

F.H.F. 4

Ford Hall Folks

587

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TWO ADDRESSES ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SITUATION*

THE easiest thing in the world is to ask: "What is the matter with the public schools?" From the standpoint of people who think they know, the public schools are all wrong; and meanwhile they go on making men and women, and saying little. We must find out



tonight what is wrong with the school considered as an absolute, not an ideal, institution. The only critic worth listening to is the one who has a remedy. When I went to a college convention recently I learned that the trouble with the school systems lay with the high schools; at a high school convention that it was the fault of the grammar schools; the grammar schools blamed it on the primary schools, and the primary schools on the kindergarten. When I went home I met our kindergarten teacher, and said to her, "Oh, I wouldn't be you for anything. You are at the bottom of the whole wrong of the school system." Well, I visited the kindergarten, and the children were pretending to be doves, and then soldiers—all but Harold. Harold wouldn't play at all until the other children were all through: then he started being a dove and a soldier. Later in the year I called on Harold's mother; she said, "That boy is just exactly like his grandmother on his father's side." Now you know what is the matter with the public schools. That I can't get hold of grandmother or change her. I have Harold just as he is. So I have learned that I would better begin

A FORWARD STEP WHICH HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY TAKEN IN FITCHBURG.

By Margaret Slattery.

teaches him the same thing for many years. It says, "Never mind how you get there: get there!" Until the world learns that this is only one-half the problem it will never be at peace with its brothers. (Applause.) It came to me at last that I was not to teach arithmetic to Jimmy, but I was to teach Jimmy arithmetic. Jimmy is the centre, arithmetic is only a tool. His studies are all tools, with which he is to earn more than a livelihood—a living and a life.

I was in a school recently where the principal said to me of a new teacher, "I don't know what I am going to do with her. This is the third time today that she has asked for permission to open a window, because the children are hot. She knows she must not open windows; it interferes with our expensive heating system." Well, teachers must obey systems, but if I had an expensive heating system on one hand and forty-five flushed little faces on the other, I should open that window—for the sake of forty-five children's welfare. The child must come before the system.

You can turn spools of thread out by system, but you can't children. The rights of the child must be realized and recognized. Not that Jimmy is to be allowed to stand on his head in the middle of the aisle—but he is to have his chance. I am thinking now of the real Jimmy. His teacher said to me, "I can't stand Jimmy; there isn't anything he doesn't do; he *must* go." "Well," I said,

"wait till I see Jimmy's mother." So I went up to the tenement where Jimmy lived, and got acquainted with his mother. It's funny how different both mothers and teachers are when you get to know them. And yet I know women who dare to give their children for a whole year into the care of a woman they have never seen. I heard two boys talking recently. "She wants to see my mother," said one. "Aw," answered the other, "I'd have my mother write her a note. She'll never keep me in again in good skating weather!" "No good," answered the first; "she and my mother belong to the same club, and chum around together all the time." When the teacher and the mother "chum around together all the time" the boy can't go very far wrong.

Well, I said to Jimmy's mother, "I've come to talk to you about Jimmy." "Have you?" she answered. "Say, ain't he great, though?" I nearly fell off my chair. And then she told me that Jimmy's father had deserted her before her baby was born, and that Jimmy got up at four o'clock every morning to help the milkman distribute milk; that at noon he got washings for her and took them back, and after school had a newspaper route. Next day I said to his teacher, "Say, ain't Jimmy great?"—and when I had told her about him she agreed with me. We kept Jimmy, and as this wasn't in a book, he wasn't good forever after. But sometimes when I watched him and thought of all he did, I realized that if Jimmy was to play at all he had to play in school hours. Today Jimmy is a fine, gentlemanly, Christian fellow behind a counter, and is waiting to get married until he can finish putting his little sister through high school so she can support their mother. I would rather have some share in helping a boy like that than to have helped make any man whose name fills the newspapers. We can get along without one, but not without the other. We have to have Jimmy! (Applause.) It seems to me that the welfare work of the public schools,

OUR HEART'S CRY.

In the public school we come the nearest to our ideals of democracy. There all our children receive according to their need and capacity and

high schools; at the high schools it was the fault of the grammar schools; the grammar schools blamed it on the primary schools, and the primary schools on the kindergarten. When I went home I met our kindergarten teacher, and said to her, "Oh, I wouldn't be you for anything. You are at the bottom of the whole wrong of the school system." Well, I visited the kindergarten, and the children were pretending to be doves, and then soldiers—all but Harold. Harold wouldn't play at all until the other children were all through: then he started being a dove and a soldier. Later in the year I called on Harold's mother; she said, "That boy is just exactly like his grandmother on his father's side." Now you know what is the matter with the public schools.

But I can't get hold of grandmother or change her. I have Harold just as he is. So I have learned that I would better begin with Harold and take him as far as it is possible for Harold to go, and make out of him the finest possible Harold. When I graduated from the Normal School I knew everything. My note-book told me just what Jimmy would do, and what I should do then, and what the result would be. The trouble was that Jimmy did the things, and I did what I was told to do, but the results didn't happen. Once a teacher taught reading, writing and arithmetic; now she does everything from washing the children's faces to begging shoes for them. The finest and hardest thing in the world is to be a teacher, with the exception of being a mother, and if you are going to be of any use in the world you must be one or the other.

I had a boy once who could not spell. My one desire was to get that boy up to 100 per cent in spelling, and one day I accomplished it. And that afternoon I discovered written on his cuff the words he had spelled correctly that morning. Then I realized that I had taught that boy that the essential thing is to get 100 per cent., and if you have to lie to do it, it doesn't matter. And the whole world

*The speeches and the questions and answers reported by Miriam Allen de Ford.

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OUR HEART'S CRY.

In the public school we come the nearest to our ideals of democracy. There all our children receive according to their need and capacity and without regard to their worth or merit. As brothers and sisters in one great family they receive from the community as a father some of the richest gifts that money and ability and devotion can bestow. All that is asked of them is that they make the most of it and recognize the source from which it comes and pay for it in the coin of good citizenship.

Our cry as a people, unto the God of our fathers, is that the day may be hastened when in the interest of the state all its citizens of all ages and both sexes may be given an equal opportunity to earn a living and make a life just as we now give the children an equal opportunity to get an education and develop their powers. May we so jealously guard and intelligently promote the welfare of our public schools that they will be able to give us the boys and girls who will later be the men and women who will help to usher in the days of greater democracy toward which we are all looking and yearning.

GEORGE W. COLEMAN.

and after school had a newspaper route. Next day I said to his teacher, "Say, ain't Jimmy great?"—and when I had told her about him she agreed with me. We kept Jimmy, and as this wasn't in a book, he wasn't good forever after. But sometimes when I watched him and thought of all he did, I realized that if Jimmy was to play at all he had to play in school hours. Today Jimmy is a fine, gentlemanly, Christian fellow behind a counter, and is waiting to get married until he can finish putting his little sister through high school so she can support their mother. I would rather have some share in helping a boy like that than to have helped make any man whose name fills the newspapers. We can get along without one, but not without the other. We have to have Jimmy! (Applause.) It seems to me that the welfare work of the public schools, carried on in this fashion, should be the work most eagerly looked forward to by the teacher who sees below the surface.

Take Selma. Selma arrived from Finland, the daughter of a drunken father and an ignorant mother. She went to school the first day with her hair tied with a string, and in a borrowed dress. I remember the day she said to me, "I can read: I can read 'most anything!'" Last June I saw Selma when she was graduated from the grammar school. She had made her dress herself; she had earned her shoes by doing extra laundry work for a Normal School girl; she had the largest and freshest of hair-ribbons. The children were in the music room, and they were having their favorite pieces played to them for the last time. And Selma wanted, when her turn came, the andante movement from the Fifth Symphony! And this was a girl who had come from a two-room tenement, in which lived her family of five, and three boarders. There she sat, *made* by the public school. You can see her now, working as a capable stenographer in Fitchburg.

The public school every day in your city and every city is doing that thing, and I
(Continued on Page 4.)

THE QUESTIONS

Q: So long as the school committee has the authority to apply the gag rule, how can we expect the best results from the teachers?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I hope they do not consider they have the right any longer. A bill was put through the Legislature last year which very definitely modified that rule.

Q (Mrs. Solomon): What do you think of the great number of boys and girls who would like to go to High School whose parents cannot afford to send them?

A (Miss Slattery): I truly believe that increasing the age limit, while it would be hard on the parents at first, would give the children a much better chance. If children from 14 to 18 have shorter hours, they can attend the evening High Schools.

Q: In the case of Selma, what becomes of eugenics?

A (Miss Slattery): I believe it is a sin for a man to bring into the world a child who must suffer for his wrong-doing; but I believe it is possible for human nature to rise above any handicap you can put upon it. (Applause.)

Q: How soon shall we be educated up to the social centre ideal in the schools?

A (Miss Slattery): I don't know, but I know that if we can create public sentiment it will come 25 years sooner than if we cannot.

Q: Would not economics as taught from the present-day standpoint be opposed by the present authorities?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I must ask you to ask the present authorities. I hold no brief for them.

Q: What is your attitude toward the action of the Board of Education in Chicago barring the teaching of sex hygiene?

A (Miss Slattery): I don't believe in the teaching of sex hygiene in the public schools. Most teachers are not qualified to teach it. The thing to do is to teach the mothers what to say. I know, moreover, that knowledge alone does not save.

Q: What effect will it have on democracy when the Roman Catholic Church fulfils the withdrawal of its children from the public schools?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I think the with-

A (Mr. Coleman): I think we can all answer that. (Applause.)

Q: Do you advocate in the public schools the giving of meals to poor children?

A (Miss Slattery): I don't see how Jimmy can do arithmetic if he hasn't had any breakfast. But I should like to get the parents where they were able to feed their own children. (Applause.) (Mrs. FitzGerald): I think there is the further question of young children who must have something between breakfast and lunch. The thing proposed in Boston is to sell good food at cost to the children, so that they will not buy trash with their pennies.

Q: Do you not both think there would be a demand for evening High Schools on five instead of three evenings of the week?

A (Miss Slattery and Mrs. FitzGerald): Yes!

Q (Mr. Sackmary): Do you not think that municipal dance halls are becoming an absolute necessity?

A (Miss Slattery): I can't answer with authority, but I think the time has come to make every other kind of dance hall an impossibility.

Q: What is your attitude toward manual training in the schools, and at what grade should it start?

A (Miss Slattery): I do not know just where it should begin, but for manual training, most certainly yes.

Q: Should not something be done for older people who might be very useful citizens if they could get more education?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I believe that something ought to be done, and is being done.

Q: Should industrial education be compulsory in our schools?

A (Miss Slattery): I doubt it, if parents do not choose to have their children take it. But it would be useful for every child.

Q: If science is the foundation of industrial education, do you approve of abolishing the scientific kindergarten education?

A (Miss Slattery): I don't think we know enough about the other method yet.

Q: Don't you think that a good deal of school inefficiency is due to a lack of co-

School period each sex should have a teacher of the same sex.

Q: What do you think of the Montessori system?

A (Miss Slattery): I think it has a great deal of promise in it, making the abnormal child normal and helping the normal child. How far it will work in America I do not know.

Q: Can a man be educated in the evening schools at three nights a week for 20 weeks a year?

A (Miss Slattery): It seems to me that it should be five nights a week for 40 weeks a year.

Q (Miss Crawford): Do you agree with Professor Earle Barnes that teachers should be both men and women, and married men and women?

A (Miss Slattery): I don't care if they are married, so long as they are womanly women and manly men, with an interest in a human child.

Q: Don't you think the child should be given the choice of what and when he should be taught?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): The great thing is not when and what to teach, but how to teach. A choice must be left to the higher schools, but the child's tastes should be considered.

Q: Isn't a good deal of our trouble in society due to the fact that our leaders have been trained in the public schools intellectually and not emotionally?

A (Miss Slattery): Yes. We have got to have our emotions trained or we are one-sided.

Q: Do you not think that the military sentiment in young boys, as shown in the Scout movement, is very harmful?

A (Miss Slattery): I don't believe that boys will ever get over the desire to be soldiers, and I don't think it hurts them.

Q: What do you think about school gardens, particularly in large cities?

A (Miss Slattery): I think they are fine—splendid in every way.

Q: Have you thought out a plan of democratic social training, in which children can enjoy the learning of social occupations?

A (Miss Slattery): Yes, but it would take a whole speech to give it.

Q: Isn't it true that a disproportionate measure of money is spent on the High Schools, so that the burden is being borne by the poor man for the benefit of the man who has more?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I don't believe we

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Q: What effect will it have on democracy when the Roman Catholic Church fulfils the withdrawal of its children from the public schools?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I think the withdrawal of any large number of children would be very unfortunate, but I don't believe that this is ever going to happen in any such general way.

Q: Do you favor a national child labor law?

A (Miss Slattery): Yes, sir! (Applause.)

Q (Mrs. Blanchard): Last summer the Woman's Club of Dorchester had Dr. Evangeline Young talk on sex hygiene to mothers and daughters. Why could not that be done in High Schools?

A (Miss Slattery): I think if the parents desire it, it can be done, but I should want to be sure that the doctor was a woman before she was a physician.

Q (Miss Rolgolsky): What would you do with children whose parents are hopelessly incompetent to teach sex hygiene?

A (Miss Slattery): I would help the parent become competent. If that is absolutely impossible, then the teacher must do it.

Q (Mrs. Sullivan): If Boston must have portable schools, whose furnaces let out coal gas, should not the older children be put in them?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I am glad to say that there are fewer portables in use this year than last. They are not fit for any children or any teacher.

Q: Isn't it a shame to take children out of school at an early age to work?

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Q: Don't you think that a good deal of school inefficiency is due to a lack of co-operation on the part of the parents?

A (Miss Slattery): Yes; many parents do not know or care to know about their children. We are working definitely now to encourage their interest.

Q: What is your attitude toward the work of the correspondence schools?

A: I think it is fine, especially for young fellows who have to leave school early.

Q: I had charge last year of some boys' clubs in New York City, and found that out of one group of thirteen in middle adolescence only one had had sex instruction from his father. Is it absolutely against the best principles of education to give a talk of that kind to the boys in groups?

A (Miss Slattery): No, not at all—the group instruction by a group leader can be done very well, indeed. It is more intimate and definite than class instruction.

Q (Mrs. Hoffman): Do you believe in district representation on the school committee?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I suppose you mean ward representation. No, I think the old committee of 24 (now it would be 26) was too big.

Q: Do you agree with Dr. Henderson that there should be men teachers for girls and women for boys, all through the schools?

A (Miss Slattery): No, I think it would be a great mistake. I think during the High

usually and not emotionally?

A (Miss Slattery): Yes. We have got to have our emotions trained or we are one-sided.

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Q: Isn't it true that a disproportionate measure of money is spent on the High Schools, so that the burden is being borne by the poor man for the benefit of the man who has more?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): I don't believe we spend too much on our High Schools, but that we don't spend enough on our grade schools.

Q: How many should be on the school committee?

A (Mrs. FitzGerald): As I said, I should like about nine for a city of this size.

Q: What is the comparative merit of the Parent-Teachers' Association and the welfare teacher?

A (Miss Slattery): The welfare teacher must be at the head of the Parent-Teachers' Association.

Q (Mr. Foster): Don't you think the co-operative educational plan of Fitchburg and Gary is a good thing for Jimmy?

A (Miss Slattery): Yes, I think it is the best solution we have so far.

Q (Same): Would lengthening the school year and possibly the school hours increase the educational value to the child?

A (Miss Slattery): At our school we have a six-hour section, three hours' academic, three manual; and this summer we are going to have a full summer session and see how it will work.

Great thoughts come to us only when we are on the heights, but they soon die if they are not taken down into the valley and put to work among men.

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of us who feel so disposed.

* * *
I suppose the chorus is getting
lead us in the singing of our new
tune by Schnittkind and Goldbergs

* * *
Last Sunday afternoon I visited
Service House on Salem street w
friends. As Mr. Davis showed
through the different rooms amon
rious classes and clubs we found
table bee-hive for the making of go

AS IT LOOKS TO ME

By GEORGE W. COLEMAN, Director of the Ford Hall Meetings

The first session of the Ford Hall town meeting fully met our expectations, both in the number present and in the enthusiasm manifested. It can be made a splendid training-school and a fine sounding-board for public opinion. Mr. Foster, as temporary chairman, brought us through the excitement and confusion of the first meeting in very creditable fashion. At the second meeting we shall experience all the excitements and anxieties of an election as we make our choice of officers and committees.

There are now one hundred and fifty "first citizens" on the roll. Others are eligible to be counted among this elect group until the meeting votes to call the list closed.

In addition to Mr. Bodfish we have among our regular attendants at Ford Hall two other blind men. Mr. Simon Robinson, who lives in the West End, has only enough eyesight to distinguish between light and dark, but he looks just as cheerful as Mr. Bodfish and can laugh as heartily—as I can. Robinson is a quiet, little, gray-haired man who always sits in the central section on the floor and often asks a question.

Mr. Cosgrove, the other one in the group of our three blind men, has often sat on the platform, but of late has taken a seat in the balcony at the end of the front row on the chairman's right hand. Cosgrove seldom misses asking a question. We must get Miss Crawford to write him up and tell us something of the awful tragedy in a Mexican mine that deprived him of his eyesight.

That was a good Irish program last Sunday night with Slattery, Fitzgerald and Coleman all figuring in it. In spite of my name, however, I was again taken for a Jew in one of the recent West End political rallies.

Wouldn't you have liked very well to have been a pupil under a teacher like Miss Slattery? It would seem that she could make anything interesting and worth while.

I have asked Mr. W. H. Foster, whose home and office address is 41 Huntington

avenues. It made us realize how little most people know of the grand good things that are going on quietly but continuously right in the heart even of our most congested districts.

A Denver friend of mine sent me, the other day, a long editorial from the *News* of that city, urging the advantages of an open forum like Ford Hall. It was very complimentary to our work here but gave me something of a shock (of very brief duration, however,) when it went on to say that Daniel Sharp Ford had left me half a million dollars to spend as I pleased in the interest of the working people of Boston. I wish that were a prophecy of what some millionaire will do some day.

A recent issue of the *Survey*, a weekly magazine published in New York, printed a hundred hymns and tunes especially adapted to just such a meeting as ours. Miss Crawford was one of the committee that helped to compile this collection. It will be of the greatest value in helping along the kind of meetings that we all believe in so strongly.

PROF. ALBION W. SMALL ON OUR PLATFORM.

Dean Small of the University of Chicago, who will speak to us next Sunday evening on "The Strength and Weakness of Socialism," has written a novel, "Between Eras," that is well worth looking up. The Socialists, of course, have not accepted the book whole-heartedly, but they have cared enough about it to give it liberal space in their various publications, and it is generally conceded that the Socialist-author has done his cause a great deal of service in this piece of fiction. Dr. Small is a Baptist of the Baptists; he is, also, a warm friend and close comrade of Prof. Zueblin. A good combination.

Why be so impatient? If you wanted to go to San Francisco and found that the only train for that city was five days late, would you wait or would you walk? Many of us in our journey toward our port of Success are compelled to obey train schedules.

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE THE TOPIC AT THE FOLKS MEETING.

J. Adams Puffer, who will be remembered for an excellent talk he once gave at the Ford Hall Meetings on "The Boy and the Gang," is to be the speaker at the Folks Meeting next Sunday, his topic being "How to Help a Boy Find Himself." Mr. Puffer is a breezy personality with humorous enthusiasm over boys and their problems. He has written a number of books on vocational guidance, and will be sure to give us an inspiring half hour. The Folks Meetings, held down stairs in Kingsley Hall at 3.30 every third Sunday, are open to all who are interested to come. But if you want to stay and have supper with us (25 cents) drop a line to Miss Crawford, Room 707, Ford Building, by next Thursday.

THE BOSS BOSSED.

Says a paragraph taken from the Boston Traveler one day last week:

"George W. Coleman may be the 'boss' at the Ford Hall meetings, but at the first 'town meeting' recently Mr. Coleman learned that he could be otherwise. During a heated debate, Mr. Coleman rose and submitted a motion. 'You're out of order,' shouted Chairman William Horton Foster, and with a mumbled, 'I beg your pardon,' Mr. Coleman subsided into his chair."

THE GOOD CITIZEN.

"The first requisite of a good citizen," says Theodore Roosevelt, "is that he shall be able and willing to pull his own weight; that he shall not be a mere passenger, but shall do his share in the work that each generation of us finds ready to hand; and furthermore, that in doing his work, he shall show not only the capacity for sturdy self-help, but also self-respecting regard for the rights of others."

It is a wise employer that can tell the difference between loyalty and servility.

Other Meetings

Lowell Institute, Huntington Hall, Monday, Jan. 19, 5 P. M., America and France in Contact in the Past, by Fernand Baldensperger. Monday, Jan. 19, and Thursday, Jan. 22, 8 P. M., The Man Behind the Vote, by Graham Wallas. Tuesday, Jan. 20 and Friday, Jan. 23, 8 P. M., Sound Analysis, by Dayton C. Miller.

Public Library, Thursday, Jan. 15, 8 P. M.

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Wouldn't you have liked very well to have been a pupil under a teacher like Miss Slattery? It would seem that she could make anything interesting and worth while.

I have asked Mr. W. H. Foster, whose home and office address is 41 Huntington avenue, Boston, to help me as best he can in my personal relations with the people who attend Ford Hall. I wish, particularly, you would let him know of any serious cases of illness, accident or trouble of any sort among our regular attendants. If you want advice of any sort, and do not know which way to turn for it, seek out Mr. Foster and he will help you all he can. Mrs. Foster will be delighted to help too. They can be found on the platform any Sunday night, and their telephone number is Back Bay, 4899-W. I want to see a closer personal relationship growing up between all of us who feel so disposed.

I suppose the chorus is getting ready to lead us in the singing of our new hymn and tune by Schnittkind and Goldberg.

Last Sunday afternoon I visited the Civic Service House on Salem street with a few friends. As Mr. Davis showed us about through the different rooms among the various classes and clubs we found it a veritable bee-hive for the making of good citi-

PROF. ALBION W. SMALL ON OUR PLATFORM

Dean Small of the University of Chicago, who will speak to us next Sunday evening on "The Strength and Weakness of Socialism," has written a novel, "Between Eras," that is well worth looking up. The Socialists, of course, have not accepted the book whole-heartedly, but they have cared enough about it to give it liberal space in their various publications, and it is generally conceded that the Socialist-author has done his cause a great deal of service in this piece of fiction. Dr. Small is a Baptist of the Baptists; he is, also, a warm friend and close comrade of Prof. Zueblin. A good combination.

Why be so impatient? If you wanted to go to San Francisco and found that the only train for that city was five days late, would you wait or would you walk? Many of us in our journey toward our port of Success are compelled to obey train schedules.

Ford Hall Folks

Edited by Thomas Dreier.

PUBLISHED weekly by the Ford Hall Associates, whose work is to create, assemble, and distribute ideas that will help men and institutions grow more helpful in serving society, and which will promote "peace on earth, good will toward men." It is the official publication of the Ford Hall Meetings, which are held, under the direction of George W. Coleman, every Sunday evening during the months of October to May, in Ford Hall, Ashburton Place, Boston, Massachusetts.

All business communications should be sent to Miss Mary C. Crawford, Treasurer Ford Building, Boston, and all communications intended for the editor to The Thomas Dreier Service, University Press, Cambridge, Mass. Subscription Price: \$1.50 for 26 numbers.

The first requisite of a good citizen, says Theodore Roosevelt, "is that he shall be able and willing to pull his own weight; that he shall not be a mere passenger, but shall do his share in the work that each generation of us finds ready to hand; and furthermore, that in doing his work, he shall show not only the capacity for sturdy self-help, but also self-respecting regard for the rights of others."

It is a wise employer that can tell the difference between loyalty and servility.

Other Meetings

Lowell Institute, Huntington Hall, Monday, Jan. 19, 5 P. M., America and France in Contact in the Past, by Fernand Baldensperger. Monday, Jan. 19, and Thursday, Jan. 22, 8 P. M., The Man Behind the Vote, by Graham Wallas. Tuesday, Jan. 20 and Friday, Jan. 23, 8 P. M., Sound Analysis, by Dayton C. Miller.

Public Library, Thursday, Jan. 15, 8 P. M., Rome, by Cora Stanwood Cobb. Sunday, Jan. 25, 3.30 P. M., The Stage of Today, by Frank W. C. Hersey.

Sunday Commons, Huntington Chambers Hall, Sunday, Jan. 25, 3.30 P. M., Dr. Charles Fleischer, leader.

School of Social Science, Monday, Jan. 19, 7.30 P. M., American Literature and Dollars, by Abraham Cahan. 10 cents.

STATESMEN'S MEETING

At which Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont will preside, and Sen. Clapp, Sen. Kenyon and Sen. Thomas will speak. Tremont Temple,

Saturday, January 24, at 8 P. M.

Reserved seats, 25 cents to \$1.00 now on sale at the hall.

ADVERTISING

A space of this size—one inch high and two and one-half inches wide—can be had for advertising purposes for one dollar per issue. For information regarding advertising apply to Jacob London, Room 707, Ford Building, Boston, Mass.

THE STORY OF SARA A. SMITH.

By Mary C. Crawford.

Twice this season Miss Sara A. Smith has officiated as hostess at the Sunday afternoon gatherings of the Ford Hall Folks, showing in this capacity the executive ability and cheerful spirit of co-operation we have all learned to admire in her. Perhaps her terms of service as secretary and treasurer of the Cambridge Socialist Party trained her to be an especially effective member of the Folks. Or perhaps it was the practice of brotherliness at the Ford Hall Meetings which fitted her to do valuable work for the Socialists. Certainly she was a member of the Ford Hall congregation first, having been constantly of our number since that evening when Lincoln Steffens was the speaker on our platform some three or four seasons ago.

Miss Smith was brought up a Congregationalist and from her early childhood had been wont, as a member of a Cambridge church, to "do good" to the poor; like many other Christian folk she interpreted that saying, "the poor ye have always with you," as a text in which Christ set the seal of approval upon the state of poverty. Consequently her faith was roughly shaken, when, in the course of her business experience, she saw large numbers of able-bodied men displaced by the introduction of machinery and realized heart-breakingly that many of these discharged workers would never find another job. Poverty so brought about is NOT the Lord's will, she decided; there must be something wrong with a society so mal-adjusted as ours—and something wrong, too, with a church which counsels submission to such injustice. So, when on a certain winter evening that she had set out to go to church, she followed instead a motley crowd trooping up over Beacon Hill and found herself at a Ford Hall Meeting. Great was her joy. Naturally she came again and again, having discovered at last a place where the problems that troubled her were intelligently voiced if not adequately answered.

Not yet, however, did she become a Socialist. When business called her to the South for a couple of years it was still the message of the Ford Hall Meetings and that alone which she painstakingly sought out in the home papers. "Ford Hall was the only thing in Boston for which I was lonely," she says, "and the happiest evening of my week was Monday night when I could read in the Boston papers the varied accounts of the Meeting which you had held here the night before."

It was while still in the South that Miss Smith first heard Debs speak. This was in March, 1911. Then returning to Boston and her beloved Meetings at Ford Hall, she agonized with us here over the Lawrence strike, and soon after that joined the So-

A FORWARD STEP.
(Continued from Page 1.)

don't care what is wrong with it while it is doing that thing. In order to do that kind of welfare work, the Board of Education of Fitchburg finally gave me every afternoon in the week to go around to the children's homes asking parents to let their children go to school longer. What these children need is a friend to stand by them. The thing I am pleading for is that there shall be put into every school section and then into every school building a welfare teacher, who shall do individual welfare work and supervise all the welfare work done by the school during the evenings and on Saturday and Sunday. The public schools are public buildings, and we have a right to use them.

Can we do all this? No, not now. But everything has to have a beginning. The other day a little girl told me that she wanted to be a concert pianist, and soon after her mother complained to me that she couldn't get Edith to practise half an hour a day. Don't laugh at her—you are just like her. Last summer I was watching two little fellows trying to chin a bar. Every time they would fall back they would say, "Not quite." "You'll never do that," said a big girl who was watching them. The six-year-old answered for both of them: "We wasn't tryin' to touch it; we was just reachin' up." It is a long, long way that man and woman have come; but they have come all the way by just reaching up. And wherever a hand reaches up, God is reaching down. He can't reach any hand that is folded, but He can touch any hand that is uplifted as far as it will go. Education is the removal of limitations; and the welfare teacher is the one who can help remove them.

A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFICULTY IN THE
WAY OF IMPROVING BOSTON
SCHOOLS.

By Susan W. FitzGerald.

I AM not going to suggest any very definite remedies. It seems to me that the fundamental difficulty with our schools is the same thing that is the fundamental difficulty with so much of our common life—the fact that democracy is more common in speech than in practice, and that the lesson we have got to learn is not to say that democracy is an overworked word, but to learn that it is an underworked thing. We often say that our schools are the training places for democracy. They ought to be; and the one advantage they have in the smaller cities is that it is easier for them, socially at least, to be more democratic.

It would be better for our schools and for us all if socially the schools were more democratic in Boston today. Of course the schools cannot be the same in all districts, but if we could feel that in each school section the schools really gathered together the

with this. I hope the time will come when there will be an organized group in each district whose office shall be to present the community's point of view.

Our schools must be more democratic in administration. If our schools are to educate our citizens, they must do it by practice, as well as by precept. Many of us have watched with interest the adoption of self-government in colleges and preparatory schools. Of course we can't expect to do the same thing entirely in the lower schools, yet much in this line could be done. I think we must soon come here as elsewhere to some form of what we might call faculty government of the schools—some scheme by which the teacher shall have more influence in the administration of our schools, so that problems may be settled by those who have to meet them.

We must, lastly, face the question of political democracy in our schools. Two things make our schools less democratic than they should be. First, there should be a larger school committee, in order that more points of view may be represented. There should be a committee of seven or nine at least, three of them women. Second, our present way of nominating members for the school committee is not democratic. The present campaign has shown us that this is true of other public offices also. I hope that the requirement for 5000 certified names on the nomination paper will be so changed that it may be possible to put a candidate in the field who does not have a large and well-organized political body behind him. (Applause.) To keep the schools out of politics it must be possible for candidates to run for the school committee without this political affiliation.

Let the machinery drop more and more out of sight, so that to the end we desire, we can devote the best of our strength.

Fools are all right, if one doesn't get too many of them together in the same place. As an old saying has it, "Ropes get entangled when goats are tied to the same post."

Let us not misjudge the quiet, self-contained man, and let us not fail to remember that it is ever the empty wagon which makes the most noise.

Friends Who Are Coming

Jan. 18—Bishop Charles Williams of Michigan, "Why I Work for the Single Tax."

Jan. 25—Dr. Albion Woodbury Small of Chicago University, "The Strength and Weakness of Socialism."

Feb. 1—Alexander Irvine of New York.

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It was while still in the South that Miss Smith first heard Debs speak. This was in March, 1911. Then returning to Boston and her beloved Meetings at Ford Hall, she agonized with us here over the Lawrence strike, and soon after that joined the Socialist party. Even today, though, she works harder to make her friends converts to the Ford Hall idea than to Socialism. Perhaps she thinks the former will lead others, just as it led her, into the latter. In any event she proselytizes zealously and continuously for us. "And at the Folks dinner last spring," she declares proudly, "there were present no less than twenty-five people whom I personally had led to know and to love the Ford Hall Meetings."

Isn't it queer how hard some of us are fighting today against having forced upon us that which yesterday we were sure we could not live without?

The greatest social center is not the great structure of stone and steel, but it is the Efficient Man and Efficient Woman—the one who does the little things better.

Don't laugh at her, you are just the same. Last summer I was watching two little fellows trying to chin a bar. Every time they would fall back they would say, "Not quite." "You'll never do that," said a big girl who was watching them. The six-year-old answered for both of them: "We wasn't tryin' to touch it; we was just reachin' up." It is a long, long way that man and woman have come; but they have come all the way by just reaching up. And wherever a hand reaches up, God is reaching down. He can't reach any hand that is folded, but He can touch any hand that is uplifted as far as it will go. Education is the removal of limitations; and the welfare teacher is the one who can help remove them.

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It would be better for our schools and for us all if socially the schools were more democratic in Boston today. Of course the schools cannot be the same in all districts, but if we could feel that in each school section the schools really gathered together the whole of the young life and taught them to work together and think together and pull together, we should be well satisfied. I don't know whether we can look to the happy time when that will be true in all parts of Boston. There is nothing more damaging to our public schools than the growth of the private schools, which always stand for separation.

Our schools must be made democratic educationally, and for this the people in our schools must be in close touch with the homes from which the children come. One of the things which would be a practical help would be some way in which the parents and the neighborhood could come into closer touch with the authorities in the schools and make them see what seems to the parents a help to the children. Vocational schools and everything that is a departure from the old line of strict academic training helps

view may be represented. There should be a committee of seven or nine at least, three of them women. Second, our present way of nominating members for the school committee is not democratic. The present campaign has shown us that this is true of other public offices also. I hope that the requirement for 5000 certified names on the nomination paper will be so changed that it may be possible to put a candidate in the field who does not have a large and well-organized political body behind him. (Applause.) To keep the schools out of politics it must be possible for candidates to run for the school committee without this political affiliation.

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Feb. 15—*Symposium*, "Breeding Men." Speakers to be announced.

Feb. 22—Charles Brandon Booth, "The Case for the Prisoner."

March 1—Leslie Willis Sprague of Chicago.

March 8—*Symposium*, on "Journalism." A. J. Philpott of the *Boston Globe* and others to be announced.

March 15—Rev. Harry Ward, "The Challenge of Socialism to Christianity."

March 22—Rev. Frank O. Hall of New York, "The Moral Law."

March 29—John Cowper Powys of England, "The Economic Aspects of Woman Suffrage."

April 5—Mary Church Terrell, "Uncle Sam and the Sons of Ham."

April 12—Dr. Thomas C. Hall of New York.

April 19—Prof. Walter Rauschenbusch.