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Asst. Commissioner.

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CARRISLE

File No.

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Ed-Schools
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DEC 15 1916

Mr. G. McM. Ross,
444 W. Poplar Street,
Stockton, California.

FILED BY C. P. F.

My dear Mr. Ross:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of December 6, enclosing a copy of your plan for the reorganization of the public schools and to thank you for the same. I will be glad to have this pamphlet given more careful attention in connection with any later consideration of the organization of our system of Indian schools.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Cato Sells

Commissioner.

12-LP-14

COMMISSIONER OF
INDIAN AFFAIRS
DEC 12 1916

FILED BY G. P. F.

444 West Poplar Street,
Stockton, California.
Dec. 6, 1916.

Mr. Cato Sels,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
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Dear Mr. Sells:

Your good letter of December 2nd., arrived this afternoon. I thank you for your patient explanation that while written without full knowledge of my plan, has led *you* far afield from what I had and still have in mind on the subject of the necessity of a re-organization of our schools, if they are ever to become worthy of a Democracy.

I take pleasure in enclosing you a copy of the plan.

With best wishes, I remain

Yours truly,

G. M. Ross

GMCMR-KO'B

Each

A PLAN



For the Reorganization of the Public Schools

FILED BY G. P. F.
BY G. MCM. ROSS, M. E.
STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA



A plan for the reorganization of the public schools, to secure from the school an education for all of our children which will be directly related to the lives of our people, which will be efficient, economical and democratic:

The present public school system is so poorly related to the lives of our people that over 90 per cent of the pupils entering leave school at end of the age of compulsory attendance; less than 5 per cent graduate from our high schools and less than 2 per cent from our universities. The cost of maintaining high schools and universities bears no just relation to the number of pupils educated. The total cost of our public educational institutions bears no sane or reasonable relation to the results obtained when measured by the number of men and women educated.

Every feature of our public educational institutions is becoming more and more aristocratic. To remedy these evils and to fully educate our people so that they may all be happy, healthful, efficient citizens it is proposed to divide the school time into two parts; half of the time to be devoted to intellectual training and half of the time to industrial training and work. This is to be the rule in all public schools and institutions, including the kindergartens and universities. To use the present schools for intellectual training, the teachers having one set of pupils in the morning will have another in the afternoon. The industrial teachers and managers will have the care of and the instruction of two sets of children each day—one in the morning and the other in the afternoon so that half of the time during the school life of every boy and girl will be devoted to intellectual and half to industrial work.

For the intellectual training the only change that would be required in the present system would be to relate the training to the lives of the

children. For industrial training, the basic principle shall be to fully instruct the children how to satisfy their primary wants and how best and with the least effort to secure for themselves directly from natural resources food, clothing and shelter or indirectly by exchanging the products of their labor for the things they require for their physical and intellectual development. To best secure these ends the school trustees shall employ business managers and technical scientific experts so that the health, training and earnings of the children, the pupils, will be properly safeguarded. It will not be necessary or desirable to provide state or public workshops for industrial training at once, as there are in every city privately owned enterprises where children can be profitably employed while being educated. Where such enterprises do not exist as the natural products of that particular section of the country calls for then the state can profitably furnish such workshops or factories.

It is figured that the output of the children during their school life when properly guided by competent instructors and the product wisely marketed and the children honestly credited with their earnings that the net result will be that they will have earned the cost of their instruction and paid out of their earnings the cost of their maintenance. With this system in operation every child can be thoroughly educated, the only limitation being his ability to receive an education. For such an education they can select from all the trades, all the professions, all the sciences and all the arts; with well trained eyes and hands, with clean minds in healthy bodies, from happy homes that they have either built or beautified they can cheerfully consider and wisely face any problem that may come to them as a people.

We must face life as we find it and improve conditions when we can. The objection to child labor is met by the fact that they are now forced to labor under brutal masters and horrible conditions. For such conditions we can and must substitute rational instruction and wise management that will secure the proper and best physical, mental and moral development of our children so that every boy and girl in the country will be equipped to earn an honest living and be so placed that they can fully enjoy the satisfaction of being able to gratify every rational want. Nature has been so bountiful with her gifts to man that an intelligent use of these gifts will abolish ignorance and poverty from the world. That a proper system of industrial education will secure to our people such blessings as I have outlined there can be no doubt. Organized labor throughout this country has most emphatically endorsed the demand for industrial education. The cry of millions of parents: "What shall we do with our children," can be answered only by such a system. The failure

of our public schools to keep the children beyond the age of compulsory attendance emphasizes the demand for a reform of the system. The great waste of public money by our present educational system is without further excuse and finally the aristocratic antics of the few who are educated at public expense is a disgrace to a democracy.

The remedy while simple cannot fail to be effective. Divide the school time in two—one-half for intellectual studies, the other half for industrial training—the pupils to be credited with their earnings and charged with their education, both from the kindergarten to the university inclusive.

There is no part of our country where the system cannot be applied whether mining for gold, hunting for furs or putting up whale oil in the frozen north, growing grain or intensive agriculture in our temperate zones or raising, picking or preserving citrus fruits in our semi-tropical climates as anything used by humanity will directly or indirectly provide the means of a complete education for the children of those who produce such things and whose earnings will neither be destroyed by war nor absorbed by monopoly as an intelligent people will neither indulge in war nor permit monopoly. With this system in operation, and it can be applied without shock to or derangement of any good work that we have as a people developed and established, in one generation we can become an educated people.



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DEC -2 1916

Mr. G. McM. Ross,
444 W. Poplar Street,
Stockton, Cal.

My dear Mr. Ross:

FILED BY C. P. F.

Your letter to the First Assistant Secretary has been referred to me and I have read with interest the correspondence which you have transmitted regarding educational questions, but more particularly the methods in vogue at the Carlisle Indian School.

Of course there may be defects in the Indian school system in common with the white school systems of the United States. Possibly these are as fundamental as you seem to imply and of course it will be necessary for any remedy to be definite and clear in order that they may be improved. However, under the present Indian school plan as exemplified at Carlisle, the Indian Bureau believes it is conferring an opportunity upon those students who attend and this opportunity it gives to the extent of providing instruction, lodging, subsistence, clothing, books, transportation and incidentals. The Indian problem differs from that of the white as you will

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realize and therefore the Indian school endeavors to give something of home conditions to young people who do not have these elsewhere.

In return for these benefits certain work is required of the students and for such work they are not paid; the injustice of this plan is not apparent. In this connection I think it should be said that the real benefit to the Indians does not rest in the giving of money or any other thing, but in teaching them to rely on their own efforts and furnishing them the necessary knowledge with which to accomplish this. It therefore seems no more than just that they should earn the training afforded by contributing in part thereto through their own labor. It is not intended that they should do so much work that it may be a burden or interfere with the pursuit of their studies and a reasonable time for recreation.

As to the value of the labor of each individual pupil, it would be difficult to attempt to place a value thereon, though were they rightly entitled to this they could, of course, be paid a wage for hours of work performed, but at the same time it would be proper to charge

for room, board and educational advantages which if placed at anything like a fair value would place the balance on the side of the institution. There is another phase of the matter, however, and that is that the time devoted to work is in reality an essential part of their instruction, and vocational instruction could not be given without the performance of a large part of the work to which you refer.

Furthermore, the students in the schools are given an opportunity to earn money. Very often during vacation season they receive wages which are paid to each student if they remain at the school and perform labor or else, as at Carlisle, they are permitted to go under the Outing System both for the wages they may earn and for the experience which they gain. Money thus earned by students is not used under any circumstances to support the school.

I have not seen your educational plan, further than is indicated in copies of your letters to Dr. Dabney and Mr. Prosser, which impress me as being more critical than constructive. However, without inviting controversy, I must insist frankly that there is no exploitation of students at Carlisle, in the stigmatizing sense that you

seem to use the term, nor can I admit that there prevails at this or any other Government Indian School any unmoral or other than humanizing principle towards the pupils or their parents. Carlisle is a great school, creditable alike to the Government and the Indians. It has fitted hundreds of boys and girls to become successful competitors with white workers. Many of its young men graduates are skilled mechanics receiving the same pay and opportunity as their white associates. The labor students perform there without pecuniary return is worthily and honorably a partial payment on their education and a lesson in self-support and democratic independence. The Government liberally contributes many times their earnings but wisely enables them to learn the lesson of self-help, without which no race can long survive.

I thoroughly believe in the union of culture and labor, the partnership of head and hands. The mind, the soil, the work-shop should coalesce. Democracy can have no better basis. In this view of education I am content with the society of Lincoln and Emerson and such later thinkers as Harvard's Dr. Eliot, and shall do all in my power to give the Indian youth this outlook into the future.

I cannot agree with your views on the Gary system. Its results among both pupils and parents, in the midst of a score of different nationalities that furnish actual "melting pot" conditions, are not proved unsuccessful or undemocratic. Some revision may follow, but revision does not spell failure so much as it foretells progress. I am free to admit that the course of study now followed in the Indian Schools accords with some features of the Gary plan. This course, tentatively introduced within the past year, provides for a full half-day of practice and productive work above the third grade in connection with academic studies. A period of three years is given to prevocational work, regarded as the finding stage of the pupils when they are aided by instructors in determining their capacities and the vocations to which they are best suited. Following this are four years of training in the larger schools, like Carlisle, in which the academic course is completed and the student is trained for some specific vocation of his choice. Although some changes may be desirable later, I am thus far much pleased with the results.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Cato Sells
Commissioner.

12-ARB-1

ALEXANDER T. VOGELSANG
FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY
WASHINGTON

November 17, 1916.

Mr. G. McM. Ross,
444 W. Poplar Street,
Stockton, Cal.



FILED BY G. P. F.

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My dear Mr. Ross:

Secretary Vogelsang has received with its inclosures your letter of November 10 relating to the plan of industrial education followed at Carlisle Indian School. He has not yet recovered from the illness which has confined him to his house for the past two months, but has read your comment and directed that your letters be referred to Commissioner Sells, of the Indian Office, for consideration of the ideas which you have therein expressed.

Cordially yours,

(Signed) Jno. Harvey

Private Secretary.

Copy and papers to Commissioner Sells.

FILED BY G. P. F.



444 West Poplar Street,
Stockton, California.
November 10, 1916.

Mr. Alexander T. Vogelsang,
Assistant Secretary of the Interior,
Washington, D. C.



My dear Mr. Vogelsang:

Your letter of the 3rd. just received and with the letter, there arrived a set of the Railroad Guide books issued by the Geological Survey. I have hurriedly glanced through the set with the result that I have promised myself great pleasure from a careful reading of the full set. When I have done so, I shall take pleasure in advising you of the impression they make. The Topographical map of the Delaware water gap has not yet arrived.

In the matter of the Educational plan of the Carlisle Indian School: in my letter of October 5th., I had reference to the various industrial departments of the school. Every department in the last report that I examined, showed a profit earned by student labor. In your letter, you say "These moneys are regarded as the product of the plant itself, rather than the labor involved". It has been my very good fortune to have seen and known many Indians. If you have not enjoyed such an acquaintance, you would probably be somewhat shocked could you get the Indian's view of the above transaction, particularly as the department has given them the opportunity of making an unfavorable comparison. When the Indians of the schools are allowed to go out on farms, they receive for their own use, the product of their labor in the shape of wages but the product of their labor produced from school lands or school workshops, is appropriated by the United States or as they will personify the transaction, by their rich and powerful Uncle. The white boys and girls who are so cruelly exploited in our vocational schools in Oakland, and in Stockton, and those along the line to the Atlantic

Coast, suffer equally with the Indians; there is no exception at any point. At Gary, they have emphasized exploitation; they boast of it at Cincinnati; they are not ashamed of it in Massachusetts; in New York, they seem to be proud of the length of time that they have had their particular brand of exploitation at work and so the pitiful story covers these United States like an infected blanket.

I have not yet learned of the escape from the exploiters of any of the children who in parts of the West and in the South have entered agricultural contests and who have succeeded in doing wonderful things with corn, with cotton, and with other things that they have produced. I hope they have been allowed to enjoy the product of their labor in some form and I hope that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs can so arrange matters at Carlisle that no Indian, man or woman, will have occasion to either question our morals or to design a plan for the punishment of exploitation.

I am enclosing copies of two letter in which are discussed existing systems of education and the plan I propose. The first is to C. A. Prosser, of New York, Secretary of the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education, of this Secretary Redfield of the Department of Commerce was President. The second letter, was to Charles William Dabney, President of the University of Cincinnati. I trust that they may be of value and helpful in humanizing and in making several of the bureaus of your great department truly Democratic.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

G. M. M. Ross

GMcMR-KO'B.

COPY

444 West Poplar Street,
Stockton, California.
April 26th., 1914.

Charles William Dabney,
President: University of Cincinnati,
Cincinnati, Ohio.



Dear Sir:

Your letter of the 21st/, with enclosures came duly; for these please accept my sincere thanks.

In the fall of 1911, I spent a few hours in Cincinnati. Even in that brief visit, I was very much impressed with your great city and its wonderful possibilities.

Your splendid work, made possible by the spirit of the citizens and the liberality of your municipality, is shown in the bulletins you sent me. Your buildings are beautiful, and your locations, seemingly ideal. Nevertheless, I have been trying to think what sort of a report a citizen from the planet Mars, or Keokuk, Ia., would make to his friends were he asked to report upon the application of Justice in Cincinnati, and upon its Democracy, as exemplified in the lives and condition of its people. Could he not truthfully say of Cincinnati, that Democracy in its full, true sense, did not exist there? That the ideals of its founders had not, in any sense, been realized? That the benefits to be derived from its higher educational institutions were limited to five per cent of its people, and of these, but a fraction of one per cent were able to enjoy the wonderful facilities of acquiring knowledge that a well trained faculty of kindly disposed men and women, aided by every modern device that science has suggested, were ready and willing to impart? That by some magical process, the great institutions of learning were surrounded by a scarcely visible, but impenetrable wall, that most effectively shut out ninety-five per cent of the people and allowed but a limited number of the initiated to mingle with those on the outside, and that these few were engaged in securing specimens for their laboratories and museums with a little data to be used in speculation so that the intellect of those on the inside of these institutions might not lack exercise?

The human specimens consist of backward and deficient children--two kinds of these specimens, academic and practical. There are specimens of the crippled and deformed; of these, there are also two kinds, not classified as to numbers, the poor and those who are not poor. The first of these are furnished appliances so that they may become active and earn a living. Another set of specimens are exhibited, but not yet classified; these are mothers, who need to be trained in the care of their infants; to these are added specimens such as the city department of charities and correction, the Union Bethel, Associated Charities, Juvenile Court, and by the Anti-Tuberculosis League, and eight hospitals. The material specimens range from impure food to adulterated cement.

*of wrecked or wrecking humanity furnished by cooperating departments,

As a real Democracy must guarantee to each of its sovereign citizens the equality of opportunity, the report could fairly conclude with the statement that regardless of what the people thought they were doing or of the form of government they had established, it could be positively asserted that it was not a Democracy, as the equality of opportunity did not exist in Cincinnati.

I am glad that you have read my plan and find the "principles therein stated correct". I am fully convinced of the sincerity of your belief in the efficiency of your plans, and I am very much impressed with your equipment but I fail to see any connection between your fundamental principle as applied, and the lives of all the people of Cincinnati, or that you more than fairly touch the subject. You say "our method is to educate the people in real life, for real life." A splendid method truly, and I fully believe that you put your heart and soul in full measure into the working out of your method. The time comes when accounts must be settled. "All debts must be paid." In this spirit, use Cincinnati to measure your method with, or reverse the process, and measure Cincinnati by your method, and what must be the report? Or in what way will it differ from the report of the man from Mars or the citizen of Keokuk, Ia.,? I agree that you must have teachers and I must tell you that you have them in abundance in Cincinnati; such teachers as can train your children how to satisfy their primary wants of food, clothing, and shelter. The teachers you ask for, are to be found in all of the trades that employ master workmen in your city. From primary wants to rational wants is but a natural step and these too, can be so well cared for in Cincinnati that the collection of horrors in your museum as pictured by the man from Mars, and his friend from Iowa, could soon be relegated to the historical section of your museum.

I am sending you enclosed a copy of a letter written some time ago to the Secretary of a National Organization for Vocational Training that I hope may help you to see our schools as they really are, and not as you so fondly think they are, or may be made by the methods you so loyally are working for. The demands of an outraged Democracy must be met. I trust that you may be one of those who will lead your great city and State forward to a sane and just system of education that will amply provide for all of the children and thus avert the consequences that must come to an individual, city, state, or nation, that consciously, or unconsciously, persists in refusing the demands of Justice.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

(signed) G. McM. Ross, M.E.

copy

444 West Poplar Street,
Stockton, California,
January 19th, 1913.

C. A. Prosser,

Sect., National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education,
105 East 22 Street, New York City,
New York.



My dear Mr. Prosser,

Your good letter of the seventh came duly. First let me say that in the last campaign that I was not elected to Congress.

I received your article "Why Federal Aid for Vocational Education?" with the speech of Senator Page advocating vocational education. I am much impressed with the earnestness of both, though quite unable to agree with either.

On page 55 of the Senator's speech, the constitutionality of the plan and of your paper is touched upon by a quotation from the friend of the Senator who does not desire to re-open that question-- still I think justice demands that we at least credit the framers of the Constitution with common sense and not attempt to force on them the approval of any scheme of circumlocution for educational or any other purpose. When and how can the Federal government get money to aid the States in any way but by some form of taxation? Do you not propose to ask them to tax us so that they may be in a position to help us by returning for an educational purpose part of what they have taken from us by a direct or an indirect tax?

The Chinese tell us that all debts must be paid, and govern themselves accordingly. To those of us who, profess to be Christians the subject is of interest as it is much more comfortable to pay our debts while here and not wait until we reach Hell, when they must be paid.

The Senator's quotations from Educators in favor of his bill are very largely platitudes and from the kind of men he so aptly describes

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on page 46 as the educators who have been asleep—these people are quite willing to have their numbers increased up to the point of destroying their slumbers. The bill is very liberal to prospective educators. The bill as stated on page seven, proceeds upon the theory that is demonstrated by the Morrill Land Grant College act of 1862. The facts and opinions presented in the speech and the appendix prove beyond a doubt that since 1862 or during the last fifty years we, of these United States, have built up the worst and most expensive, inefficient educational system that exists in any country in the world.

I fear that our good friend the Senator has made the mistake of thinking that the intense desire for a sane system of vocational education is an approval of his bill; one can fairly derive such an inference from his quotations on page 45 from Messrs. Gompers and Miles.

These men are simply subscribing to the correctness of a statement covering an existing condition, in about the same way that they would naturally approve of the correctness of seven times seven equals forty-nine.

The same sort of mental confusion is illustrated in the Senator's treatment of the equality of opportunity. He seems to regard it as a thing (page 45) that you can distribute as a gift or as charity, while in reality it is a condition. The senator has very clearly shown in his speech that the equality of opportunity does not now exist in these United States.

The Senator does not seem to grasp the fact that as a people we are overburdened with taxes and that here in California about half of all our taxes goes directly or indirectly to maintain our inefficient public school system and that his plan adds to these growing burdens, and that on analysis, I regret to say, is without promise of relief as it fails to realize the basic trouble or to make any provision for its relief.

The basic trouble with our people in educational matters, is that our school system makes no provision to satisfy primary wants; the new born babe and the 1.7 per cent of our pupils enrolled in our higher

institutions of learning, require for their existence, food, clothing, and shelter and until these wants are supplied, it is wanton cruelty to even hint at ethics music, or art, or any of the things that are denied by our educational system to 98.29 per cent of our children.

Among all of the men quoted by Senator Page there is but one who seems to have grasped the enormity of our offense to our people. On page 41, Professor Carver of Harvard says:

"In the present conservation movement, it is highly important that we realize two things; First, that our most valuable resources are our people; and second, that we are wasting people more than we are wasting anything else."

Now what is proposed to stop this waste, a per capita tax of 15 cents. I would not be surprised if some of the great educators who are so proud of the results secured from the operation of the Morrill Land Grant College Act of 1862, would consent to raise this per capita tax to thirty cents. Job could surely say to us "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you."

What our people, our children demand is justice, not charity. Such justice that will enable them to make proper use of the gifts that the Creator has given us, and not the justice of the day.

"And all the sky is dark with wings
That bear to feasts of infamy
And Shame of un conjectured things
The vampire brood of Luxury.

Lo! Power, with encrimsoned hands,
The blood draught of his shamle sips;
And Justice at her altar stands
And stammers with polluted lips."

Justice demands that even the United States Senators shall obey the Constitution and keep in this respect their solemn oath.

To remedy this wanton waste of the lives, of liberty, and the most sacred honor of our people, we are in duty bound to use fully and without mental or physical reservation, every resource that we possess "to the uttermost farthing." If we fail in this, we invite destruction.

"Though it may take the language of prayer, it is blasphemy that attributes to the inscrutable decrees of Providence the suffering and brutishness that come of poverty; that turns with folded hands to the All-Father and lays on Him the responsibility for the want and crime of our great cities. We degrade the Everlasting. We slander the Just-One. A merciful man would have better ordered the world; a just man would crush with his foot such an ulcerous ant-hill! It is not the Almighty, but we who are responsible for the vice and misery that fester amid our civilization."

We profess a willingness to do everything for the people. Tolstoi appreciated our willingness to do so while exposing our hypocrisy when he said that we were willing to do everything for the people except get off their backs. We are and have been exploiters of little children; we starve and cheat them, and deny them the bounty that a good God created for the use of all of the children of men demanding of us that we simply establish and maintain forever as a rule of life, "the equality of opportunity." We have not done so, we do not recognize any such rule of life. "The Creator showers upon us his gifts, more than enough for all; but like swine scrambling for food, we tread them in the mire-- tread them in the mire while we tear and rend each other."

The States are able to care for the education of their children. They only need the kindly direction of a few of the good citizens who fully realize the errors of the past and who cannot be further deluded with a system that has been so cruel, so inefficient, and so hopeless.

The plan that I offer you is so simple, and easy of application and so sure and prompt in its results, that when honestly tried it cannot fail. It can be put in operation in any part of our country; in the

smallest village or the largest city; we have millions of men and women who are willing and competent to act as the first vocational teachers; any successful farmer, mechanic, or dress-maker is quite capable of starting and directing the work teaching how to provide food, shelter, and clothing. When these things have been secured, the demand for the best of all the good things that labor properly directed can produce, will promptly make itself manifest. Any successful, honest storekeeper or trader can care for the marketing of all that the children produce. There is no need or excuse for delay or for waiting for specially trained teachers or educators who, after fifty years of effort in these United States are conspicuous by their absence in our public schools.

That the principle of the plan I offer is correct, I submit the following statement from a mining school that was organized to meet the bad conditions that can be found in every industry in the United States.

"It is with hearty good will and sincere appreciation for the service you rendered us in conceiving, and what is more important still, making the conception an actuality, in the Comstock School of Mining & Metallurgy now known as the Virginia City School of Mines; that we send you this testimonial of esteem.

You desired to give the common miner a chance to improve his condition and surround him with an environment that would encourage and help him to become an assayer, surveyor or manager of a mining company.

A man of less energy and resourcefulness than yourself, would have been daunted by the obstacles thrown in his path.

It was a new idea in America; this invitation to the "ground-hog" to lift up his eyes and see the acorns on the tree of Knowledge; to reach the lower branches if he would and strive for the topmost branches if he could; and its practicability was derided by some, and doubted by many.

Its feasibility is no longer a matter of doubt, and its former students are holding important positions from Alaska to Central America."

I may add that I have failed to find an educator between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans who as a school official, would endorse the plan. I state this fact to show the utter hopelessness of attempting to reform our school system through the existing school organization.

Your organization has influence and power enough to try out the plan in anyone of a dozen places or in a dozen places at once. I will be glad to aid you in any way that I can.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

G. M. Ross