

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MARYLAND

By H. LOUISE C. BUCHNER, Chairman Education Committee, Maryland Federation of Women's Clubs.

OF all the matters of vital importance to which women will soon be able to direct the energy which the long struggle for political freedom, so unnecessary and wasteful, has forced so many of them to withdraw from other objectives, there is none more insistent and closer at hand than public education. This is true not only of the whole country in general, but of Maryland in particular, for many of our very keenest and most tireless minds have for years been devoted to the cause of woman suffrage to the practical exclusion of everything else of a public nature, and this because of a conviction of the necessity of political equality as fundamental to all truly co-operative public service. This condition is, happily, not to continue much longer, and the liberated energy of hundreds of able women will soon be at the disposal of the State.

Nowhere is it more needed than in the field of public education. Not only do we share with the whole country an appalling lack of trained teachers, due to the financial attractiveness of nearly every calling but teaching, and the inability of even the most devoted and unselfish teacher to buy food, clothing and shelter on next-to-nothing a year, but we have some "exceptionally unique" problems of our own to solve. They can be solved—of course they can!—and easily solved, if we will. One does not even need to seek the remedy to be applied, for it is inherent in even a partial catalogue of the educational ills that do beset us.

In common with the other States, we will have an adequate supply of educated teachers when we raise the profession to a position respectable in the eyes of the general public and offer compensation in some degree commensurate with the service expected. We have made a modest beginning in this direction by the adoption of a higher salary schedule by the recent General Assembly, but it is only a step, and not a very long one at that. Public sentiment, in its present partially dormant condition, would probably have blocked a more adequate increase—and that brings us to the heart of the whole matter, *public sentiment*. Without it, the only direction in which anything moves is *backward*, and that is the way we are headed at this moment, despite the model school law which we wrote upon our statute-books four years ago. Can it be that we were so simple as to imagine that the new system thus inaugurated would make the least bit of difference in our situation if we left it to shift for itself or to be shifted by the same hands which had controlled the schools before the law had existed? Evidently we were, for the whole country knows now that we have not only not held our own, but have actually dropped lower than we were before.

Two comparative studies of the 48 public-school systems of the country, made by the same individual under the auspices of the Russell Sage Foundation at intervals of six years, namely, upon the basis of data available in 1912 and in 1918, reveal this disconcerting and inexorable fact with scientific impartiality: In 1912 we ranked 33d among all the States (36th if one included the Territories and insular possessions). We had no reason to be proud of that, but to be ranked, as we are now, 34th (37th if counting Territories, etc.), calls for the discriminating attention of every good Marylander. It is interesting to note, before leaving these statistics, that in the six-year period Montana advanced 15 places, and is given an efficiency percentage of 76. What is ours? 43!

Now, whose fault is this? *Ours*, because we tolerate such a situation. We need waste no more time arguing the value to the State of an educated citizenry. Let us open our eyes and look about us; let us open our ears and hear what is being said; let us open our mouths and protest against the continued political domination of the schools; let us clear away the rubbish in the path toward better things, and let us help erect upon the foundation of the school law an edifice worthy of the pride we profess to feel in this old State.

So much for the State at large. Baltimore city presents an equally magnificent opportunity for constructive work on the part of us. Whenever and whenever professional leadership is lacking, it is our duty to step in and do what we can to save the State from the results of that lack. In the last analysis, we, the people, are responsible for our woeful lack of

an adequate State and city school system, and we will be rightly blamed by the children who are now its victims.

The relation of the citizen to the public schools is analogous to that of the parent to the child. The best, wisest and most loving parent is *not* the one who is most indulgent, most long-suffering, most blind to faults and most sensitive to criticism. Not at all! The best and most successful parent is the one who is quick to note faults and wrong impulses, who, knowing the child's ancestry, is on the watch for inherited tendencies, good and bad, to be cultivated or eliminated; who holds a high standard before the child and is never at heart satisfied with less than the best of which he is capable, and who welcomes criticisms made by persons who see the child from a different angle, and who can therefore throw light upon the problem of his real character and right training.

There is a challenge in the whole situation which can hardly fail to arouse the sporting blood in every good Marylander. Where there's a will, there's a way. Given the will, the rest is easy. It's "up to" us! Let's do it!

CONGRESSIONAL ASPIRANTS FILE PAPERS

THE old adage of where a young man's fancy turns in spring has been somewhat obliterated by the way a good many men are looking toward future political careers. In Baltimore city the two old factions in the Democratic party are vying with each other over places in the Democratic State Convention, and elsewhere throughout the State Congressional candidates have announced themselves from the six Congressional districts.

In the First District, T. A. Goldsborough and H. W. Robertson are candidates for the Democratic nomination, while Congressman Wm. N. Andrews and A. Stengle Marine are running for the Republican nomination. Congressman Andrews, it may be remembered, voted for the Federal suffrage amendment, and has always been a consistent friend of suffrage.

Carville D. Benson and S. C. Appleby are opposing each other in the Democratic primaries, while Linwood L. Clarke and Albert A. Blakeney are trying for the Republican support. Mr. Benson has been one of the bitterest foes of suffrage in the State.

Charles P. Coady, Democrat, the present incumbent from the Third District, is ambitious for another term, while on the Republican side John Philip Hill and Charles J. F. Steiner are candidates. Mr. Coady, too, is an anti, and voted against the amendment.

In the Fifth District Sydney E. Mudd, Republican, has announced his candidacy for re-election. Mr. Mudd voted *against* the Federal suffrage amendment. Walter B. Dorsey and J. William Klemm are on the Democratic ticket in the primaries.

In the Sixth District, the situation is unusually interesting. Frederick N. Zihlman, who has always been a staunch supporter of woman suffrage, both in the General Assembly and in Congress, is a candidate to succeed himself on the Republican ticket, while Frank W. Mish of Hagerstown, a member of the 1920 Legislature, is a candidate on the Democratic ticket. Mr. Mish, while a candidate for the General Assembly, signed a petition urging the ratification of the Federal suffrage amendment. When the vote on ratification was taken, Mr. Mish electrified the suffragists by appearing with a vivid red rose in his buttonhole, and later cast his vote against ratification. While it is hardly likely that Mr. Mish can defeat a man like Mr. Zihlman, it is interesting to know the type of man ambitious to represent the State at Washington. If the Federal amendment is ratified in time for women to vote in the primaries, there is little doubt but that Mr. Zihlman will again be elected, for Mr. Mish, by his conduct at Annapolis, cannot hope for co-operation from a group whom he sought to keep from the electorate.

Mention the Maryland Suffrage News When Patronizing Our Advertisers.