

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE DALTON PLAN

REFLECTIONS AND OPINIONS AFTER MORE THAN
THREE YEARS' WORKING OF THE PLAN

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LONDON

GEORGE PHILIP & SON, LTD., 32, FLEET STREET

Liverpool : PHILIP, SON & NEPHEW, Ltd., 20, Church Street

1926

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TO
MISS HELEN PARKHURST
AND
MISS BELLE RENNIE

PREFACE

THE Dalton Plan has had a profound effect on English education, and the enthusiasm with which Miss Helen Parkhurst's solution of the difficulty of securing individual work while retaining many of the advantages of the class system has been received is unmistakable evidence of the value of the principles on which the Plan is based.

This book will prove to be a very valuable and welcome addition to the literature on the subject.

Mr. Lynch has had a wide experience of the working of the Plan in an elementary school under exceptional difficulties. He has triumphed over all obstacles, and has obtained very considerable success as a consequence. The story of his achievement is told in a simple manner, with no trace of exaggeration. In fact, in many ways, he has underestimated the value of his work.

The question of examinations is dealt with in this book in an almost unduly temperate manner. A much more generous conclusion might have been reached even on the statistics given in the chapter on "Tests of the Educational Efficiency of the Plan." Parents will, however, fully realise that even from the examination point of view, they

certainly have nothing to fear under the Dalton Plan.

The chapters II, III, and VII are particularly good. In chapter VIII the Foreword to Mr. Shann's booklet, by the Vice-Principal of the Training College at Melbourne, merits special mention. It gives an unusually concise and carefully reasoned statement of the educational principles involved in the Dalton Plan. In the next edition, it would be well to amplify the account of the whole-hearted adoption of the Plan in China and Japan.

In any account of the remarkable and rapid success of the movement in England, reference should be made to the extraordinary efficiency of the Dalton Association under the able direction of the Hon. Secretary, Miss Belle Rennie, the importance of whose services to modern education cannot be over-estimated.

C. W. KIMMINS.

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FOREWORD

THE present volume is no substitute for the author's previous work on *Individual Work and the Dalton Plan*, but is supplementary to it. Like its predecessor it makes no claim to be authoritative. During the course of his experiment, now covering more than three years, the author has been the recipient of a mass of correspondence from all parts of the world, and has, besides, come in close contact, at the school, with hundreds of visitors from this and other lands, who wished to see the Plan in operation. Both correspondents and visitors have asked innumerable questions, the answers to which the author has done his best, within the limitations of time and opportunity, to supply. These questions, most of them of a general, though not unimportant nature, have a very wide interest. It is the belief the author has that such answers to these questions as he was able to give, together with such additional information as has come to him through experience and otherwise, might be of service to the much wider circle of those who are experimenting on similar lines, that he offers the present volume. He has no other excuse than the desire to be helpful.

It may be of interest to readers to know that

the author's school has been visited by the Inspectors of the Board, and whilst no definite opinion was expressed on the Dalton Plan itself—this was not expected, nor perhaps desirable—the Local Education Authority, to whom, in the first place, the Board's report was submitted, sent a letter of congratulation to the Staff of the school, and gave permission for the experiment to continue.

The author desires once again to place on record his keen appreciation of the devotion and co-operation of the Staff with whom he works—the personnel of which has changed considerably since the experiment began—and to express his conviction that, in whatever success has come to the school, they may justly claim the greater share.