

## Comment

There prevails a wide-spread conviction that college and high school instructors in the various social studies should devote much of their time to clearing up current economic, social and political problems. It cannot be denied that there are fundamental problems on which light is needed. Men of affairs who are engaged in business, social work or politics are divided into groups ranging from reactionaries on the one hand to extreme radicals on the other. The extremists of the right have learned nothing and seemingly have no tendency to gather wisdom from abundant experience. Extremists of the left are equally anxious to cry down and defeat any moves not completely in harmony with their own set formulas. The more open-minded elements who occupy the ground between are divided on almost every problem. They want action, but cannot get together.

It would be a happy situation, perhaps, if teachers of the social studies were in substantial agreement—all ready to march together while leading their troops of students in a battle for reforms guaranteed to work out happily for all. The truth is, however, that college and high school teachers include reactionaries, near-reactionaries, near-liberals, liberals, near-radicals, and possibly a few who have no desire to see any part of the existing economic régime preserved. Whoever assumes that a different situation prevails is surely in error. It is folly for anyone to expect that all teachers of history and kindred subjects can impartially examine the facts in relation to the present emergency and decide readily what policies are constructive and sound. If let alone by propagandists of one school or another and encouraged to consider without bias the different angles of current questions, they may do a great deal of good. They can at least try to send their students on with open minds and some power to resist the appeals of those who know just what they want and who are out to attain their selfish ends by innocent-looking means.

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Stirred by the need of change in his day, James Russell Lowell one day wrote:

My soul is not a palace of the past,  
Where outworn creeds, like Rome's gray senate, quake  
Hearing afar the Vandal's trumpet hoarse,  
That shakes old systems with a thunder fit.  
The time is ripe, and rotten-ripe, for change;  
Then let it come: I have no dread of what  
Is called for by the instinct of mankind;  
Nor do I think that God's world will fall apart  
Because we tear a parchment more or less.

The sentiment of this passage seems to fit the times in which we live even better than those in which the poet wrote. There is now a great fear indeed on the part of frightened conservatives lest the world which their heroes have dominated shall "fall apart." History is in the making whatever the future may bring, and time will reveal what the verdict of history is to be in regard to those who fall back upon a parchment, made in a period of change, as their chief resource in resisting change in a new day of unrest.

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The Daughters of the American Revolution in Indiana are encouraging the marking of historical sites, for which they should be highly commended by the public. A contest was staged in which a prize was offered, that resulted in the naming of a number of sites worthy of being marked. Among the Indiana places proposed by various local chapters of the D.A.R., the following were included: The Harrison House in Vincennes; the first American fort in Ft. Wayne; the boyhood home of Thomas A. Hendricks in Shelbyville; the old site of Springville in Clark County; the site of the Indian village of Nees-wau-gee in Marshall County; the Scribner House in New Albany; a section of the Whitewater Canal near Connersville; the "Underground Railway" station near Eaton; the site of the Indian village of Prophetstown near the mouth of the Tippecanoe about eight miles above Lafayette; the *Pivot*, a spot from which land surveys were and are still made in Orange County; the site of the Half-Moon Fort in the same County; Cornstalk Town in Montgomery County; the grave of Elizabeth Lindsey, the first white person who was buried in Fulton County; and the site of Lindsey's Corn-cracker Mill in the same County. It is expected that all these places will be properly marked in time, either under local or state auspices. No doubt the D.A.R. will continue to cultivate

the historical spirit and lead the people to increase their appreciation for the heritage which the past has left to them.

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The Historic American Buildings Survey has been established with the purpose to conserve certain historical resources. Types of dwellings such as man has devised in various times and climes serve as evidences of his advancement and adaption to circumstances. The Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes, mentions the adobe hut, the cliff dwellings of the agricultural Indian, the tepee of the nomadic Indian, the log cabin of the pioneer, the cottage, the farmhouse, the city dwelling, each as expressing "eloquently the culture and mode of life of the original owner." He also points out that chapters of the nation's history are likewise illustrated by the "churches and missions of the Franciscans and Jesuits of the South and West, the churches of the Russians in Alaska, the meeting houses of the Puritans in the East and Middle West, the colleges, hospitals, mills, warehouses, shops and other buildings."

Many specimens of early American architecture have long since ceased to exist, others are in a state of decay, and still others will some day disappear. It is impossible to preserve all old structures that possess historical value and interest. It is the purpose of the Historic American Buildings Survey "to record in a graphic manner and by photography . . . the exact appearance" of a great number of buildings and their surroundings before it is too late.

Our state is, of course, interested and involved in this American Survey initiated by the federal government. For the district of Indiana, Herbert Foltz of Indianapolis is the Director. He is supported by an advisory committee made up of Arthur Bohn (chairman), Anton Scherrer, Frederic Polley, Christopher B. Coleman and Lee Burns, all of Indianapolis. A beginning of the Survey was made with a list of the following buildings in Indiana: the Rappite buildings in New Harmony; the old Cathedral with its Chapel, and the Harrison House at Vincennes, the covered bridge built by the Kennedys across Flat Rock Creek just east of Rushville on the Connersville Road; the Swinney Homestead in Fort Wayne; and the Markle Mill just north of Terre Haute. Records of other buildings will be made as the survey progresses.

The "History Teachers' Forum" is a new feature inaugurated in this issue. Each quarter two or more pages will be devoted to the problems of high school and college teachers of history. Those having material which they wish to submit for publication in this new department, should send copy to Dr. F. Lee Bennis, President of the History and Social Studies Section of the Indiana State Teachers' Association and Professor of European history at Indiana University.

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