may make children rejoice in the absence of members of rival groups.

Still other teachers have in some places offered prizes and diplomas with the hope of bettering attendance, but such incentives do not reach the source of difficulty. The remedy must finally lie in a fundamental change of attitude toward the school and its opportunities. Good attendance must spring from interest in the school work and a feeling of its practical use rather than from any arti-

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29. Wherever these aids and inducements to parents have been tried out, they have proved to be highly effective in attracting children to school. Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and other countries are cases in point. For further reference, see, UNESCO, Compulsory Education in the Arab States, Drukkerij Holland, N.V., Amsterdam, 1956, pp. 47-48, and, UNESCO, Compulsory Education in New Zealand, S.A.I, BEL., Paris, 1952, pp. 50-51.

ficial incentives.

COMMUNITY INDIFFERENCE TO EDUCATION

Indifference to the work of the school is the rule rather than the exception in the hamlets. It manifests itself in a number of ways. Chief among these are poor attendance, failure to cooperate in movements for school improvement, efforts to use the school for personal advantages, etc. All members of the community may not show these characteristics, but when they are generally manifested, it is clear that the community at large does not support the school.

One step to remedy this situation is for the teacher to scrutinize and carefully evaluate the efforts he exerts in the classroom and on the playgrounds to make the school activities of real value to the pupils. A certain school inspector's most favorable advice to the teachers under his guidance was: "Teach through your students to the community". As a matter of fact, such an opinion, that is based on the assumption that "the pupils are the teacher's loudspeakers", expresses an ideal which if tactfully followed, will often win an entire community to the support of the school. In order to do this effectively the teacher must not merely know how to teach, but he must understand the hamlet in

which he works. This demands real community study and appraisal on the part of the teacher.[30]

A second remedial step is the formation of some organization, such as Parent-Teachers Association, a community club, a mothers' club, a parents study class, and the like. In many cases the P.T.A. or community club precede the parents' study class in point of time. The first step in organization may be difficult in some hamlets, but a small nucleus will make the start possible. The matter of utmost importance is for the teacher to have a real service to suggest which the proposed organization can render. Unfortunately, sometimes the teacher eager for the credit of having organized the community,[31] has no clear-cut program in mind, nor worthwhile objectives to attain. The first aims should be easily attainable and attractive to the community. Money for the purchase of books for the school library and the poor pupils, the purchase of a school flag, means for securing clothing for the needy children of the district, are a few needs which are quite generally found and attract public attention. A record of each achievement

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30. K. Panagou, The Teacher Studies the Community, Soloniki, Argyriou and Co., 1949, pp. 445-48.
31. G. Kalliafas, Organizations Sponsored by the School, Athens, Elevtheriou Press, 1945, p. 204.

must be kept in order that the plans and results of one year may serve as a stimulus for the next year. The matters to be stressed in all press reports are what results have been attained, and not who has been elected to this or that office.[32] Factionalism and jealousy are frequent causes of discord in small communities, and too much personal mention tends to develop both.

If the district has a standardization plan, it will often constitute an excellent point of attack in order to overcome community indifference. An effort to attain a standard ranking draws a portion of its appeal from the rivalry reaction. The hamlet residents are led to act upon "We ought not let others excell us". This may not be a high type of motive, but sometimes it is effective; it starts community pride in cooperative achievement for the good of the school. Such a spirit, once started, can be kept growing and directed into more worthy channels.

When the whole hamlet begins to take an interest in its school, it is a good beginning. The door of progress is now open, where it had previously been closed. When community indifference gives place to interest, an able teacher can lead the people to work for the achievement of higher objectives, such as emphasis upon the essential

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32. Ch. Xenopoulos, School-Press Cooperation, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1938, p. 215.

value of education rather than upon its superfluous elements, broader training and higher ideals on the part of the pupils, a more effective type of school control, etc. All of these and other worthwhile objectives may be gradually developed in the public mind under the careful guidance of teachers with faith, vision, and perseverance. Since the school, as Dr. Miniadis says, cannot turn out worthy citizens in an atmosphere of indifference to education, it becomes the major task of the teacher to modify this atmosphere so that the desirable goals may be achieved.[33]

THE HEALTH PROBLEM

Importance of the problem. Health is basic to happiness and success in life and to the realization of one's potentialities. Consequently, it is one of the most important areas for the one-room school's attention. If the school neglects it, it will inevitably devitalize its own program to some extent.[34] "Sick and underpar children cannot fully benefit from the services of the schools."[35]

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33. R. Miniadis, Education for Citizenship, Iliadis and Co., Volos, 1938, p. 173.
34. There is a close and demonstrable relationship between health and scholarship. See, E.L. Kilpatrick, Guideposts for Rural Youth, Technology Press, Cambridge, 1941, Chapt. VI.
35. National Education Association of the U.S.A., The White House Conference on Rural Education, N.E.A., Washington, D.C., 1945, p. 189.

Psychology tells us that one's mental ability is affected by his physical condition. That is to say, a sound mind is in a sound body. But there are also some other reasons why the school must concern itself with the entire problem of health. Pupils' notions about health and their physical well-being are dependent on what they learn and do in school, not merely on home and community conditions. Moreover, any school, but especially the one-room school which is to be found in hamlets where health knowledge and services are not readily available, has a great responsibility to its pupils to do its best to teach the fundamentals of healthful living and to improve their health conditions and experiences.

First of all, the one-room school must interest itself in community conditions affecting health, for health cannot be treated as an individual matter. Moreover, in diagnosing pupils' health condition and in getting remedial work done, the school must enlist the support of parents and community health agencies. In planning its health program, the school must take account of the concepts of health which pupils have acquired as a result of their preschool and out-of-school training. Finally, if the one-room school is to do its duty of educating pupils for life, it cannot ignore community conditions which demand improvement.

What to do about the health problem. But what can the one-room school do about the health problem? Fortunately it is in a strategic position to do much about it. Good health teaching enlightens the pupils about health and breaks down prejudices and superstitions so prevalent in hamlet communities. Especially helpful are the desirable health experiences pupils obtain in school in planning nutritious and well-balanced meals. In Virginia every classroom teacher maintains a file of proper health literature for circulation to pupils.[36] The school may also enlist the cooperation of parent-teacher groups to assume responsibility for carrying health education outside its four walls and playgrounds.

There is an increasing number of one-room schools which have tried hard to make the adult population aware of conditions that adversely affect children's health and of inadequacies in health facilities. They have also arranged programs to improve conditions. There is no doubt, that, to some extent, the bad health conditions are economic in origin and, therefore, beyond the small school's control. But to a large degree they result from ignorance and lack of health safeguards of various kinds.

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36. N.E.A., Newer Types of Instruction in Small Rural Schools, Yearbook 1938, Washington, D.C., N.E.A., Department of Rural Education, 1938, p. 40.

However, the school can do much to ameliorate the conditions. Proof of these assertions is furnished by the actual results of school-initiated health programs in a number of places. In Bullock County, Georgia, where 60 per cent of the children were found to be suffering from hookworm, the incidence of this disease was reduced by more than half, to 27.7 per cent, in a-three-and one-half-year period as a result of a program launched under school leadership. This was done by sincere cooperation among rural teachers, parents, pupils, state health department, local physicians and nurses. The P.T.A. members worked to arouse the community to the need of improvements.[37]

The school health program. What should be the component phases of a one-room school health program? Education in the Fourty-Eight States names five: 1. healthful school environment, 2. mental hygiene as reflected in pupil-teacher relationships, 3. health protection through medical inspection and remedial work, 4. health instruction by means of materials related to the child and his environment and, 5. physical education.[38]

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37. Community Organization for Health Education: A Report of a Committee of the Public Health Education Section and the Health Officers Section of the American Public Health Association, Cambridge, Technology Press, 1941, pp. 11-18.
38. Payson Smith, et. al., Education in the Fourty-Eight States, Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, 1940, p. 17.

There is some overlapping among these points. However, this scheme provides a convenient framework for discussing the health activities of the one-room school.

The one-room school is handicapped in providing an environment that contributes to the child's well being. Yet much can be done to ameliorate the situation. The aid of the public health agency may be enlisted in the improvement of drinking and waste disposal facilities. In the absence of a sanitary officer the help of local doctors and the county medical association can be solicited. The doctors can help arouse public opinion to the need for improving school health conditions.

Periodic rechecks (of water supply, sanitary toilet facilities, etc.) are essential. Pupils can be given a great deal of responsibility not only for keeping the environment clean but also for making improvements in it. An easy way to accomplish it is for the teacher to direct children's attention to school environment deficiencies and then encourage them to make plans for making it more healthful, attractive and comfortable. In a certain one-room school pupils constructed such things as board draft-deflectors, shades and curtains which are important in improving the appearance of the classroom.[39] Such activities have

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39. S. Kostakidis, The Classroom, Elevtheriou and Co., Athens, 1945, p. 162.

double value: they give pupils an increased awareness of the effects of their physical environment and they show them how, through self-initiative, they can improve it.

An increasing stress is being placed on the health of the teacher, which is an important part of the child's school environment and definitely exerts an influence on his well-being. This is why the Government awards teaching certificates only to those who are healthy and requires school personnel to have periodic physical examinations. Teachers' personalities and emotional balance receive particular attention. It is recognized that "to protect the child against harmful emotional and psychological disturbances in the classroom is no less important than to protect him against bad physical conditions. The former are more subtle and often more dangerous than the latter."[40] Especially in one-room schools the teacher must know how to safeguard pupils' mental health, that is to say, how to make them feel comfortable and secure. This is because in a hamlet, more often than not, there are no guidance specialists, school psychologists, psychiatrists, or child guidance clinics to help teachers and pupils overcome their difficulties. Through

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40. Payson Smith, et. al., Education in the Fourty-Eight States, Washington, D.C., Dept. of Labor, Children's Bureau, 1949, p. 83.

continual contact with proper professional books and through a genuine love for the child, the teacher is helped to prevent the development of feelings of inadequacy and failure which are really detrimental to the child.

Health protection cannot be undertaken by the one-room school without the cooperation of other commuhity agencies and the understanding and support of parents. In most places the greatest amount of health assistance can come from the public health agency. However, child health work in Mesa County, Colorado, depends to a large extent on health clinics sponsored by the P.T.A.'s.[41] Immunization and vaccination programs can be undertaken by the school with the help of local doctors; necessary materials can be furnished by the Red Cross agency or by the state health department. The fees are nominal and even the poor can pay them. Traveling clinics can be organized by more than one single-teacher school to solve the dental examination problem.[42] The school may also enter into contracts with doctors and dentists for specified programs of service. In view of the fact that annual physical examinations have not proved to be of real value,[43] it is more advisable to substitute

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41. E.L. Kilpatrick, Guideposts for Rural Youth, Technology Press, Cambridge, 1941, pp. 101-8.
42. P. Stephanou, Travelling Clinics, Dimitriou and Co., Athens, 1938, p. 305.
43. Ibid., p. 208.

thorough examinations at two- or three-year intervals for the superficial annual examinations.

Daily health inspections are of unusual importance in small schools, for if the spread of a disease is checked at schools, it is often prevented in the whole community. Since most one-room school have neither doctors nor nurses in regular attendance, it is essential that the teacher familiarize himself with the symptoms of the common diseases of children. It is also essential that the one-room school teacher have some knowledge of first aid.

Health examinations must result in appropriate remedial action. The school can notify parents of the defects and diseases revealed by inspections and follow up each case. The teacher can also communicate personally with parents. It is also the duty of the school to refer the poor children who need remedial work to an agency which is in a position to help them. In other cases welfare organizations pay the fees charged for the needy children's medical treatment. In Callinisky County, parents pay small monthly fees which entitle their children to complete health service. This scheme is advisable.

The one-room school has many opportunities in giving health instruction. The surroundings suggest many themes for meaningful discussions on health. The effect of en-

vironment on people's well-being need not be a bookish subject for the hamlet child. In making pupils aware of broad aspects of the health problem, the one-room school may use local happenings and activities, such as epidemics, swamp-drainage projects, etc.

One-room school activities often provide health instruction and foster the development of good health habits (planning for the school lunch, handwashing and eating, rest periods, keeping washroom and toilet facilities clean).

"Despite the fact that rural children enjoy the benefits of sunshine and fresh air, they tend to develop into adults with more physical defects than city children".[44] Physical education, therefore, which contributes to building up a strong body has important values for rural children, even though they get a great deal of exercise and outdoor life. Many types of physical education activities contribute to well-rounded physical development which, to some extent, is not found in rural youth. The mastery of physical skills has important psychological results as well. Finally, because one-room school children are relatively isolated, games, group activities, and team sports are perhaps of particular value to them.

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44. N.E.A., The White House Conference on Rural Education, N.E.A., Washington, D.C., 1945, p. 189.

In spite of these facts, generally speaking, physical education has been neglected in the one-room school.[45] Even where offered, children of all ages are grouped together simply because they happened to have a free period at the same time.[46] Scholastic overemphasis has also blocked a good physical education program.

The one-room school through better planning and relatively inexpensive improvements may provide facilities for expanded physical education programs. Pupils are grouped together in accordance with their age, interests, and abilities, so that they get the fullest benefit from their physical education.

In some places in the States different inducements are used to promote the health of children. The award of blue-ribbons is one means of encouraging children to follow good health practices and of stimulating parents to immunize them and correct whatever remediable defects they may have.[47] The so-called "health-weeks" which are common in other countries may be observed by the school.

THE TEACHER'S COTTAGE

The problem. The problem of finding satisfactory

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45. P. Ioannou, Physical Education, Dimitracos and Co., Athens, 1939, p. 408.
46. Ibid., p. 309.
47. For a further reference, see, Tennessee Department of Public Health, Tennessee's Blue-Ribbon Program, Nashville, 1935.

places where the teacher may room and board, as we have seen, is a serious one in many hamlets. At present it is extremely difficult for the teacher to procure a suitable lodging and boarding place. Either people, in rare cases, are so well-to-do that they do not care to bother with the teacher, or they are so poorly housed that he experiences nothing but discomfort and inconvenience. Very often the teacher has little or no privacy. The room is frequently unheated in winter time, so that if there is to be any studying it has to be done in the family living room amid annoyance and interruption. Under these most unsatisfactory domestic conditions it is not surprising that many capable teachers hesitate to remain in the community for a long time; others are forced to go to a neighboring large village or town to obtain a suitable boarding place; still others live in the school's office or school store, if there is any. Also, it is not uncommon for the teachers to dwell in improvized buildings which are inadequate both for their personal needs and the status they should occupy in the local society. It is because of circumstances of this kind that some of the one-room school teachers feel that they are undertaking penance, from which they will only escape when they can secure transfer to a town.

Possible solutions. The problem now is to find out what can be done to improve the situation described above.

The difficulty can be overcome in some cases by an appeal to certain people of the hamlet to open their homes to the teacher, even though doing so would result in more inconvenience than profit.

A better solution for this problem is for the district to own a teacher's residence. In other cases the community will find it practicable to rent a small home for the teacher. Still in other cases it may be more desirable for the people to buy a home for the teacher.

One of the most common plans, and perhaps the best one, is for the community to erect a teacher's cottage on the school grounds or outside and furnish it with everything needed to make it a comfortable home. Thus in other countries of Europe the teacher's home is as much a part of the one-room school plant as is the classroom. This is true in Germany, France, Scandinavia, Switzerland, etc. This movement to house the teacher is also to be found in the States and in Australia.[48]

For the one-teacher school the Americans Cyr and Linn[49] present plans used in California for adding living

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48. John M. Braithwaite and Edward J. King, Multiple Class Teaching, n.p., n.d., p. 23.
49. Frank W. Cyr, Henry H. Linn, et. al., Planning Rural Community School Buildings, New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949, pp. 144-45.

accommodations to the school building. One of these plans includes a bedroom, a bath, a kitchen, and a closet. Another plan, in addition to these facilities, provides a living room in which provision is made for cooking and serving meals. Such a place where the teacher may have what is, in effect, his own home, has real advantages in that he can entertain his friends without fear that he is disturbing others. However, isolation has psychological and sometimes physical hazards. These must be weighed. Building a small home for the teacher near another home, outside the school grounds, may be preferable to having it attached to the school building. Here the problem is one of keeping the teacher from living too much to himself. A teacher's cottage not attached to the school building is to be preferred, because, as Dr. Poulis suggests, "a teacher's family needs privacy; the school children require freedom. The playground should not be encroached upon, neither should the sanitary appliances be used in common by the school and the home."[50] The "teacherage", as such a residence is sometimes called, need not be an elaborate or expensive building.

Another solution to the problem under consideration may be the following. In some cases where a new schoolhouse

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50. D. Poulis, One-Room School Houses and Grounds, Athens, Dimitracos and Co., 1936, p. 84.

has been erected, the old one can be remodeled and converted into a home for the teacher.

Instead of a cottage, a second story may be constructed for this purpose, thus making it financially easier.

In the Porter Community School, the genius of the teacher converted an old tenant house - half a mile from the school - into a pretty little teacherage where she and her mother lived. The school garden near the cottage - which contained a variety of wholesome vegetables formerly little known in the average grain-growing and stock-raising sections of Missouri - not only supplemented the teacher's income but also it was used as an experimental plat for the school.[51]

Why provide a teacherage? The value in the practice of providing a home for the teacher cannot be overestimated. "Wherever it has been tried it has given excellent results."[52] The principal advantages claimed for it are the following:

1. It is a means to procure and retain good teachers, determined to settle down to a life-work in the hamlet and to give the people the best of which they are capable. Thus teachers are attracted by the prospect of having a comfortable,

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51. Evelyn Dewey, New Schools for Old, E.P. Dutton and Co., New York, 1919, p. 74.
52. Poulis, p. 124.

enjoyable home life, and once they are settled in such a home they are likely to want to remain.

2. By virtue of having his residence in the district the teacher acquires a deeper interest in the welfare of both the school and the community. He becomes a part of the community and consequently has a greater influence and power for good. He identifies himself with the neighborhood activities and is in a better position to take a leading part in every movement whose purpose is the improvement of the school or of the community in general. In fine, the teacher's cottage means much for all concerned.[53]

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53. In Denmark there is a legal requirement that every small rural school have ample housing facilities, see Poulis, loc.cit.

CHAPTER IV

TEACHING IN THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

Efficient teaching still remains an important criterion of the proper function of the school. In fact, school and systematic instruction are, as yet, thought to be inseparable. It becomes then the responsibility primarily of the teacher to see that he employs constantly improved instructional techniques in the conduct of the one-room school.

Some of the paramount issues which merit thoughtful attention in considering and promoting sound ways of teaching in the above-mentioned school are contained in the following questions:

How is the teacher to install the unit type of teaching?

What is to guide him in selecting desirable learning experiences?

What other factors, if properly made use of, may contribute to good teaching?

These and other related issues, such as making the daily program, will be discussed in this chapter.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNITS OF WORK

WHAT A UNIT OF WORK IS

There is some difficulty in understanding what is meant by the phrase "unit of work" in teaching. In fact, it means different things to different people. According to Billet, there are ten of these meanings:

1. Project method
2. Problem method
3. Differentiated assignments
4. Long-view assignments
5. Contract plan
6. Laboratory plan
7. Individualized instruction
8. Morrison plan
9. Winnetka technique
10. Dalton plan[1]

However, an analysis of these widely different conceptions reveals certain common characteristics which Wofford summarizes as follows:

1. Learning experiences are planned over a long period of time.

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1. Roy O. Billet, Directed Learning and the Unit Assignment, N.E.A., Washington, 1933, p. 511.

2. The organization is general

3. Opportunities are present for the care of individual differences.[2] A fourth characteristic probably is the fact that no great emphasis is laid on grade and subject matter divisions.

What then is a unit of work? It is "an organization of various activities, experiences, and types of learning around a central theme, problem, or purpose, developed cooperatively by a group of pupils under teacher leadership; involves planning, execution of plans, and evaluation of results."[3]

ADVANTAGES OF THE UNIT TYPE OF TEACHING

There are certain advantages claimed for this new way of teaching especially when applied to the one-room school. The units of work reduce the number of classes and integrate subject matter by relating it to a meaningful purpose. As a result of this much time is saved and class periods become longer. Through group work the teaching units or "centers of interest", as they are sometimes called, also provide desirable social experiences that often are badly needed by the isolated one-teacher school.[4]

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2. Kate V. Wofford, Teaching in Small Schools, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1947, p. 121.
3. Carter V. Good, ed., Dictionary of Education, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1945, p. 436.
4. For more general advantages of the unit plan, see Raleigh Shorling, Student Teaching, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York, 1940, p. 93.

SITUATIONS SUGGESTING UNITS OF WORK[5]

Every good unit begins in a real life situation which gives the teacher and pupils natural leads of approach. Based on students' needs, interests and ambitions, a unit starts in different ways.

In the primary group a discussion of farming may start through conversation and activities dealing with farm animals. Pets at school may also serve as a starting point. A school fair of farm products may be another opportunity to motivate the children for a study of farming in the hamlet.

In the intermediate group a unit on farming may start while the children talk about the ways in which they help their parents at home, such as milking, feeding domestic animals, planting potatoes, etc. Thus the following questions are natural: "Is this kind of work done on all farms?" "Why do we have to do this work?" "What becomes of the crops we sell?"

The advanced group is probably more interested in the more complex difficulties of farming that concern their parents. The boys and girls often assist in marketing the crops. Through this they can realize that there are serious

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5. Genevieve Bowen, in her Living and Learning in a Rural School, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1946, pp. 224-32, has shown how to develop units in which the students work both as separate groups and as a whole school. The materials of this course have contributed partially to the following discussion.

problems of farm production and farm prices. These they study at school and relate them to the problems of their parents. Questions such as these "Does farming pay?" set the children to thinking about the economic problems confronting farmers today. During vocational guidance periods the pupils have also many opportunities to talk about the desirability of farming as a vocation.

IS THE UNIT WORTH THE TIME IT WILL TAKE?

Before starting a unit, the teacher tries to answer this question: "Does the unit hold any potentialities for the children concerned?" Thus he wants to be sure if the unit is worth the time and effort of the pupils for whom its study is intended. The following are some of the criteria that can help the one-room school worker to evaluate the unit:

Child purpose - Does the unit grow out of some genuine situation and include a purpose or purposes for its accomplishment?

Objectives - Does the proposed unit contribute to the general educational objectives?

Variety - Does it appear to afford a wide variety of activities in and out of school?

Success - Is the unit sufficiently adapted to the children's ability range and to

the school's limitations of teaching and learning supplies to promise success and stimulate growth in its accomplishment?

Freshness - Is the proposed unit likely to afford learnings not adequately provided in the out-of-school life or not already experienced in the previous school life of the children?

Leads - Does the unit seem likely to carry the children into a study of other profitable units of work?[6]

A GENERAL PLAN FOR ORGANIZING UNITS

In the development of units of work Wofford has suggested the following plan:

1. Enlist the cooperation of children and decide upon a problem.
2. Formulate objectives to be attained.
3. Work out a plan to introduce the unit.
4. List children's experiences related to the unit.
5. Outline the subject matter to be covered together with its possible correlations with other subject matter.
6. Make a bibliography that will help in the study of the unit.

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6. For another set of criteria, see James L. Mursell, Developmental Teaching, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1949, New York, p. 267.

7. List the outcomes expected, such as understandings, attitudes, knowledge of subject matter, and abilities and skills.[7]

HOW TO DEVELOP UNITS IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

If a unit appears to have desirable qualities, it should probably be taught. To do this the teacher strengthens the situation by various means: referring the children to books, magazines, or pictures; suggesting further stimulating problems and questions, etc. Thus the children are led to set up an inclusive purpose which can serve as a center for many activities.

There are different ways in which units may be developed. The line that a particular unit should follow depends upon the children's interests and advancement; their over-all ability; their background; their knowledge of how to work; and the school's equipment.

In the primary group a unit of work should always be centered around concrete and life-like activities. For example, in a farm unit which starts with a fair, the group may decide to bring exhibits of flowers, vegetables and pets. They may build a farm on the playground. They construct farmhouses, divide their "land" into fields and form many

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7. Kate V. Wofford, Teaching in Small Schools, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1947, pp. 121-25.

family groups. Thus they engage in many kinds of play with their farm and learn a lot.

There are various ways to develop a unit of work in the intermediate group. It may be organized around a concrete activity; or it may become a purely intellectual problem. But more often than not, it is a mixture of both these ways. Thus treating a unit on farming, these children may visit farms in their own community. Also, with the help of books, etc., the tour imaginatively includes other farms in Greece or in other countries. Or the approach may be somewhat more intellectual. In this case they make a list of questions relating to farming and by observation and interviews collect facts to answer these questions. By reading or correspondence they can extend their survey to include distant lands. Large problems concerning different kinds of farms should be divided into smaller ones for study.

A unit of work on farming carried out in the upper group will probably be centered around some more difficult issues related to farming. "What makes farmers poor?" is an example of such problems. To give answers to such questions the group will have to gather much information from many and different sources and consider carefully many aspects of farming:

Why do we not have more laws to help the farmers?

What is tariff and why do farmers talk about it so much?

Do farmers in other lands have troubles like ours?

By trying to answer these and similar questions, one-room school children are not expected to give a final solution and to find a way of solving farm problems. However, they can realize that the problem is there. In facing it together they can also acquire wholesome ways of cooperation.

To the achievement of these objectives many procedures employed by the advanced group materially contribute to class discussions; presenting information by charts, graphs and diagrams cooperatively prepared; collecting pictures and clippings; arranging for interviews with people that can help; inviting to school certain persons to speak; keeping correspondence; etc.

ACTIVITIES OF VARYING DEGREES OF DIFFICULTIES

As shown above, the same topic may be studied by any group of children if the work is adjusted to the group's ability level. But it becomes the teacher's responsibility to guide the children's learning activities in order that they may be suitable for the group. For example, in acquiring the concepts of time and space, the primary group studies largely the here and the now; the intermediate group continues studying what is nearest in time and place, but they also extend their efforts to some study of other times and places; the advanced group studies other places and other times probably more than the here and the now.

UNITS FOR THE ENTIRE SCHOOL

To combine the whole school on a single large unit of work has several advantages. It lessens teacher preparation and concentrates the energy of all concerned. The various groups stimulate one another by working together. The integration of all group activities in a single unit affords more class time. Also, the use of a common focus of interest on all group levels makes possible economy of the teacher's time. The teacher's work with one group helps him with his work with another group of children. These are some of the reasons why "The plan of having all grades work with the same subject at the same time is being more widely used."[8]

Obviously all-group units cannot be organized for all the activities that need to be carried out by the various groups. In fact, most units will be developed by single groups working separately rather than by more groups working together. However, when a situation of interest to all arises, the teacher should make the most of it.

Before the development of an all-group unit the teacher evaluates it. For this purpose he applies the criteria already suggested, always thinking not of one group, but of the entire school.

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8. Ernest Hilton, Rural School Management, American Book Co., New York, 1949, p. 88.

The second step is to see that all the activities to be undertaken mean the greatest possible growth for all the pupils involved in the enterprise. He plans the parts of the units for the separate groups, so that each of them may perform tasks that can be easily carried out.

After the preliminary planning the teacher enlists the cooperation of the total number of pupils to develop the unit. The particular forms this joint planning takes differ with the gradual growth of the unit. They depend upon teachers' and students' suggestions and reactions. Other factors, such as availability of materials and means of activities at the time when the children need them, may be equally important.

Preliminary and later planning on the part of the teacher is necessary, because it discovers the scope and potentialities of the enterprise and makes it possible for meeting the needs and abilities of the various groups.[9]

OBJECTIONS TO UNIT TEACHING

If acceptance of the unit teaching method is to be wide, some minor objections to its introduction especially in the one-room school will have to be adequately met.

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9. For a sample of units for all groups together, see Genevieve Bowen, Living and Learning in a Rural School, The Macmillan Co., 1946, New York, pp. 229-30.

There are certain authors who hold that installing the unit plan of teaching calls inevitably for a superior teacher.[10] They doubt if an average teacher accustomed to the old "recitations" system can develop units of instruction, in which activities play an important role.

To others, experience shows that the teacher can make use of the teaching method under consideration, if he really cares enough and wants to enough. Supervisory interpretation and guidance are usually necessary. "A good teacher, however, who possesses faith in herself and has initiative can achieve success in this type of work without such aids."[11] It seems that much depends on the teacher himself.

Another objection to initiating a unit plan of teaching is that discipline is more difficult in the new regime.

Unit teaching as such offers no more disciplinary problems than teaching in the traditional way. One may go even further and say that under the new type of teaching disciplinary problems may decrease in number. This might be explained by the fact that the old system controls behavior by exerting coercion. The new depends chiefly on interest as the mainspring of action; but interested children

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10. Herbert J. Klausmeier, et. al., Teaching in the Elementary School, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1956, p. 132.
11. Charles D. Lewis, The Rural Community and Its Schools, American Book Co., New York, 1937, p. 154.

have no time for misbehavior. It also depends on a sense of personal responsibility for what one says or does. Rules and regulations are not imposed on the children, but they are made by them. Moreover, the new system eliminates certain important elements of disorder common in the old, i.e., discouragement, sense of failure and the mischief-making propensities of the quick child who got his lessons done before time. Under the unit teaching regime the slow or dull child is always given a chance to make a contribution to the group and thus to experience a feeling of success. On the contrary, the quick child has much more to do not to "keep him out of mischief", but to develop his potentialities. So the chances for misconduct are fewer.

RURAL COMMUNITY LIFE IS A GUIDE IN SELECTING PROPER LEARNING EXPERIENCES

What to teach is perhaps the one-teacher school's number one problem, if this institution is adequately to meet the needs of the people and be responsive to the educational possibilities of the environment.

At present in Greece no serious effort is being made to integrate the school program with community life. Generally, the curriculum content and organization are formal and unrelated to the life of the pupil, to the community, or to the pattern of country life.

But an effective curriculum for the one-teacher school consists of guided experiences primarily in rural living, cooperatively selected, and planned. Such experiences extend to several areas of the child's growth, including health and physical development, social growth, and the development of self-realization and self-esteem.

The sources of these suitable curricular activities are many. They include activities of home, school, and farm; recreation and play; community understanding and service; and study skills.

But what is to guide in the selection of worthwhile learning experiences? The best answer might be a desirable school-community relationship. This point of view is expressed in the following quotation from the Conference of Leaders in Elementary Education:

"(The rural one-teacher school is at its best) when it centers on the child growing up in the culture of the community. Its curriculum grows out of the child's needs, problems, and experiences. Rooted in the lives of the learners and the local community, it reaches far beyond the immediate environment. It develops the children's knowledge and understanding of the relationship between personal and community activities and problems, and the activities and problems of people in other communities and environments throughout the nation and the world. It selects and organizes the subject matter which is needed for this purpose

and which is appropriate to the growth levels of the children using it."[12]

COMMUNITY STUDY

If the one-room school teacher wants to help his pupils take part in the community's work, he will have to understand the whole structure of the community. He will have to study resources, goals, aspirations, traditions, history, programs, and the whole way of life of the local people. This will enable the teacher to help boys and girls get those experiences that mean most to them.[13]

LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN

A certain group of teachers tried to find ways and means to better their pupils' life. They tried to help the children get three types of experience. They arranged for boys and girls to experience the richness and beauty of the community. They helped them to have a part in community improvement. And they made it possible for all pupils to extend their experience and understanding beyond their own community.[14]

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12. Conference of Leaders in Elementary Education, Report of Second Conference, Washington, D.C., May 20-22, 1948, p. 18.
13. For a consideration of this point, see Loyd D. Tireman, Community School in a Spanish Speaking Village, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1948, p. 169.
14. Fannie W. Dunn, The Rural Supervisor at Work, N.E.A., Washington, D.C., 1949, p. 79.

In another case a one-room school teacher led the pupils to draw on the community for some of their school experiences. As a result of this the old art of the local people fascinated the pupils who became greatly interested in it. As a further result a workshop was planned for the summer months because the children did not have time enough in school for all the art work they wanted to do. The net outcomes were these: deep appreciation of the beauty of the craft work of the local people and care of much heretofore unappreciated handwork wrought by their ancestors. Also the adults were helped to have increased regard for their heritage.[15]

The author of My Country School Diary, put improvement of living high in considering ways and means of helping rural pupils select the best learning activities. Thus the Diary shows how children in a rural community can be helped to develop better ways of living and understand local problems and progress.[16]

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COOPERATION

At present a few one-room schools have developed school-community cooperation as part of the curriculum.

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15. Where Children Live Affects Curriculum, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950, Washington, D.C., p. 59.
16. Julia Weber, My Country School Diary: An Adventure in Creative Teaching, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1946.

The school may start this movement in many ways; health activities is one of them. In this case the work first can be done by the teacher and the pupils; later it can include adults also. While the project is under way, committees of children visit the community to learn how shops and restaurants keep food clean and sanitary, to study the handling of garbage, to study the recreation facilities and possibilities of the community and to get acquainted with other health services.

Thus the children profit in a variety of ways. To carry the above mentioned activities out successfully the pupils might have to increase their ability to read facts, to work with numbers and get meaning from them, to express ideas clearly and expressively, etc. The pupils may also have to make reports to others and to plan for the school's part in community services and improvement. But the best part of the process is the enrichment of the pupils' social experiences and the betterment of their living.

In Culloden, W. Va., the school staff saw the need for initiating a program of school improvement that would spread into the community and gain the cooperation of parents and of the local people in general. In starting the project, the teachers first studied the school and home environments and then worked with the children, keeping their emphasis on the school's work.

In the program, for their initial goal the school staffs had a more nearly adequate development of rural boys and girls. As soon as pupils and teachers felt the need for important things to learn and do, community problems and resources came into the picture. Although the projects were carried out in staffed schools, teachers in one-room schools may get valuable information from them.[17]

OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO GOOD TEACHING

In addition to the above-discussed units of work and the local community as a source of learning experiences, other factors significantly contributing to effective teaching are the employment of common activities and the use of individual instruction. The present section contains discussions of these two points.

COMMON ACTIVITIES

Generally, schoolmen and other people think of good teaching in terms of grades only. To them it is hard to conceive of it otherwise. Yet this grade system of teaching is a relatively modern invention, and is not necessarily the

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17. For detailed information and useful ideas, see Petersburg Builds a Health Program, U.S. Government Printing Office, Bulletin No. 9, Washington, D.C., 1949, and Culloden Improves Its Curriculum, U.S. Government Printing Office, Bulletin No. 2, Washington, D.C., 1951.

best. At present scientific evidence is lacking as to the superiority of the plan. Certainly, homogeneous grouping is the common practice in staffed schools, but studies of its comparative merit are as yet inconclusive.

Instead of a homogeneous group, Sackman believed that a heterogeneous group "could yet be formed into an organic unity which would result in the maximum opportunities for progress of the individuals composing it. From this point of view a system of training based largely on activities would find in a given group old and young children, some bright and some dull, but each carrying on learning activities in conjunction with others in such a way as to finally attain a maximum result."[18]

This is the very situation which obtains in the one-teacher school. If this school is to provide learning opportunities for social training, its "classes" will almost always have to include a heterogeneous group. The fact that this has not been widely practised does not prove that it is undesirable or without practical merit. The grade system has been developed in harmony with the nature of city schools and with the conception of education as a process of teaching and reciting subject matter.

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18. Paul Monroe, ed., Cyclopedia of Education, Vol. 3, New York, Macmillan Company, 1918, p. 127.

Where activity becomes important as a teaching method in the one-room school, children of different abilities and levels of advancement are likely to take part in the enterprise. The Teachers' Guide to Child Development includes an interesting account of "an activity in a box-car rural school", grades one to five, from which the following quotation is taken.

"The younger children in Mrs. Lindley's school had many opportunities to do original work connected with the activity. They did their work in a self-directed period while the teacher was working with the older children. Sometimes they worked individually, sometimes in groups.

"The older children, too, worked in the same way in their self-directed periods. At certain times, group discussions were held during which each child showed his trophies and received the approval and criticism of the group, guided by the teacher in a way which raised the standard of the children in regard to workmanship, beauty, use of time, or any other factor to be considered in relation to the behavior or the type of work which was under discussion.

"Out of the group discussions, the curriculum grew by leaps and bounds. The way in which the work carried over into the home was one of the most satisfactory results. The parents reported that all the work and play at home

centered about the school interest in industrial arts, which had begun in clay. Each day the children went back to school with some new contributions for the group activity...

"Many experiences interesting and worthwhile to the children grew out of the clay interest... They have begun to work together in making collections. They have formed the habit of asking questions about things they do not understand. Each child keeps a record of his reading... The interest in reading along the lines of primitive life and industrial arts has carried over into the home where parents are reading.

"Other community interests and activities which have grown out of the clay experiences are: (1) a desert flower book, (2) a book of desert birds and reptiles, (3) splint baskets of mesquite boughs, (4) a doll house using clay tile, (5) relief maps of California, (6) onion and cotton industries, and (7) activities connected with the railroad station... All these things have furnished a need for learning the fundamentals of the curriculum...

"In all the interests and activities the younger children have had at least some small part...

"The power in observation and in English expression developed through the activity work which began with clay has shown remarkable results in the beginners' class in

learning to read... Jesus, who came without one word of English, and had no older children in the home to help him, showed remarkable development in vocabulary power as it developed on the basis of interest in what was going on in school... These children have not spent their days in listless idleness or inane 'busy work'."[19]

The full account of the unit from which this excerpt is taken shows a wide range of activities appealing to the whole age range of the school, to all types of taste or talent which might be represented there, even to the parents, who were drawn into participation. It is inconceivable that such a variety of suggestions could possibly have arisen in a homogeneous group. The potentiality lay in the range of interests and abilities present in the whole group.

Unit teaching is perhaps the best means so far known to make use of various learning activities[20] as an integrating factor and thus employ them to the best interest of each individual participating. Evidence to this effect comes from a rural supervisor in Connecticut, who says:

"The unit provides a center of interest for cooperation in the school family, this school family being a group in

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19. California Curriculum Commission, Teachers' Guide to Child Development, State Department of Education, Sacramento, 1930, pp. 107-108.
20. In fact, there is a close and intimate relationship between unit teaching and activity method; in actual practice they are inseparable.

a one-room school, or thirty grade pupils in a graded situation. A well-chosen unit provides sufficient work for any number of levels of ability. Thus a common interest brings the group together and provides each individual with the type of work he can carry out successfully."[21]

In fact, one may say that the unit type of teaching is so organically connected with the concept of activities that in actual practice they are inseparable. Genuine units of work naturally growing out of real life situations call for interest-awakening activities if the total learning process is to be effective. This point is made clearer by the above-mentioned supervisor who reports a unit in a primary group of three grades, in which an interest in transportation grew out of the arrival of several toy trucks and automobiles.

"Roads were laid out and dramatic play began. Only the immature first grade children were contented with this play for any length of time. The children of the other grades immediately required filling stations, garages, prices of gasoline, and mileage.

"That the children of third grade reading ability attained their own levels was evidenced by the fact that

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21. Connecticut State Board of Education, Social Studies in Primary Grades, The Board, Rural Education Bulletin No. 1, Hartford, 1930, p. 84.

they became interested in books of travel. They interested the younger children in the beautiful illustrations in Picture Book of Travel. They read and reported on information gained and wrote stories, which, when read to the younger children, gave them information.

"Pictures and books used led the more mature children to a study of means of transportation in other countries. Illustrations in crayon and paint, and models constructed of wood and cardboard were produced.

"The dramatic play of the immature children developed thru the information gained from the children on higher levels of ability... An older child who had constructed a jinrikisha objected to its being used on an American road in American traffic. His explanation of the inappropriateness of this provoked several questions among the younger children. He brought in pictures showing the situations in which jinrikishas are used."[22]

Thus the one-room school that adopts such ways of teaching and learning looks like a hive of bees in which all members of the society are primarily interested in the common welfare and work along the lines of their individual abilities. Common activities are of utmost importance in bringing about such desirable results.

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22. Ibid., pp. 84-85.

INDIVIDUALIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

There are two main purposes for which individual instruction is employed in the modern school. First, it serves as a means of adapting group teaching to the interests and abilities of each pupil. No longer does the modern student have to pursue certain studies for which he does not show any interest or ability to carry out successfully. Second, individual instruction is necessary for the mastery of the so-called "minimal essentials", certain skills and abilities, that must be mastered individually, according to each child's rate of progress and method of attack more appropriate for him.

In order that these two distinct goals may be more fully achieved, the teacher must give much thoughtful attention to the problem of the proper place of individual and group instruction.

Three pertinent points are discussed in the following sub-sections:

Instruction as adaptation to individual abilities, needs, and interests. Adapting instruction to each child's abilities and needs makes for better motivated and more efficient learning. This is exactly what the following statement stresses:

"In order to keep all interested and allow for a maximum of learning for each grade group, there will have

to be differentiation of related activities on the basis of grade abilities."[23]

At present there are some instances in which the first three grades of the school are combined for social studies. The general practice, however, does not favor such a combination, because, they say, there is a great difference in the reading abilities of the pupils. However, reading is only one of the many activities involved in any social studies unit.

Those who enter the school for the first time can share much of the primary group work with more able or advanced pupils. No doubt, at the beginning the newcomer cannot read; but he can share in living and performing many tasks together. For example, he can join older children in many social experiences, such as making illustrations for story books, relate experiences, show or look at related pictures, listen to stories, make clay dishes for the playhouse, etc., etc. Consequently, is the teacher justified in depriving such a pupil of the larger group's common life for the naive reason that he is not so much advanced as they are along certain lines mainly of academic nature? The answer should be "No", provided that the school sees to it

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23. Maryland Department of Education, Goals in Social Studies for Primary Grades, I-III, with Suggestions for Their Achievement, The Department, Baltimore, 1931, p. 56.

that "each child" finds his place in a group activity "according to his individual ability and need". The most important things to notice here are the phrases in quotation marks.

Guided study must be provided if instruction according to individual needs is to be fruitful. This is well pointed out by the New Jersey Department of Public Instruction as follows:

"Every class conference period in Social Studies when properly conducted, leaves the child something to do with his hands, or something to think, read, or write about, something to look for, something to bring, something to make or experiment with, or some responsibility to meet which has been selected with the approval of the other children and the teacher."[24]

The wide variety of activities suggested by the above-mentioned Department for the development of units of work make it possible for the teacher to provide for a "maximum of learning" not only "for each grade group" but also for each individual child. The Social Studies in Rural Schools marks the suggested activities D (difficult), M (medium), and E (easy), thus helping the teacher provide

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24. New Jersey Department of Public Instruction, A Handbook in Social Studies and Related Activities for Primary Teachers, The Department, Trenton, 1932, p. 19.

for work which is more in accordance with "individual ability and need".[25]

Similar adjustments are to be made when the whole school is combined into one instructional unit. In this case the members of a certain group may be responsible for reporting on special topics which are of great interest to all. Constructive activities that can materially contribute to the proper solution of common problems may be carried on by members of one group more fruitfully than by pupils belonging to another group. Older pupils help and guide the younger ones. Thus, an older pupil who is a slow learner may, as helper of younger children, be benefited by access to simple materials bearing on the unit upon which his own group is at the time engaged.

Instruction for mastery of skills. Teaching for mastery of certain skills, being the second function of individual instruction in the one-room school, comes most readily to mind when the term is used. Individual instruction has been so greatly associated with drill devices (work books, practice exercises, instruction sheets, etc.) that its broader implications are sometimes overlooked.

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25. Fannie W. Dunn, and Effie Buthurst, Social Studies for Rural Schools: Agriculture in World Civilization and How the World Gets Food.

In its narrower sense, however, it also has an important contribution to make to the efficient function of the one-teacher school. Modern psychology has shown the efficacy of the above-named devices[26] when the desired goals to be achieved are the mastery of certain skills and facts.

In the Quaker Grove School, individual practice was prevalent as evidenced by the following excerpts:

"The curriculum employed in the Quaker Grove School is in general a combination of group and individual activities. Class topics arranged to provide for rotation of work by years are supplemented by individual assignments or practice exercises of the Dalton 'contract' nature".

"Individual practise exercises for comprehension and vocabulary development, and individual reading for recreation or information in connection with other studies, supplement the work of the reading class.

"Both second and third grades have silent reading in textbooks for which check cards have been provided to test comprehension of the matter read. Cards for this purpose have been prepared for a primer, a first reader, and some

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26. Drilling, however, is fruitful when it is accompanied by an understanding and a sense of usefulness of what is practised.

second readers. These books are required reading. Pupils progress in them in their own rate. When a child finishes a story, he gets the question and answer cards which belong to it, and by matching questions and answers correctly, demonstrates his comprehension of what he has read. This work is checked by a pupil of the intermediate or advanced group, using a key check card to insure his own accuracy."

"Individual exercises commercially available are used to supplement the group work" in English in the advanced group. "Texts have been selected (in the intermediate group) which give much guidance for individual composition, and these have been further supplemented by individual practise exercises, as in Group A."

"There are numerous number cards for drill on various processes, made with the school's price— and-sign-marker. The children, working in pairs, use these in drilling each other. The Courtis Practice Tests in Arithmetic and the Studebaker Practice Exercises have both been used and have proved practicable for an upper grade pupil to administer, the teacher having only to inspect the pupils' record cards once or twice a week in order to determine which children are in blind alleys and give these the necessary individual help."

"Considerable individual work in arithmetic after the order of the Dalton and Winnetka plans has been used and

found of value. 'Contracts' which furnish children exercises, progressing according to their respective abilities, have been prepared for every grade studying arithmetic."[27]

These quotations indicate the ways in which individual materials[28] and methods provide for progress of each pupil as a member of a group; thus he has to learn at his own rate of speed and in a way that is more appropriate for him as an individual. Some modern one-room school teachers set a period in the daily program especially for this type of work.

In such a period each child according to his personal needs and abilities outlines a history reference, engages in silent reading with self-checking tests, uses map exercises to master certain location facts, fills blanks in an effort to master some language usage, or tests himself by a pack of cards to see if he has mastered certain combinations in arithmetic. The teacher provides help to the extent needed by each child.

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27. Fannie W. Dunn, and Marcid Everett, Four Years in a Country School, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1926, pp. 3-6, 45, 137, 139.
28. However, if individualization of instruction is to be successful in the one-teacher school, text-books, workshops and other similar aids used must be self-teaching, self-motivating, self-testing, and self-directing. Washburne and his staff have written many excellent books that meet fully these requirements and can adjust themselves easily to individual abilities. See, Carleton W. Washburne, et. al., Washburne Individual Arithmetic, Yonkers-on-Hudson, N.Y., World Book Company.

"Since the needs are individual, it does not matter whether the children thus engaged are all of one grade, or whether they are scattered thru six or eight grades. Whether all work simultaneously in one subject field also is a minor matter, conditioned by the nature and extent of the children's needs at any time."[29]

Individualization of teaching vs. group instructional techniques. To end the present section it might not be out of place here to comment on the proper relationship and balance that should obtain between individual and group instruction.

In fact, individualization is usually more marked in the conduct of the one-teacher school. The smaller number of children at any age level and the wide range of their abilities make it easier and necessary for the teacher to individualize his instruction.

However, the need for individual teaching especially in the basic skills must not obscure the necessity for group instruction in the so-called content subjects. Yet, this should not be taken to mean that all the subject matter of the tool subjects should be individualized; nor should all the rest of the subjects be taught by group methods. Some-

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29. Fannie W. Dunn, "Modern Education in Small Rural Schools", Teachers College Record, 420-21, February, 1931.

times it is permissible to use the individual method for the content subjects and the group instructional techniques for the mastery of the "minimal essentials". Generally, though, group teaching methods and individual instructional techniques are preferable, respectively, for the content subjects and the skill subjects.

THE DAILY PROGRAM

SIGNIFICANCE

One of the important tasks of the teacher is to plan a daily program. Planning the work of the day is a normal process in teaching and learning as it is in living. A good plan makes not only for emotional security, but also for an economy of time and effort on the part of both pupils and teacher. Furthermore, it prevents the pupil from studying one or two subjects to the neglect of all the others; and it prevents the teacher from spending too much time with a certain group or in teaching his favorite subjects. In addition, a good daily program enables the teacher to plan for the development of the school work in its totality, to systematize and organize his presentation, and to interpret his personal planning with effectiveness.

FUNCTIONS

From what has been said in the preceding paragraph

one may infer what the objects of a good daily program are. In fact, such a program aims at the accomplishment of the following functions.

1. To keep the teacher in helpful cooperation with all the pupils of the school.

2. To avoid hesitation, delays, and great loss of time and energy.

3. To make easier the control of the school through the pupils' knowing what their work is, and when and how they should do it, and

4. Thus to train students in habits of regularity, responsibility, etc.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

In the past, when the school was conceived as an institution primarily concerned with subject matter, to plan a daily program was very simple. The teacher divided the school into numerous and, hence, very short recitation periods and assigned a school subject to each of them. Thus teaching was reduced to hearing lessons in cinematographic succession.

Today, however, if one is to meet the challenge of modern educational developments, one feels there are certain inherent difficulties in organizing the daily work of a one-room school. The teacher of six grades must keep the great spread of interest, abilities, and needs of children

always in mind and adjust his task to a modern program of education. Further, he must try to eliminate the very small classes and thus to save time. In addition, he must meet the administrative problems peculiar to any multi-classroom teaching situation. And it is these and other obstacles which have given rise to the development of unsatisfactory daily programs.

INADEQUATE PROGRAMS

Out of the inadequate but very common conceptions of one-room school programs two are singled out and discussed here for their weaknesses and wide acceptance. These are the "one-subject" and the multi-subject programs.

According to the first plan, one subject prevails throughout the whole school at a given period.

In applying the multi-subject plan, different divisions are having different lessons. Lessons differ from period to period. The teacher tries to give equal attention to all the classes and to vary the subject matter systematically.

In spite of their long standing, both of these plans have not much to recommend them under a modern program of education. The first plan presupposes that the time to be devoted to different subjects remains constant throughout the school. But this is not true at all. With reference to the second plan, its main weakness is that it cannot adjust

itself to the modern educational demands for breaking down the traditional form of the hard-and-fast subject matter organization and thus increase the length of the period in which the teacher works directly with a certain group. To put it in other words, unit teaching is impossible under this scheme.

In view of these inadequacies, how to make a good one-room school daily program in the light of the present professional knowledge is really a challenging problem. It is to a consideration of this question, therefore, that the following discussion is directed.

HOW TO MAKE A PROGRAM

If the philosophy of meeting the persistent and the daily needs and interests of children is accepted, flexible programs, which change in emphasis from day to day, take the place of the rigid allotment of time.

Today the tendency is to organize the school day in blocks of time, a practice which actually saves time. No longer does the modern one-room school teacher attempt to "hear" dozens of lessons a day. Another tendency is to make the day's plan in terms of curriculum experiences considered desirable for wholesome child growth and development. That is why the modern small school teacher blocks the school day under headings such as these:

1. Preparation for the day.

2. Exchange of information and ideas - talking things over through current events, reports, radio news, personal experiences at home or on the way to school, etc.

3. Planning the work of the day - deciding on what jobs to be done, etc.

4. Activity periods - learning to work together or alone.

5. Conferences with the teacher.

6. Study or practising skills of reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic in connection with projects under way (separate classes or small groups as needed).

7. Creative and appreciative activities.

8. Recreation and physical education

9. Rest

10. Evaluation or checking at the close of the day.

11. Putting the school house in order before dismissal.

An additional modern feature of a good daily program is for the teacher and the pupils to plan the work of the day cooperatively. Such planning develops worthy democratic citizenship traits and makes for intelligent and responsible handling of everyday problems. Moreover, the pupils learn to work, to evaluate their experiences, and then to plan and work further. During the planning session they take notes on their responsibilities included in the plan which may also be outlined on the board. By consulting individual

notebooks or the blackboard the children can check themselves against the completed and unfinished tasks.

WHAT A DAILY PROGRAM LOOKS LIKE

But, in the light of the above-mentioned tendencies, what does the daily program really look like in a one-teacher school organized as has been indicated?

To answer this question as briefly as possible, there is no daily program which is better than all others. This is an individual matter, and different schools plan their daily work differently. It will all depend on the teacher, the pupils, the teaching and learning facilities, the activities under way, and the environmental conditions. Without trying to recommend any one best schedule the one suggested below is a sample for the day and presented here as indicative of what a good daily program may look like and what the children can do in carrying it out.[30]

(The time devoted to each of the activities mentioned below will vary according to the thoroughness and detail with which they are undertaken).

A DAY'S PROGRAM FOR THE PRIMARY PUPILS OF A ONE-TEACHER SCHOOL

Free discussion and planning.

Pupils talk on topics of common interest, e.g.,

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30. See also, Tennessee State Department of Education, Living and Learning in Small Schools, State Department of Education, 1943, Nashville, pp. 42-45.

pets, brothers and other family people, a little calf, progress of community projects, visitors, news heard on radio, local ceremonies, things to be done on the day, etc.

Story hour.

Pupils read aloud pages from books they like; show interesting pictures; express their feelings about books they look at; narrate interesting stories learned from elders, etc.

Morning play period.

Teacher and children join in games they freely select together.

Developing skills.

Children may help one another drill with flash cards on arithmetic combinations not adequately learned through use. The teacher helps those having trouble with reading, spelling, or writing. New procedures are taught in meaningful ways. Extra time is provided for practising things they want to do better.

Learning about other peoples and lands.

Lunchtime.

Lunch may be prepared with the help of all the children. They do it by planning for the meal, taking turns serving plates, etc.

Rest period.

Children spontaneously choose what they wish to do. Some look at books and periodicals. Others walk about the playground or visit near-by places to get information necessary for the projects under way. Still others have a talk with the teacher. A few may paint, or sing or play an instrument. Enjoying things they think beautiful (e.g., listening to good music) is also a part of this period.

Physical education.

Children divide themselves into small groups. Thus they make dramatizations, take part in rhythms and folk dances, in games calling for ropes, use of balls and bats, running, etc. Many other games are used in this period, e.g., hiding and seeking, etc. The experiences provided here are balanced, varied, and constantly guided by the teacher.

Checking at the close of the day (Evaluation).

Teacher and pupils talk about the progress of the day. They mention things learned and incomplete jobs to be taken up next day. They jot down their responsibilities for the coming day, information to be sought at home, and the things to be brought to school.

Putting the classroom in order.

As easily seen, modern one-room school daily schedules are simplified. They do not look like the daily programs of the past. The 10- and 15-minute periods at one time have been completely eliminated and the teacher-pupil conferences have been lengthened as necessary. They cover a wide span of activities. Further, no printed or mimeographed daily programs are used any longer. The child prepares and writes them each morning in cooperation with his classmates and the teacher. In addition, the flexibility of such daily programs to allow for real life experiences and activities and for the teacher to help individuals and groups having special difficulties is also to be noted.

Uniformity in the day's work has no place under the new ways of teaching and learning in a one-teacher school. The class period one day is a conference period in which further problems are set up; another day it may be a summary period; in still another day it may be supervised study. Thus not two days are alike.[31]

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31. For more samples of one-room school daily programs which are most suitable where grade and subject matter divisions are not emphasized, see Ernest Hilton, Rural School Management, American Book Company, New York, 1949, pp. 249-257, and Kate V. Wofford, Teaching in Small Schools, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1947, pp. 110-12.

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