THE industrial training of children should have as one big thought in the foreground—character development. That skilled labor might result from industrial training, that industrial training might lead to later vocational training, are to be conceded. Goodness is not character. And men are rare who can be useful to a community and do not know how to use their hands. Industrial education has been the cure meted out for the deformed, the undesirable, the deficient. Industrial education should be the preventive. The cure is doubtful; the prevention is sure.

The son of the workingman has to go to work and soon becomes a drudge; the son of the man of means gets no chance to work and thus becomes a parasite. Both are, undoubtedly, the result of our public-school system. The United States is criminally negligent in caring for her wards—the children—when it comes to education. And through education, but beginning with the babe, is the only chance for the regeneration of a race already showing moral decadence.

We are taught responsibility. Parents do not understand responsibility. They try very hard—many of them—to do all possible for the child, after the child is born. The time to do for the child is during the youth of the parents. And there is no way the youth of the land can be made to understand this, save through the public schools, save through industry—unselfish occupation—during the adolescent period. Sex preachments have never prevented anything. Self-protection is not possible through being told how; self-protection comes from knowing how. The only way to learn is through doing. Mastery of self, muscular control, mental morality through the centering of thought on helpfulness toward others,—these attributes are possible only through constant and unselfish occupation during the formulative years. This country does not possess a conscious citizenship.

This age has kept us so very busy perfecting and marketing horse power, that man power has been greatly neglected. In consequence, the man who might be willing to work, doesn’t know how; and the man who happens to know how, rates his earning power with the developed mechanical force and his demands being met, has meant a resultant decrease in accomplishment at an increased cost of effort. The increase of foreigners, who do the so-called drudgery, has taken from the hands of the male population of this country, the source of their forefathers’ strength—the strength on which was founded the nation. Great
nations have been and are the physically industrious ones. To the
dfact that the great mass of the German people toil with their hands,
live next to the soil, is due, without doubt, their preëminent position
among civilized countries today. On the other hand, nations whose
light has been kindled by their wits, find the flames soon flickering, if
not extinguished. The Romans, 'tis true, and the Spartans, were
most physically fit; Belligerency, however, gets but so far, then like a
whipped dog, slinks back and bows its head to Justice. The nation
that lives by its wits, the nation that climbs through its armies' ac-
tivities, is doomed. From the soil emanated life, and recognition
of Justice. Justice decrees that each shall labor in order that his
neighbor's neck may not ever be under the yoke.

"Of Law, there can be no less acknowledged than that her voice
is the harmony of the world." Law should mean peace. But war,
rapine, murder, inhumanity—all have become legalized through
brains. Poor Justice would well be blind that she might not see the
shame of law. Moral law needs no policemen, no jail, no courts;
moral law bespeaks manhood, helpfulness, Christianity. And the
makers of the code of moral law must be the children.

Education is a matter for constant change; education is progress.
Education must meet conditions that are at hand, yet act as a pre-
ventive for recurrence of such conditions. Education should mean
happiness, and there can be no happiness without successful per-
formance of a task. Law is a result largely of custom, of precedent, and
must be. Therefore, new custom, new precedent must begin with
the child.

The education of children should have as a second big aim—
civic improvement. Good citizenship should not consist in
merely obeying the law. The civil law is but an ill-advised
way for creating and sustaining government. No good government
can exist unless sustained by moral law and it should be the function
of education to insure moral training to the young of the state.
There is not a government in existence today where the people rule,
and a nation cannot be truly great unless people do rule. Were the
people to rule today, not in this country alone, but elsewhere, there
would be anarchy because education has not prepared the children for
civic improvement, for civic understanding. Education should
mean self-reliance, fortitude, daring, self-control, endurance, self-
sacrifice. Education is too much a matter of quantity—a peck of
mathematics, a pound of history, a ton of English, a gallon of geo-
graphy. Education should not begin at seven and end at eighteen, or
twenty, or thirty. Education is for always. And to make possible
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the two aims stated—character development and a conscious citizenship—is the duty of the administration department through industrial training.

The principal of a school, having understanding, and no intermediary but the superintendent, freed from special supervisors (the ruination of independence in teaching and honesty of thought and expression) allowed absolute sway in his building and the community neighboring the building, given the authority to select his own teachers and plan the curriculum for the individuals coming under his care, such a one could make a public school do what it should for the children of the people.

There are few such principals, if any; there has been no precedent governing the training of teachers along these lines. Therefore, to reach the desired aim, the beginning with such a work must be made through a system stamped with Federal and State approval, if not coming directly under their jurisdiction. The success of such teaching would be assured when the public schools were made self-supporting, or partly so.

I personally am positive that any school in any locality could through self-maintenance create a new citizenship. I personally am positive that private schools maintained by our Government—Federal or State—could become self-supporting institutions and not only develop a conscious citizenship, a clean coming generation, an economic race, but could also train boys and girls to develop specifically the resources of their States, each State to be strengthened through local flavor. At the present time, we seem to seek new lands to conquer, when all is yet to be done at home.

With the above thought in view, a plan has been submitted to Congress, outlining a National School and embodying the ideas necessary for the formulating of a new type of public instruction. In addition, it is suggested that another fund supposedly available—the George Washington bequest for a National School—might be kept in mind, as well as the Lincoln Memorial appropriation upon which the idea of the proposed school is now based. And even if the Lincoln Fund could not be used, surely some action should be taken to prevent the George Washington bequest from being brought to light for the further exploitation of experimental work. Higher education has proven itself inadequate in supplying the nation with a race of men. Its product is largely useless and is looked on askance by the business man today. And like this product, so will be its progeny. It is now time that the child received attention, in order that the coming race practice the virtues of industry, helpfulness, subordination of self.
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PROPOSED NATIONAL SCHOOL UTILIZING LINCOLN MEMORIAL FUND.

UNIVERSAL belief in the non-partisan action of men fighting for a bi-partisan cause, is surely a test of greatness. Both Lincoln and Lee have stood this test. Arlington, our National cemetery, once Lee’s home—peaceful, beautiful, truly in memoriam, stands a lasting monument to Lee. In his garden lie at rest, not his enemies, nor the enemies of the South, but guests in death of the host against whose cause they struggled. Forgiveness, forgetfulness of strife, eternal peace! And now we would honor Lincoln—fittingly record the living greatness of this great American. A generous Government—inoculated with the guilt of the age, extravagance, is ready to spend two million dollars that Lincoln may stand named in marble or in bronze. Indeed the vast sum appropriated shows again that we are inclined to rate our dead financially—Lincoln, the greatest, needs a greater sum than ever expended, that he might be sufficiently honored by the Government he served, the Government he saved.

But will a palace of stone, a pyramid, a building of any grandeur reflect such a man as was the war president? Lincoln was an unassuming, simple, nature-loving creature, molded by God Himself, and a perfect creation because he was never embellished by the false tinsel of society—forgetfulness of his kind, egoism, indolence. Our tailor architects never had a chance to hide the man. “I am only right, when those I serve are benefited,” thus might have said Lincoln. Can anything other than life itself stand a memorial to such a man?

“The noblest motive is the public good”—Lincoln lived by this thought and why not let his memory live also by the same thought? Our schools are the salvation of this country. They might be much more—its sanctification. But today the public schools are conducted and based on too much sentiment and precedent. Attack the schools and the Little Red Schoolhouse orator begins; attack the courses of study and you become the object of a fusilade as furious as if the very Constitution of the United States were involved.

The proof of anything is always product—results. The boys who pass through our schools are not capable of earning a living, are less capable of rising above the commonplace, have no basic idea of citizenship, and are weaklings physically. This in spite of vast changes in curriculums, in spite of splendid gymnasium equipments. We do too much for the child. His entire education should be a course of learning through doing. Froebel worked this idea out appealingly in the kindergarten, and we have accepted his methods; but so far we have not dared to make all our work conform with this sure, and the only sure, principle of education—learning through doing.
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The public schools should not be a place to exploit the oratory of Jones, the high jumping of Brown, or the drawing of Smith. The public school should reflect the community; but it does not. The first fifteen years of child life is the only time when training can be made permanent, yet we do not begin to give much thought to the child until he is in the high school. And then, what thought? At just the wrong age we have our boys and girls together in school; at just the wrong age we crowd the mind when the body ("There is but one temple in the Universe and that is the Body of Man") should be allowed to develop, to grow to prepare itself for functions of sex. The present three years of high-school life should be given over largely to freedom of action and thought. This does not mean lack of systematic training—but it does mean the harnessing of power so that it will pull forward, not backward.

As nearly as possible the actual building, and most assuredly the maintenance of every public school should be the work of the children and parents using the building. And the parents should not only be pupils at the school, but the best ethical teachers in the school. The modern school is institutionalized, is burdened, therefore, with inspection, with supervision; individuality is crushed out of the teachers, and we reflect what we are. The “best” children are the best bookworms, or the best behaved, or the best anything that causes least trouble or annoyance. The best pupils should be those who are most law-abiding in practice, and practice is rarely obtained at school. In districts where men and women are laboring people, they are stigmatized with help from the charitable organizations, church visiting guilds,—what a shame to make people paupers. The mere fact that people are in the laboring class should make their neighborhood the happiest, the brightest and the most law-abiding. For contrary to the popular whim, but recognized as the greatest truth by the wise of all ages, work is the one source of happiness that faileth not. What knowledge could more conduce to their welfare and to the welfare of the communities in which they live? What could we teach our children more essential than this? There is just one agent that can tap this fountain of happiness and public weal, and that is the public school. Until a standard for this sort of schooling—the schooling that inculcates love of work, unselfishness, desire for usefulness, self-support, is set, the public schools will never come out of the mire; the country will continue to retrograde, and we shall be drifting into another civil war. And where shall we get our Lincoln? Do we Americans realize that the few bright spots—seemingly so because they awaken a new idea in our latter-day education, are
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little items culled from Germany or Switzerland, or other foreign countries? We need borrow from none, for we are richest; but unused power brings about decay, and we are allowing the foundation of the nation—the public schools—to rot and wear away from lack of chinking and spring house-cleaning.

Near Washington, D. C., a tract of land might be purchased,—a tract as rough as real estate men have left it—and on this tract should be timber and water. We already have Annapolis for our Navy; West Point for our Army—fighting schools; caste schools whose graduates tend toward an American aristocracy: but we have no National School for peace, no National School where children, the wards of the nation, are taught civic honor, civic pride, honesty, virtue and governmental purity. We cannot reform the disrupting dishonesty of our present system of Government in practice; one can’t reform anything where the adult is concerned; one might begin with the child. This generation may not benefit from the Lincoln National School; but it is the country’s future we are aiming to assure.

Each State and each of our civic possessions should send its quota of children to Washington. Selection should rest in some definite authority, but the boys sent should not be picked boys, the requirements demanding only that the boys should be healthy in mind and body. Selection should be a matter of eugenics. These boys should be about ten years old and should be in school twelve months each year.

Upon their arrival in Washington they should be set to work, building their home-house first, then other necessary buildings; but all these buildings should be planned by them, under guidance, of course. The first building might be a log building. If gravel is on the place, then a cement house should follow; if clay, then a building of bricks, after they have made the brick. The buildings planned of stone should wait until some of the boys have spent some time at the quarry from which the stone is to be taken. In brief, not a place to rest their heads, not a table from which to eat, except what they provide themselves.

IMPOSSIBLE with children? Not at all, even at the right age—ten years. Guidance is everything. Now we do not wish to wait until these beginners grow up before we send out to the States in charge of groups men to look for new pupils, before we have—in other words—the normal department of the School. Ultimately, the large portion of the boys should spread the gospel of independence through their teaching, while others will do so through their citizenship. A normal department should be inaugurated in the beginning
with fifty pupils. Young men of fifteen or twenty should compose this group and should be molded largely on industrial lines. The teachers should provide the guidance and instruction for the younger boys and at the same time instruct the normal pupils in both theory and practice. The latter could do the heavier work while training the younger. The pupils should learn at first hand of the various occupations of our people by being at the centers of such occupation and actually entering into such work. “Books must follow sciences, and not sciences, books.”

The boy who at the receptive age sees miners at work and helps them, is in the quarry and knows how and why, even at the press, picks and packs fruit, will before we know it, be devising ways and means for the bettering of laboring conditions, will vivify life with the genius that creates, will be active in mind and body. And in my mind the only safe genius is the guided one who develops genius through doing for others.

Washington with its marvels in architecture, art, natural history, libraries, affords a fertile field for research, and all of its buildings should be used as they are, no effort being made to supply the Lincoln School with costly equipment and impediment. Employees of the Government will be rendering real service when they turn about as teachers—but without extra pay.

The reaching out of the various branches of Government service—the Geodetic Survey, the Reclamation Service, the Agricultural Experimental Stations; the use of public documents now covered with mold; the unifying of this vast school the Government now maintains, but without cohesion and without big results; a better citizenship, a better country, would enable the Lincoln National School to regenerate education, but with the easy gradual revolution of the world upon its axis.

The School should merge into a university which should be a national one, and which should reflect the nation through good citizenship and active cooperation in governing the country. From the Lincoln School should flow ideas and plans for the building of schoolhouses—their suitableness, their simplicity, their decoration.

There are so many ramifications to a plan of this sort, that it would take reams to discuss it fully, but one can easily foresee the possibility of a living memorial if such a school were conducted as planned—to make good citizens. And a good citizen labors, helps, does his own dirty work, believes in his Government, and is happy.

State branches would next be in order, and such branches, especially with their normal departments, would revolutionize education as it is generally understood. It will be hard for each “M.C.” not to arise
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and praise his normal school and the splendid education of his State. But the facts stand that our education is at fault, else why the prevalence of graft, of poverty, of imprisonment, of social scandal; why the fatal apathy toward public affairs, the universal absence of conscious citizenship, the appalling lack of worthy national ideals. Let us face the truth; our education is routine, superficial, uninspiring—in short, a failure. Consider the possibilities of manhood as exemplified in the man we would commemorate, and then look around and ask if our public schools are doing their duty. The interest on the fund appropriated by Congress for a Lincoln Memorial would be sufficient—properly invested—to carry out on a proper and fitting scale the Lincoln School as projected. The school would have to be kept free from politics; it would have to be economically managed, and indeed such management should include returns from pupils' labor—at least in the way of self-support.

The plan for a National School would be incomplete—indeed futile in conception—if it did not care for the nation's fundamental strength—woman. Girls' work along suitable lines of domestic endeavor could readily be conducted, and the merging of the school work and life of the boys with that of the girls be effected at the proper—not as now at the wrong, period of life.

The question arising in dealing with the race problem, the chance for a false stand on State’s rights—all the many problems connected with a plan of such scope, can be easily handled if the scheme is allowed to thrive. Men of wealth throughout these United States would do more to support this idea, once its practicability were proven, than they are doing now in the giving of libraries, founding of colleges and keeping them from foundering.

To recapitulate—a tract of land near Washington—say one hundred and sixty acres, a boy from each State in the Union, a young man from each State in the Union; fifteen teachers, largely men and women capable of doing with their hands, but necessarily none the less skilled with their heads; free access to the Government buildings; assurance of cooperation from Government employees; tools for building and for farming; tents for temporary shelter, and these borrowed from the army; an allowance of fifty thousand dollars for salaries, maintenance of one hundred persons, necessary buildings to start; ten thousand dollars for field and extension work; an understanding that the School is not an orphanage or a Governmental industrial home but a vast national attempt to recuperate our lost manhood, our passing resources, our waning integrity—and the results will abundantly repay the outlay. Lincoln will be honored.