



Gratia A. Countryman and Family Papers.

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REFERENCES FOR SPANISH TALK

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579

REVIEW OF REVIEWS 1932 (85-86)
Education in Spain. P. 44
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THE SCHOOL LIBRARIES OF THE UNITED STATES

The growth of school libraries as we know them in the United States is a recent movement. The idea is not new. There have always been progressive educators through the past who clearly saw that the school was the natural place to introduce children, step by step, into the marvellous world of books and to teach them the most valuable habit they can acquire, the habit of reading.

But the schools have had traditions that were hard to overcome. They have had a hard and fast curriculum. Teachers were bound to a text-book and must see that each child learned a given amount each day. Children were turned out of the same mold regardless of individual capacities. There was no time nor place in the school plan for reading.

Now we are asking more searching questions of our educational system. What is the process we call education? We answer that it is the process of fitting each child to live the fullest, finest life of which he is capable, the process of relating him to his social duties and his human obligations.

To-day, our educational leaders are visioning this supremely important task. Educational ideals are ^{enlarging} ~~changing~~ and educational methods are passing through revolutionary changes the world over. The tyranny of the text-book is broken, and an entirely new method ^{of teaching} requires the use of many books. Reading becomes a fundamental process, encouraged in all pupils: and the school library is becoming a necessity in every grade of the school system. Librarians have for many years emphasized the ~~essential~~ fact that children should be brought into contact with books, either in a public library or school or at home, and the earlier and more constantly the better. ~~They are naturally looking upon this change in educational methods with the utmost satisfaction.~~ The most natural place for constant exposure to books is in the school building where the children must go daily and where they are under the direction of teachers who should appreciate the value and necessity of teaching the love of reading. No movement has been heralded with more acclaim by librarians and forward looking teachers than

the program of extensive reading which has been introduced throughout the schools and which makes a school library a growing necessity in the educational program.

Chiefly due to the requirements of the new methods and the new ideals, a decided school-library movement in the United States is spreading from the large cities to the smaller, and out into the rural districts. It is a growth chiefly of the last twenty-five or thirty years, with a marked growth in the past decade, as school men have rapidly realized its significance.

See Reverse side
Already there is a wealth of printed matter describing the value, the methods and administration of the school library. The American Library Association has issued five School Library Yearbooks. The Elementary School Principals devoted their Yearbook of 1934 entirely to the Elementary School Library. There have been surveys and researches into children's reading and many fine graded lists of books. There has been the greatest variety of professional articles appearing in the educational journals. The whole subject is awakening the greatest interest, and the idea is sifting down through high schools, through elementary grades to the very beginners.

Let us quote here the opinion of ^{some} three representative school men: Mr. Joy Elmer Morgan, Editor of The Journal of the National Education Association, says:

"School library service means for the child a new world of spiritual and intellectual adventure. It means for the teacher untold increase in resources and power. It means for the school a new atmosphere of learning."

Mr. John Carr Duff of the New York University School of Education declares:

"The library must become the living-room, the hearthside, of the school. If a school has a soul, it will abide in the library."

From a State Commissioner of Education:

"A school, if it is to guide those who enter its doors must be built about the library. It is the one minimum essential for learning. It

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is necessary therefore, as we plan for educational development, to give much greater attention than heretofore to the growth and effectiveness of the school library."

One could repeat many such enthusiastic expressions from school men who have experienced the usefulness and great advantage of the school library and who have recognized it as an indispensable workshop of teacher and pupil.

The School Library Room.
The ideal school library is a room definitely set apart for library purposes. *Although as needed* ~~The books may be loaned to classrooms for special periods but the~~ books are classified and ~~and catalogued and shelved permanently as a library unit,~~ *and catalogued and shelved permanently as a library unit,* ~~in a room set apart for library uses.~~ Schools which are emerging from the old into the new methods are demanding that the library be a department of the school. In many of the fine new *Senior* High School buildings, which are marvels in their completeness, the library is being as definitely planned as the auditorium or the gymnasium or the manual training shop. The same is true of the new Junior High School buildings which have become so popular in recent years and frequently, though not so generally, of the new elementary schools.

In many towns and cities the old school buildings are finding room for the library somewhere, even if it has to be placed for the time being in a relatively undesirable location. *Where possible,*

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~~Where possible it is placed in a centrally located place with~~ abundant light, large enough for reading tables and the necessary equipment of card catalogues, vertical files, magazine racks, etc. If it is *as is often the case* to be used for the community as well as the school, the library room is often conveniently placed on the ground floor, with an outside entrance, so that the library may be used after school hours *or* during vacations without disturbance to the rest of the school building.

Functions
The school library has two chief functions:

1. Service to the instructional program of the school: to enrich the curriculum with supplementary material and to increase the social value of every subject in the modern school program.

2. To provide recreational and cultural reading, and such guidance as will promote reading tastes and stimulate the reading habit.

These two functions might be elaborated upon almost indefinitely.

They cover all the uses of books to inform, to interest, to build character, to develop thought, to give pleasure, and to inspire. They are carried out through the best methods and technique, the highest ideals and the finest spirit which characterize the library profession wherever it may be functioning.

now at
The success with which they are carried out depends upon the training and education of the librarian, the wise selection of books, and the close co-operation of teachers and librarians.

The Librarian
Speaking first of the librarian: In the library world, we are accustomed to saying that the trained competent librarian is the most important part of a useful working library. It is especially true of the school librarian who comes into close daily contact with students and teachers.

Teaching has a technique; men and women take normal courses, psychological courses and special training which prepares them to teach in a professional way. Library work also has a technique. Its professional schools teach methods that are just as necessary for the right conduct of a library as normal courses are for methods of teaching.

In the marked progress of school libraries in the past few years, one of the handicaps to their best development has been the failure *of school men* to realize that a library should be administered by a trained, competent person *whose* *just as much as* *any other* *specialized department* *of the school* ~~whole effort and thought are given solely to that department.~~ If the school library service throughout the country comes to be all that it should and may be, it will be when the librarian is chosen because of her library training, her interest in young people, her background of reading, and her personal qualities.

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But although the need of trained librarianship ~~was~~ *has been* not immediately

reading, of trained instruction in the use of books, which make
the library the wide

recognized, and school men ^{have} temporarily thought that a library was ^{only a} collection of books and could be administered by a clerk, there is now a growing appreciation of the well administered library. Many competent school librarians have demonstrated just how valuable the school library can be made ^{under the guidance administration of a trained person} ^{adults}

One principal frankly states that the librarian needs to be the best trained scholar in the school. She must know the needs of the curriculum. She must know the books pertaining not only to one subject but to all the subjects taught in the school. She must keep herself informed and help the teachers to be informed of new issues of books. She must keep them catalogued and classified, ready for use, and available for every activity, curricular or extra-curricular. She must get material ready in advance for classroom or teachers' use. She gives instruction on the use of the library and helps the students to find their way among books. As a matter of fact, if she be a real librarian, doing her job well, she is a teacher of the highest order, serving both teachers and pupils, cheerfully and intelligently.

I have spoken thus at length about the importance of the school librarian because I believe that we are entering upon a comparatively new field of library work. No function of the social structure is being studied more analytically and is undergoing more criticism than the methods of education. Changes upon changes may be looked for. The library with its essential book resources will be more and more indispensable. The modern school library is entering upon an interesting experiment, changing with the educational changes, a laboratory of fruitful studies in child life. Librarians of training and education and character will find an opportunity for distinguished service. It is, I believe, a great and growing field for trained librarians.

Co-operation.

To return to the present discussion, one of the necessary elements of

success in the school library is the hearty co-operation of librarian and teachers. Too many of the older teachers find it difficult to change their ways; they do not themselves know how to use a library and do not encourage their pupils to use it. *They do not visualize a library as an educational keepsake.* There is ^{danger of} ~~cause for~~ friction between librarian and teacher who may feel that this new department is an interloper. Yet if the library is to serve, the librarian by resourcefulness and tactfulness ^{by offering assistance} must win the indifferent teacher in one way or another.

It would be a great advantage if each school librarian could have had teaching experience or certain pedagogical courses. It may sometime be required of school librarians. But likewise, it is very valuable, almost imperative, that the teacher should have had some library training. Normal schools, we believe, are including a course of library instruction in their curricula, and younger teachers are prepared to use library tools. The co-operation of teacher and librarian is absolutely essential to the success of the classroom teaching and to the best functioning of the school library, and the two are more likely to understand each other's problems if each has had teaching and library training.

^{the} Selection of Books

Selection of the books ^{is} ~~will be~~ linked with both functions of the school library, the instructional and the recreational. *The collection is* ~~It must be built~~ ^{both} not only on the classroom needs, ^{at} but on the vital interests and activities of live boys and girls. ~~As far as money will allow, the library should~~ ^{In connection with instructional use} not be allowed to grow shabby and old. Whatever changes come, whatever new methods are tried, or new subjects taught, the library must keep up with the growth, ^{by adding} ~~with~~ new up-to-date material. ^{as far as money will allow} ~~In most good school~~ libraries ^{usually} the books are selected by the librarian in co-operation with the various teachers of the school, with much care and with reference to the subjects to be taught. Always a balance must be kept ^{in supplying the needs of} ~~between~~ the various grades or departments, so that the library will not be overloaded in one

place and meagerly supplied in another, and this needs the discretion and judgment of the librarian.

There is also great opportunity for careful selection of pleasure reading.
There is so much that is cheap and vulgar on the news stands and coming over the radio that the school library can do much to counteract. In a library built around the natural interests and curiosities of children they may be turned loose to browse about among books and read widely all kinds of interesting things.

Fortunately, the publishers are ~~also~~ assisting the school library by issuing the most attractive books; biography and history that read like fiction, travel that thrills with adventure, current events that are as dramatic as life is dramatic. Suitable reference helps have been developed to use all along the educational path: simple atlases, children's encyclopedias, and text-books disguised with beautiful illustrations and most interesting text. One can interest children in science, in industries, in the peoples of the world; one can build up ideas of social relationships and civic responsibilities through the rich material that is prepared especially for the children's use. In addition to the necessary reference helps and fact finding material and all of this well prepared supplemental reading, the library contains magazines, pamphlets and clippings, maps and pictures, selected government publications, debate and vocational material, designs for the art or manual training teachers, ^{or} any other material useful to departments or school activities.

place with a different atmosphere from the classroom
The library room itself ^{is} wears a friendly air, and children visit it with pleasure, getting lesson assignments or dipping into their own especial favorites, in their unassigned periods. It is their own place which they grow to love. One could hardly overemphasize the contribution which this school library is making to the teachers' equipment or to the pupils whose interests are awakened in so many directions.

Instruction in the Use of Books

One of the important services of the school library is instruction in the use of books and library tools. We all know from experience how many adults who use our public libraries are helpless before a card catalogue or a Readers' Guide. But the next generation who have been brought up in a school library should be perfectly at home with such tools.

The object of the instruction is to create intelligent self-help and self-education in each child. Wherever there are elementary school libraries, the instruction begins in the lower grades with the parts of a book and the care of books, continuing step by step through the grades with simple ^{alphabetizing use of the} alphabeting, the dictionary and encyclopedias, until the Junior High School where a regular course of library instruction is a part of the school course for which credit is given. Classes are scheduled regularly into the library for this purpose, subjects are assigned, and each child is taught where to find and how to look for what he wants, through the help of card catalogue, indexes, atlases, handbooks, etc. The librarian continues this personal help and instruction throughout the Senior High School, and any graduate should be able to use a public library or a college library with intelligence. It is a service which a school library ^{can} ~~could~~ render more efficiently than a public library because of the daily correlation of classroom work and library use.

The Elementary School Library

In this general discussion, we have talked about school libraries without distinguishing the elementary from the secondary schools. The Senior High School libraries are fairly well established throughout the country; the Junior High Schools are following quite rapidly, but the elementary school library is of recent growth. Within the past ten years, a very progressive superintendent gave it as his opinion that elementary

schools did not need libraries. The whole subject is still being explored, both in urban and rural communities, but with a slower development. It is an expensive matter in a large city to furnish school libraries in the many grade school buildings. But the elementary schools have also new and modified curricula and new child centered activities. There is the same need for reading and ^{the need} book tools, and the child cannot come into contact with books too soon. In order to carry out the ideals of the newer school, every elementary school, ^{as well as} every Junior and Senior High School, ^{needing} needs a library and reading room, and we foresee a rapid development of the elementary school library where the masses of the people receive their only education.

Administration.

As the school libraries have been developing these past twenty-five or ^{have} thirty years, there ~~has~~ grown up three definite plans of administration with many and diverse practices. In some communities, large and small, the board of education has preferred to maintain the school libraries as one of their responsibilities, treating it as any other department and allocating funds for its support. In other communities the public library has established branches in schools as one of the methods of library extension, and maintains the school libraries as an integral part of the public library system. The third method is a co-operative plan, whereby the board of education and the library board share the expense and responsibility of the school libraries.

Each plan has certain advantages. The first one separates the school libraries entirely from the public library and loses the contribution which the public library might make. It makes necessary the maintenance of two separate library systems, ^{separate} each with central organizations and supervising departments, ^{which} duplicating each other's functions more or less, ^{while} and both ^{are} supported from the same public purse. But this plan leaves the schools a free hand to develop the type of school libraries which they wish.

The second method, where the public library administers the school libraries, grew out of the effort of public libraries to give reading service to children, not only through children's reading rooms and special privileges to teachers, but through collections of books loaned to classrooms. The classroom libraries are still in operation as a partial solution of the schools' book needs, and in smaller localities and rural schools this travelling group of books is an acceptable method. It was but a further step to the establishment of library branches in Junior and Senior High Schools and finally in elementary schools. In almost every large library a new department has grown up, known as the school department, which has charge of the technical organization and the supervision of the school libraries where these are administered either by the public library or as a co-operative project. This department usually maintains a professional collection for teachers and parents, following closely all the new publications and keeping up with new theories of education and changes in curricula.

The third method is the co-operative method, in operation in numbers of large cities, which seems to the writer the best way to settle what might become a tangled administrative problem. In these cities, the public library board and the school board have entered into a contract to establish library service in all of the schools. The contract usually provides that the schools shall ^{furnish} provide the space, and that the public library shall administer the service, with a division of the cost for books and salaries. This co-operative plan has many advantages. The entire resources of the public library are at the service of each school library, with regular book truck delivery from the Central Library. ^{The comparatively small collection in the school library becomes} The school librarians are members of the public library staff and participate in the general staff meetings and book review discussions. ^{a large collection through this connection} They are in close co-ordination with the children's librarians of the public library with whom they have many common problems. Each pupil has a regular ^{from the public library} borrower's card which can be used both at the school library and at the public library. They are introduced while in school to all the methods of

the public library, and use one or the other as need be.

But whether the school libraries are administered wholly by the school authorities as a parallel system or as an integral part of the public library system, or co-operatively by both, there should be the closest integration of effort and understanding between teacher and librarian, each one studying without pride or prejudice to advance the interests of the children and young people.

Quite frequently in the smaller towns the school library is also a community library. Indeed, in the school libraries which are administered by the public library in the large cities, the surrounding community is usually welcome to use the library. With the smaller town the combination of school and community library is an economic necessity.

Rural Libraries

The rural school library offers the greatest problem. Our minds wander out from the cities and from the fine consolidated district schools where libraries are being established, to the many small rural one-room schools where teachers are working against poor equipment, no books, and uninterested parents. How can these children be equipped for citizenship, for community life, for the use of leisure time? They need the use of books to enlarge their own limited experience, perhaps more than city children, but for financial reasons, cannot have ^{it ?} ~~(this advantage)~~. ^{cap.} The states which have granted direct financial aid to schools for a local collection have partly though not satisfactorily solved the rural problem. The best solution seems to lie in the development of county libraries. Where these have been established a central organization, supported by the county and administered by trained librarians, selects the books, places a fitting collection in the rural schools, exchanges them at intervals, binds and takes care of them, and teaches both pupils and rural teachers the use and value of books.

Then there are the rural families. The school library is the only

supply of books for the whole community. It is only a matter of justice that this country child and his family should participate in all possible opportunities to become intelligent citizens, and a school library in every district is of the first importance. The county plan is not an experiment. ^{BWP}Thirty-four states have enacted laws permitting establishment of county libraries, and 253 county systems have been in active operation. The county or regional library, with perhaps a fully developed state plan, are the next steps in the development of rural school libraries.

Recreational Function.

We have not enlarged upon the second great function of the school library, the stimulation of reading habits and the cultivation of the love of books. It is the most important service which any librarian can render. If we could give but one gift to a child, or develop but one habit, we think we should choose ^{for} him ^{to} have the love of reading. He can then help himself to the knowledge of the world, and learn the way for himself to success and happiness. Every child has a right to be introduced to the world of books,-- these winged messengers of life. He may escape the opportunity offered in the public library but he should not be able to escape the lure of his school library. The books are selected not only with reference to his studies, but for voluntary reading for pleasure. The very heart and soul of a good library is its opportunity for voluntary reading, according to the natural tastes and interests of the child. To browse around freely in a collection of good books, in an atmosphere of friendly encouragement, with conversations about his book favorites or suggestions from a sympathetic and understanding teacher or librarian, is to lay the foundation of real culture through books.

The school librarian has an advantage over the children's librarian of a public library in that she has the same children day after day, and perhaps through a number of years ⁱⁿ through their elementary and high school courses. She knows what they are studying, she learns to know their

personal characteristics and individual tastes. ~~in~~ smaller communities, and often in outlying schools in the cities where ~~the school library serves as a community library~~, parents and young people out of school, as well as the pupils are privileged to use the books. ~~The~~ school library takes on enlarged responsibility for recreational and pleasure reading. In the new type of school, the interests of parents and community life are more and more considered. In it the child should live a normal, happy life in touch with parents and teachers and the common interests of his social environment. ~~From~~ ^{Out} it, he should come ~~as~~ a thoughtful, self-disciplined, socially minded individual, capable of further self-education ~~and continuing ambitions~~. ^{To produce this result} ~~It is~~ a joint enterprise of teacher and librarian in which the public librarian also shares.

In the confusion of to-day's life, we librarians and educators are all trying to teach through books and friendly assistance what none of us knows too well, the business of living.

Note This paper in more
extended form was delivered at
the _____

or

This article is a condensation
of a paper read at the

Name.....

Address.....

Have you a library card?

What Branch or Departments
of the Library do you use?

In what subjects are you
interested?

How can the Library be of
more service to you?

Note: This article is a condensation of a paper read at the
Second International Library and Bibliographical Congress
held in Madrid, Spain, in May, 1935

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But the schools have had traditions that were hard to overcome. They have had a hard and fast curriculum. Teachers were bound to a text-book and must see that each child learned a given amount each day. Children were turned out of the same mold regardless of individual capacities. There was no time nor place in the school plan for reading.

Now we are asking more searching questions of our educational system. What is the process we call education? We answer that it is the process of fitting each child to live the fullest, finest life of which he is capable, the process of relating him to his social duties and his human obligations.

To-day, our educational leaders are visioning this supremely important task. Educational ideals are enlarging and educational methods are passing through revolutionary changes the world over. The tyranny of the text-book is broken, and an entirely new method of teaching requires the use of many books. Reading becomes a fundamental process, encouraged in all pupils: and the school library is becoming a necessity in every grade of the school system. Librarians have for many years emphasized the fact that children should be brought into contact with books, either in a public library or school or at home, and the earlier and more constantly the better. The most natural place for constant exposure to books is in the school building where the children must go daily and where they are under the direction of teachers who should appreciate the value and necessity of teaching the love of reading. No movement has been heralded with more acclaim by librarians and forward looking teachers than the program of extensive reading which has been introduced throughout the schools.

Chiefly due to the requirements of the new methods and the new ideals, a decided school-library movement in the United States is spreading from the large cities to the smaller, and out into the rural districts. It is a growth chiefly of the last twenty-five or thirty years, with a marked growth in the last decade, as school men have rapidly realized its significance. Already sixteen states have made provision for financial support in the establishment and maintenance of school libraries whereby grants of specific sums of money are awarded annually under specified conditions. Already there is a wealth of printed matter describing the value, the methods and administration of the school library. The American Library Association has issued five School Library Yearbooks. The Elementary School Principals devoted their Yearbook of 1934 entirely to the Elementary School Library. There have been surveys and researches into children's reading and many fine graded lists of books. There has been the greatest variety of professional articles appearing in the educational journals. The whole subject is awakening the greatest interest, and the idea is sifting down through high schools, through elementary grades to the very beginners.

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I believe that we are entering upon a comparatively new field of library work. No function of the social structure is being studied more analytically and is undergoing more criticism than the methods of education. Change upon change may be looked for. The library with its essential book resources will be more and more indispensable. The modern school library is entering upon an interesting experiment, changing with the educational changes, a laboratory of fruitful studies in child life. Librarians of training and education and character will find an opportunity for distinguished service. It is, I believe, a great and growing field for trained librarians.

It would be a great advantage if each school librarian could have had teaching experience or certain pedagogical courses. It may sometime be required of school librarians. But likewise, it is very valuable, almost imperative, that the teacher should have had some library training. Normal schools, we believe, are including a course of library instruction in their curricula, and younger teachers are prepared to use library tools. The co-operation of teacher and librarian is absolutely essential to the success of the classroom teaching and to the best functioning of the school library.

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As the school libraries have been developing these past twenty-five or thirty years, there have grown up three definite plans of administration with many and diverse practices. In some communities the Board of Education maintains the school library as one of its departments. In others, the public library maintains branches in schools as an integral part of the public library system, and by the third plan, the two co-operate and share the expense and responsibility of the school libraries.

Each plan has certain advantages but the co-operative plan in operation in numbers of large cities, seems to the writer the best way to settle what might become a tangled administration problem. In this co-operative plan, the two boards enter into a contract providing what the joint arrangement shall be.

But whether the school libraries are administered wholly by the school authorities as a parallel system or as an integral part of the public library system, or co-operatively by both, there should be the closest integration of effort and understanding between teacher and librarian, each one studying without pride or prejudice to advance the interests of the children and young people.

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In these small communities, and often in outlying schools in the cities where parents and young people who are out of school as well as the pupils are privileged to use the books, the school library takes on enlarged responsibility for recreational and pleasure reading. In the new type of school, the interests of parents and community life are more and more considered.

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Gratia A. Countryman

Librarian of the
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